FROM PAGE 1

But the polls might be politi-

cised, as grassroots level lead-

ers of political parties will

poll schedules at a press brief-

ing, Chief Election

Commissioner (CEC) ATM

Shamsul Huda announced

that the long due elections to

over 4,000 union parishads

Unveiling the municipal

contest the elections.

NEWS

Norway examining

Bangladesh."

newspapers.

letter to the government of

Bangladesh making an allega-

tion that Grameen is transfer-

ring donor money (including

that of Norad) to various enter-

prises outside of Grameen

Bank. This allegation will create

a lot of misunderstanding

within the government of

this spat between Norway and

Grameen Bank was publicised

as if Nobel Peace Prize winner

Yunus had himself pocketed the

donor money, which is totally

removed from the fact. The fact

remains that he never had

gained from this transfer. The

money was transferred just as a

matter of organisational

accounting to another sister

company to carry out the same

task--fighting poverty.

Grameen Bank's response as

written by Yunus to the allega-

tions was also not carried by

ambassador, Yunus said the

agreement between Grameen

Bank and Grameen Kalyan was

made so that Grameen's finan-

cial resources and assets could

be managed more profession-

ally and effectively to get the

maximum benefits for

lished as a separate legal entity

to accelerate the pace of social

and economic development of

Grameen's targeted clientele

and also to ensure continued

access to loans and other finan-

cial services they have been

getting from Grameen Bank, he

transfer funds from the Bank to

Kalyan was to ensure maximum

transparency and responsible

system, the money would have

been owned by the Grameen

Bank which would use it on a

revolving basis. Under the

changed situation, he argued,

the money will be used for the

same purpose but GB will now

receive it as a loan from separate

was to ensure its continuous

reuse for the same purpose and

to harness maximum benefit in

terms of servicing more clients,

Muhammad Yunus said, add-

ing: "But since in the earlier

approach the fund was avail-

able within the same manage-

ment structure, in spite of the

policy compulsion to revolve it,

there remained the possibility

that the required financial

discipline to recover the money

and exercise appropriate cau-

tion to effectively monitor the

loan operation, may not be

alternative method though GK

to implement the intention and

the spirit of the revolving fund

concept. The revolving fund

has got an institutional struc-

ture so that it can never be

absorbed by multifarious other

demands of the Bank, he said,

adding further that the GK can

be viewed as a company set up

exclusively to manage the

arrangement does not in any

way violate any of the clauses of

the agreement between Norway

and GOB, rather it strengthens

professionally the financial

operation of GB for eradication

He further said that the GB

board of directors took the

decision within the scope of the

agreement with the donors. "It

in no way threatened to inter-

fere with the successful utilisa-

tion of the grant [and] that is

why we did not think of inform-

housing portion of the loan

given to GB, Dr Yunus said, the

GK management consciously

interest to keep the interest

burden low on the ultimate

borrowers. "Adding interest on

this loan would have made the

fund costly for the GB to transfer

it to the borrowers at the existing

He, however, added: the

rate of eight percent."

On charging interest for the

ing the donors."

of poverty," DrYunus said.

"We believe that the new

This led them to find an

The idea of revolving fund

use of the revolving fund.

Yunus said the agreement to

He argued that in earlier

Grameen Kalyan was estab-

Grameen's customers.

explained.

legal entity.

enforced."

revolving fund.

In his reply to the Norwegian

Interestingly, the news about

FROM PAGE 1

In a statement, the Bank said that the allegations were false. It said that a full explanation with more details would be provided at the "earliest convenient

Our staff correspondent adds: The documentary has alleged that Grameen Bank (GB) had transferred about \$100 million it received from donors to Grameen Kalyan in 1996 and then got back the money as loan in breach of agreement. This led to a spat between the Norwegian government and Grameen Bank.

But Dr Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Bank, has defended himself saying this had been done to ensure maximum transparency and responsible use of the Bank's revolving

The documentary, titled 'Fanget i Mikrogjeld" or "Caught in Micro debt", was aired on Tuesday on the National Norwegian Television, NRK. The whole episode took place about one and a half decades ago. And then it was presumably ironed out, as the documentary showed a compromise had been reached concerning transfer of the funds Norway granted to Grameen Bank. Under the agreed compromise, 170 million Norwegian kroners was transferred back to GB.

