

**Best Rates for Foreign Currency Deposits.**

COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC  
www.combank.net

# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

**SAMSUNG**

New Galaxy S at Tk. 2,606\*

0% interest for 12 months

For More Information: 885366-8, 01712-665463

TRANSCOM DIGITAL

REGD. NO. DA 781 • VOL. XX No. 318 • DHAKA WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2010 • AGRAHAYAN 24, 1417 BS • MUHARRAM 1, 1432 HJRI • 28 PAGES PRICE: Tk 10.00

www.thedailystar.net

COMMITTED TO  
People's Right to Know

Today's Issue 28 Pages

## Assange arrested in UK

WikiLeaks founder refused bail, may have to fight extradition battle; US terms the arrest good news, but the website 'won't change operation'



PHOTO: REUTERS

WikiLeaks chief Julian Assange was arrested in London yesterday after surrendering to a Swedish arrest warrant, the latest blow to an organisation that faces legal, financial and technological challenges after releasing hundreds of secret US diplomatic cables.

Assange, 39, was detained after attending a London police station by appointment at 0930 GMT. Later he was remanded in custody until December 14 by a London court after he said he would fight extradition to Sweden where he faces rape allegations.

Appearing before a judge at Westminster Magistrates Court following his arrest, Assange was refused bail despite an offer by personalities including film director Ken Loach and socialite Jemima Khan to put up bail for him.

"Officers from the Metropolitan Police Service's Extradition Unit have this morning [yesterday] arrested Julian

Assange on behalf of the Swedish authorities on suspicion of rape," the statement said.

"He is accused by the Swedish authorities of one count of unlawful coercion, two counts of sexual molestation and one count of rape, all alleged to have been committed in August 2010."

Assange denies the allegations, which his British attorney Mark Stephens says stem from a "dispute over consensual but unprotected sex." Assange and Stephens have suggested that the prosecution is being manipulated for political reasons.

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates, who was visiting Afghanistan yesterday, said when told about the arrest that it "sounds like good news."

The net has tightened around the Australian former computer hacker since his whistleblower website began releasing thousands of secret US diplomatic cables last week, infuriating Washington and other countries.

Since beginning to release the cables, WikiLeaks has seen its bank accounts cancelled, its web sites attacked and the US government launch a criminal investigation, saying the group has jeopardised national security and diplomatic efforts around the world.

It has also seen supporters come to its aid by setting up over 500 mirror sites around the world.

In a statement on Twitter, WikiLeaks said: "Today's actions against our editor-in-chief Julian Assange won't affect our operations: we will release more cables tonight as normal."

A spokesman for the whistleblower website called Assange's arrest an attack on media freedom and said it won't prevent the organisation from releasing more secret documents.

"This will not change our operation," said Kristinn Hrafnsson told The Associated Press.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

## Families live on nerves

The fear of the possible worst is eating up Shaila Farid, wife of Farid Ahmed, captain of hijacked ship MV Jahan Moni.

Unconditional belief in prayers and fasting is the only thing keeping her alive. Shaila has been fasting almost unceasingly since she heard about the hijack by the Somali pirates in the Arabian Sea.

The family got to know about the hijack only Monday morning through newspapers. The government has not yet contacted the family.

When The Daily Star visited Shaila and Farid's house in Mohammadpur yesterday, their daughter Faria politely said, "Mother is not in a position to talk you now."

## Hijacked Bangladeshi ship Contact not made yet

The government has no update on the hijacked Bangladeshi ship MV Jahan Moni except for its location. Officials could not make any contact with the crew members or the pirates till yesterday.

"We do not have any update on them," said Commodore Bazlur Rahman, the director general of shipping directorate, when asked.

The operating company of the ship, Brave Royal Ship Management is spotting the vessel via satellite. Last time the ship was tracked at 850 nautical miles off Somali coast.

Brave Royal General Manager Meherul Karim said the ship was heading west at 10.8 nautical miles an hour.

He said they were repeatedly trying to contact the crew aboard over satellite phones.

The phones rang but nobody responded.

Brave Royal Technical Manager Rahmat Ullah said they had sought help from Indian Coast Guard, Mumbai Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, Dubai based UK MTO and Singapore based International Maritime



Matiul Mawla (Chief Engr) Rukhsana Gulzar (Wife of Matiul) Farid Ahmed (Captain)

Bureau immediately after the Sunday's pirate attack.

Indian coast guard had assured them of sending gunboat but later stepped back fearing any assault on the hostages since any armed intervention could trigger bloodshed, he said.

Meherul said they have nothing to do but wait until the ship reaches any shore or the pirates contact them.

The foreign ministry sources said the government was keeping touch with different organisations, including those from India, Dubai, Singapore and in Somalia, who work on preventing sea crimes.

The government had contacted Somalia,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Prof Yunus Manmohan said nothing

The Indian high commission in Dhaka yesterday said Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had not made any comments about Prof Muhammad Yunus or Grameen Bank of late.

In a statement on a local news report involving Manmohan and Yunus, the high commission's spokesperson said, "The reports that Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh criticised Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus are false and erroneous. No such comments have been

## Edn not served rightly by state

PM tells JS discussion on national policy

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday the state did not perform properly its constitutional duties to ensure free and compulsory education for the people.

Participating in the discussion on the national education policy 2010 in parliament, the premier read out the constitutional provision on free and compulsory education, and made the comment.

Article 17 of the constitution says, "The state shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law; relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens

## Stalker's acid threat ruins her HSC exams

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A college girl in Dinajpur could not sit for her HSC test examination yesterday, as a stalker threatened to throw acid on her face on way to the college.

She is a candidate of the upcoming HSC examinations from Pachbari Degree College.

Ujjal Chandra Sarker, 22, son of Gokul Chandra Sarker of Umarpoil village under Dinajpur Sadar upazila, has long been stalking the girl, her family members told The Daily Star requesting not to disclose her name for social reasons.

When she was going to the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Chemical Worry Fire in Old Dhaka again

2 badly burnt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In yet another chemical fire in Old Dhaka, two youths were badly burned yesterday while refilling cigarette lighters at a building storing liquid petroleum gas and lighter refill canisters on Nazimuddin Road.

The injured--Mohammad Sujan Ali, 30, an occupant of the four-storey building, and his relative Ripon, 28--were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where they are undergoing treatment at the burn unit.

Sujan and Ripon had burns over 42 and 28 percent of their bodies, hospital sources said.

Sujan told The Daily Star that it was around noon and they were refilling lighters. As one of them lit a cigarette, a huge ball of fire engulfed the room.

Locals doused the flames before they could spread to other rooms.

Police said the two used to refill butane lighters on the ground floor and sell those at Chawkbazar.

They would do the refilling with the doors locked, as they did not want the neighbours to know what