Contacted, Grameen Bank said the allegations of fund misuse are false. It will release a detailed statement on the affairs soon. The Bank is already working on the issue, but since it was a matter happening about 14 years ago, it is taking some time to get all the facts together. The documentary claimed

the Norwegian embassy in Dhaka at a meeting with the Bank at its office on December 3, 1997 came to know about the May 7, 1997 agreement between Grameen Bank and Grameen Kalyan, which became effective on December 31, 1996 for transfer of funds of Tk 3.914 billion. In a letter to Yunus on

December 15, 1997, the embassy said: "In line with the agreement, Grameen Bank transferred all funds accumuated up to December 31, 1996 received from donors for revolving funds, to Grameen Kalyan, which at the same date transferred the amount to Grameen Bank as a loan. Tk 1.927 billion of the

amount was related to the revolving fund for housing

Grameen Kalyan is in fact a spin-off created in 1996 by Grameen Bank, which set up an internal fund called Social Advancement Fund (SAF) by imputing interest on all the grant money it received from various donors. SAF has been converted into a separate company to carry out social advance activities such as education, health and technology among Grameen borrowers. It has 30 health clinics across the country. Most of these clinics are attached to Grameen Bank

The letter, signed by Ambassador Hans Fredrik Lehne, said: "The agreement concerning these transactions has not made provisions for any interest rates to be charged for this part of the loan, nor any terms of repayment."

The agreement was signed between the governments of Norway and Bangladesh on November 30, 1994 to support Grameen Bank's Phase IV

Annex 1, clause 4 of the agreement said: "The amount of the Grant used for housing loans will be used as a revolving

The Norwegian embassy was concerned that it had not been informed about the agreement between the two organidecided to avoid charging the sations. It said "the agreement was contrary to the quoted clause of the agreement between the governments."

It also observed that the accounts of Grameen Bank as of December 31, 1996 did not reflect any revolving fund for housing loan in operation

left uncertainty about future

quence considered the agree-

ment between Grameen Bank

and Grameen Kalyan "as a

change which affects two agree-

ments between the two govern-

ments to support Grameen

explain in writing "why

Grameen Bank entered into the

agreement with Grameen

Kalyan, and of the conse-

quences for the owners of

ciaries of the housing loans".

It also requested Yunus to

Bank".

regulated by the agreement.

issue of adding interest can be under the Bank. reviewed if deemed appropriate The embassy said "the by the lending and borrowing ownership of Grameen Kalyan organisation. is of another nature, and Norway has not entered into an

Prof Yunus said the decision to transfer the money, instead of agreement with Bangladesh to adversely affecting the owners, provide funds to Grameen has enhanced their interests "by Kalyan for lending to Grameen ensuring more efficient and prudent fund management and accountability on the part of "The agreement has further

"This process of mutual repayment of the loan to Grameen Kalyan, since it is not obligation and accountability on the part of two organisations "The agreement is also silent has enhanced the immunity of about Grameen Bank's use of the fund from being eroded due to lack of accountability if the loan from Grameen handed by a single organisation The embassy in that conseas was done prior to its transfer

to Grameen Kalyan." The grant money received from different donors reckoned

has increased the liquidity of the loanable funds for Grameen Bank, he added. Dr Yunus also wrote the ambassador that establishment

of GK with endowment fund from GB has broadened the scope for them to address the issue of eradication of poverty and hunger by undertaking

Grameen Bank and the benefidifferent projects and activities. The profits and income In a letter to the head of earned by Kalyan, he said, offer the scope for such initiatives to Norad in 1998, Yunus wrote: "Some misunderstanding has be undertaken for the poor, he crept up between us and said, adding that it was the Norad/Dhaka. Norwegian initial purpose of creating the embassy/ Dhaka has written a Social Advancement Fund.

Govt wants FROM PAGE 1

rally at city's Muktangon, he declared a three-day protest programme saying all the programmes will be peaceful unless the government tried to intervene.

BNP will stage demonstrations at upazila level on December 5 and December 7 with organised rallies and will submit memorandum to all deputy commissioners. The party will stage another demon stration at city's Muktangon on December 9, he said.

Besides, the main opposi tion party will also hold a meeting on December 13 to mark the Martyred Intellectual Day and on December 17 to commemorate National Victory Day.

Delwar said the government is trying to control judiciary as part of its plan to ensure reelection by making a party man chief of the caretaker government but people will not accept

"Do you think that you can rise to power again by making a party man chief of the caretaker government?" he questioned the government. Bitterly criticising the gov-

ernment for signing transit deals with India, the BNP leader said the government did so only to please India. Moudud Ahmed, standing committee member of the party

said people want hartals which become successful if government obstructs. "We have to force the government to resign through continuous movement," said

Moudud. Party leaders Brig Gen (retd) Hannan Shah, Nazrul Islam Khan, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Zainul Abdin Farroque, among others, addressed the rally.

HC revokes

FROM PAGE 1

petition, filed by Taher's wife Lutfa Taher, and his brother Anwar Hossain, the court ordered the government on August 23 to submit the records to it within three weeks.

A division bench of the HC yesterday also asked its office to complete preparatory work for hearing the petition.

The bench comprised of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain passed the order following a prayer from the petitioners counsel Shahdeen Malik for fixing a date for hearing.

The government could not produce records other than a list of persons, who were sentenced to death in martial law trial in 1976 and 1977.

The inspector general (IG) of prisons' office recently informed the HC that 13 civilian and military personnel including Col Abu Taher were tried and sentenced to death on different dates in 1976 and 1977.

Col Taher was executed at 4:30 am on July 21, 1976, at Dhaka central jail, the IG's office said in a report.

The 12 others who were executed include Khaled Montaj Khan (civilian) from Arambagh, Dhaka, AKM Anwar Hossain (civilian) from Fakirapool, Dhaka, Lance Nayek Shafiqur Rahman, Nayek MA Quddus, Chhana alias Masud Khan (civilian) from Uttara Circular Road, Dhaka, Nayek Subedar Fazlul Haque sepoys Mohsin Reza, Shafiqul Islam, Siddique Ahmed Mohiuddin, Abul Hossain and Mofazzal Hossain.

Marine drive

FROM PAGE 1

Minister Syed Abul Hossain told a meeting at his ministry, adding the road is very important to attract tourists from home and abroad.

He requested the roads and highways department to conduct the study with the help of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology and foreign experts.

Tidal surge has damaged two kilometres of already constructed 24-kilometre road, forcing the ministry not to go ahead with the second phase.

Bangladesh Army completed the first phase construction from Kolatoli to Inani beach in 2008 at a cost of Tk 93.78 crore.

The government allocated Tk 169 crore to construct 28 kilometres more from Inani to

Shilkhali in the second phase.

Construction of the road started in 1994. In 2000 the then government took a separate project in this regard. After a lengthy bureaucratic tangle, the project finally got approval in 2007 and the army was given the responsibility to implement the project.

But the damage to the road and the subsequent repair expenditure put the ministry in a dilemma over whether to go-ahead with the next phases

or not. The government has already spent Tk 3.90 crore for maintenance of the damaged portion.

Pricey foods

FROM PAGE 16

a better chance of coping with droughts, floods and other climate shocks.

"Many have made the case that we have to address climate change to fight poverty. We are saying you must address poverty as a key part of climate change adaptation, and you must do it now," said Gerald Nelson, who coauthored the report.

"Once the most serious effects of climate change kick in, it will already be too late to respond effectively," he said. Beyond 2050, predicting

the temperature rise is more difficult but even so the challenge to food security is "likely to increase," the report said. "All scenarios now show

average temperature increases by 2050 to be on the order of one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit). After that, they diverge dramatically, ranging from 2C to 4C (3.6-7.2F) by 2100. Yields of many more crops will be severely threatened."

The report adds to a series of warnings by researchers and watchdogs about the impact of climate change on food supplies as the world's population continues to grow

The current global population of around 6.9 billion will rise to between 7.959 billion and 10.461 billion by 2050, with a mid-estimate of 9.15 billion, according to UN calculations.

The increase will be determined mainly by economic factors. Rising prosperity in poorer countries prompts many families to have few children.

The talks in Cancun are taking place under the flag of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), gathering 193 countries plus the

institution of the European

Union (EU). Negotiators, meeting until December 10, are seeking to find agreement on how to curb heat-trapping carbon emissions and devise ways of channelling hundreds of billions of dollars in aid to climate-vulnerable countries.

On Monday, as the talks opened, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schuetter declared in Geneva that as many as 600 million more people could be put at risk of hunger by 2020 because of climate change.

Huajun, deputy dean of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, warned production of rice, wheat and corn could fall by five to 10 percent by 2030, and by 37 percent in the second half of the century. Agriculture has been the

worst hit by climate change and some negative effects have become more obvious due to rising temperatures and water shortages over the past 10 years," Tang told the official China Daily.

IFPRI, a Washington foundations, and international and regional organisa-

PDB rolls out

FROM PAGE 16

generation.

Meanwhile, the PDB is

within this month. India has done its part and we have also finished reviewing the draft," said the official.

randum of understanding in Delhi.

The two countries aim at investment of around \$ 1.5 being acquired now.

outlines equal equity between the two countries in setting up the Khulna coalbased power plant, equal representation of both countries in the board of directors and the modalities of financing the project, among other issues. The chairman and the managing directors' position ously targeted signing within between the two nations to maintain equality.

India will play the lead role in arranging the finances.

of the India-Bangladesh joint venture coal-based power project. It had previ- will be periodically rotated

(NTPC). But as both the parties spent a few extra weeks over the draft, it has not yet been signed. "We are hoping to sign the joint venture agreement

On November 5, Tang

based think-tank on food problems, is financed by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), gathering 64 governments, private

interested companies to submit their bid qualification documents. The bidders will submit documents next month, and the PDB will evaluate which companies are suitable for the two projects, and ask for their project proposals. Then the projects will be awarded to the bidders offering the best and lowest price for power

"If all goes well, PDB will give the successful bidders three years time from contract signing to complete the projects," said a top official of PDB.

running behind the schedule late September a joint venture agreement with Indian Thermal Power Company

The joint venture deal will be the result of the memo(MoU) signed by the PDB and the NTPC on August 31

jointly floating a tender and completing the tender process within a year to build the 1,320 MW power plant at an billion on an 1,800-acre site close to Chalna. The site is The draft agreement

Coal power is considered one of the cheapest power in the world, although it is also the worst polluter in power generation. This is why Bangladesh intends to build the plant using super-critical technology to keep the level of pollution as low as the current global technology

Nurul Islam

College Hospital disclosed that unidentified mobile phone callers were asking him to come to the path of Allah and not to join the polls race. The investigators are yet to detect the phone callers who used to issue threats.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) officials, who are investigating the case, said they collected one month's call list of Nurul Islam's cell phone and were

trying to detect the offenders. Talking to The Daily Star Nurul's daughter Moutushi expressed her dissatisfaction over the investigation process. "We do not think that the investigation is being carried out fairly."

She claimed the clues of broken door lock and bent window grill were not taken seriously during the investiga-

She also lamented that though the case has been listed as a sensational one, very little progress has been made so far. Ministry of Home Affairs,

Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC), Fire Service and Civil Defence fire. Directorate, CID, Detective Branch (DB) of police and Chemistry Department of Dhaka University filed several probe reports after carrying out investigation separately at different phases.

Gross inconsistencies are evident in the investigation reports regarding the cause of the fire incident. mentary election.

Fire service in its report prepared on December 7, 2009, mentioned that an electric short circuit caused the fire by exploding compressor of a fridge in the apartment.

Another report on December 22 in the same year cancelled the possibility of short circuit as the cause of the fire, stating that the circuit breakers of the apartment were intact. In its initial report on

December 21, 2008, DPDC stated that there was no clue of short circuit causing the fire and also claimed supply of electricity to the refrigerator was cut off. The report also added that

the main circuit breaker and the circuit breaker used for the supply line of refrigerator were turned off, which indicates that there was no power sup-However, in another report

on January 18, 2010, DPDC pointed out that they did not notice the burnt power strip, which was used for the refrigerator damaged in the fire. They suspected that the power strip might have caused the

scrapping without pre-cleaning Tamohor was burnt alive on the spot while Nurul succumbed to his injury at Combined Military Hospital nated by them. the following day after the incident. Awami League led grand

government to ensure safety alliance nominated Nurul to and security of the workers at contest from Noakhali-1 different shipyards in constituency in 2008 parlia-Chittagong, mostly in Bhatiari, Sitakunda.

PM returns

FROM PAGE 16 League leaders and high civil and military officials were present at the VVIP gate of

Shahjalal International Airport

to greet the prime minister. Earlier on Wednesday, Sheikh Hasina told to a group of Bangladeshi journalists at her hotel suite at Tokyo that Bangladeshi soil would never be used for any terrorist or violent activities.

She said after a long struggle,

democracy has been restored in will be held in between March the country and the people have and April next year. reposed a great responsibility in He however declined to the present government to mention any possible schedule for long due Dhaka City ensure their wellbeing. Corporation (DCC) poll. " "We have been able to restore peace in society. None will be allowed to use the soil of

or violent activities," the prime minister said. Hasina described her trination visit very successful and said all the friendly countries of Bangladesh have assured her of continuing their support and assistance to expedite national

Bangladesh to launch any terror

development. Hasina mentioned the Japan government's commitment to provide Bangladesh additional US\$ 100 million for construction of the Padma Bridge.

She said as part of the massive infrastructure development programmes, the government is thinking about setting up a third seaport in Kuakata.

Boy dies FROM PAGE 16 he was on his way to their home

at Kutub Khali. Nurul Islam claimed that

police tortured Sagor as his family had failed to give Tk 50,000 to Shahin, sub-inspector (SI) of Jatrabari Police Station. "We offered Tk 3,000, which

case after torturing him severely", Nurul Islam alleged. SI Shahin, however, denied the allegation saying, he did not have any information regarding the arrest as Ismail Hossain,

he refused to accept and impli-

another SI had made the arrest. However, despite repeated attempts SI Ismail could not be reached on his cell phone.

According to sources, Sagor was held for remand for two days and produced before the court on November 29 after which he was sent to jail. The Dhaka Central Jail authorities admitted him to DMCH after he fell sick in the morning on November 30. He died at the hospital that night. "We came to know about the

death two days later as neither the police nor the jail authorities had bothered to inform us, Nurul Islam said. DMCH morgue sources

said injury marks were found on different parts of his body and his lungs were badly infected.

Russia to host

ballot of football's world governing body Fifa's 22 executive members in Zurich.

It is the first time that either Russia or Qatar has been chosen as host nation for the World Cup.

Sixteen toxic

FROM PAGE 1

Association (BELA) vesterday served a legal notice to all the officials who gave the NOCs asking them to take steps so the toxic ships leave the country's territory immediately.

The importing companies are: MAK Corporation, SK Ship Breakers, Asadi Steel, Siko Steel, Jamuna Steel, BBC Steel and Peninsular Steel, sources said.

The notice has been served on the director general of shipping; Commodore Reaz Uddin Ahmed, chairman, Chittagong sea port; Golam Kibria, Collector of Customs (Import); Jafar Alam, director, Department of Environment of Chittagong division; Md Mosharaf Ashraf, Chief Chemist, Department of Shipping; and Hefajtur Rahman, president Bangladesh Ship Breaking Association.

BELA said the officials concerned have clearly violated previous High Court orders.

Recently, all these officials

were charged with contempt of court for allowing two toxic ships -- MV BARDI and MT BO - in the country. Later, they canceled the NOCs following an HC order. The court released them of

cials offered unconditional The HC in its March 17 order last year directed the govern-

the charge, as all but two offi-

ment not to allow any scrap ships without cleaning them outside the country's territory. On May 11 last year, the HC gave another order saying that no ship should be imported for

certificates from the government agencies of the exporting country or an agency nomi-The court also ordered the

can't say when the DCC poll drawal of candidacy is will be held," he added. December 26. An EC official said the Thirty-three municipalities commission will move for under the Khulna division and holding the DCC poll when-21 under the Barisal division ever the government gives the will go to polls on January 13 green light. with the last date for filing the In response to a query, the application on December 15. poll chief said EC would move Election officials will scrutifor deployment of army, navy

The last municipal polls were held in May 2004 and the tenure of those elected bodies expired in mid-2009.

and air force personnel to

ensure poll security, if neces-

4,000 union parishads expired in 2008 after elections to the lowest tier of local government were held in between January and March in 2003.

The last poll to DCC was held in April 2002 and its tenure expired in May 2007.

The EC could not hold the polls in time due to various reasons -- the state of emergency, holding parliamentary elections, and the incumbent government's indifference to local government elections.

"We are sorry for not being able to hold the polls [to municipalities] on time. But cated my brother in a mugging we are not liable for it alone,' CEC Huda said. The poll chief, who was

speaking at the press briefing

at the EC Secretariat premises, urged aspirants to municipal elections to remove in next three days all posters and banners they already pasted and hanged in their electoral areas for publicity. He said EC could not take

publications before the announcement of the sched-According to the electoral laws, such campaigns through posters and banners are illegal and EC has legal authority to

any actions against such

the electoral code of conduct. "If we find any such posters and banners after December 5, we will take serious action,

take actions for violation of

the CEC warned. Flanked by two other election commissioners --Muhammed Sohul Hussein and Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain, CEC Huda at the briefing also highlighted some legal aspects for aspirants to the municipal posi-

No aspirant is allowed to bring out procession or any showdown during collection of applications and filing those with the returning offi-

Every aspirant has to open a bank account to meet their all electoral expenses and they have to submit details of bank accounts during filing of their

candidacy. For the first time in the municipal polls, an aspirant has to submit in affidavit

Transit facility

FROM PAGE 16

commerce, and communication ministries, the finance division and Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of

Commerce and Industry. Former director of UN ESCAP and transport expert M Rahmatullah, Vice Chairman of Policy Research Institute Sadiq Ahmed, Prof Ayubur Rahman of Economics Department at Dhaka University, and a researcher from BIDS are likely to be appointed as experts, commerce ministry officials said.

Rahmatullah conducted

several studies on regional cooperation and connectivity in the region while working for the ESCAP. Sadiq Ahmed, a former high-up of the World Bank, also headed up several studies on the issues. A team led by Dr

Rahmatullah had prepared two draft reports on transit and transhipment -- one for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the other for the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). Policy Research Institute

has been conducting a study on the issues. It is at the final stage. On November 9, it was

decided that a committee headed by a representative of the commerce ministry would be formed to lay the necessary rules and fix transit and transhipment fees. The decision came at a meeting with Finance Minister AMA Muhith in the chair.

Municipality polls seven-point information it is a non-partisan election. including educational qualifi-

> cation and police records. "Application for an individual might be rejected on

grounds of any loopholes," CEC Huda said. DATES FOR POLLS

According to the schedule, polls to 27 municipalities under the Rangpur division and 49 under the Rajshahi division will be held on January 12. The last date for filing applications is December 13 and election officials will scrutinise the

applications on December 14

and 15. The last date for with-

nise the applications on December 18 and 19 and the last date for withdrawal of candidacy from the electoral race is December 27.

Elections to 70 municipalities under the Dhaka division will be held on January 17. The Similarly, the tenure of over last date for filing applications is December 18. Scrutiny of the applications will be held on December 20 and 21 and the last date for withdrawal of candidacy is January 1.

Fifty-three municipalities

under the Chittagong division

and 16 under the Sylhet division will go to polls on January 18. The last date for filing applications seeking candidacy in the polls is December 19, while scrutiny of those will be held on December 22 and 23. The last date for withdrawal of candidacy is January Of the remaining 41 municipalities, the CEC said tenure

been expired and elections cannot be held to others due to various reasons including pending cases. Meanwhile, the EC yesterday appointed 260 government officials as returning

officers (RO) and same num-

of 17 municipalities has not

ber of assistant ROs to conduct the polls. Additional deputy commissioners (general) were appointed as ROs for the municipalities at district headquarters and upazila executive officers for the municipalities at upazila

headquarters. District and upazila election officers were appointed as assistant ROs. The deputy commissioners were appointed as the appellate authorities who will dispose of appeals to be filed either against rejection of applications for candidacy or accep-

tance of any application.

WikiLeaks

FROM PAGE 1

While the elusive whistleblower laid low, his British lawyer insisted police knew his whereabouts and it emerged that an initial warrant was defective. After the Supreme Court in

Stockholm refused to hear an appeal by Assange against the initial warrant over allegations of rape and molestation, Swedish police said they would issue a new one as a result of a procedural error.

"It's a procedural fault," Tommy Kangasvieri of the Swedish National Criminal Police told AFP. "The prosecutor Marianne Ny has to write a new

While Assange has not been seen in public since WikiLeaks began leaking around 250,000 cables on Sunday, his Londonbased lawyer Mark Stephens

"Scotland Yard know where he is, the security services from a number of countries know where he is," Stephens told AFP.

denied he was on the run.

"The (British) police are being slightly foxy in their answers, but they know exactly how to get in touch with him, as do the Swedish prosecutors." Britain's Times newspaper

said that Assange was at a loca-

should be treated like a terrorist

tion in southeast England although there was no confirmation from Stephens. After former US vicepresidential candidate Sarah Palin said the WikiLeaks team

organisation, a spokesman for the website said Assange feared "When you have people calling, for example, for his assassination, it is best to keep a low profile," Kristinn Hrafnsson said in London, after right-wing

for him to be assassinated. Assange's mother also expressed fear for her son's safety.

US websites and pundits called

"I'm concerned it's gotten

too big and the forces that he's challenging are too big," Christine Assange told the Courier Mail, her local newspaper in Queensland, Australia.

Assange's Stockholm-based

lawyer Bjoern Hurtig told AFP yesterday he would fight his client's extradition to Sweden in the event of his arrest.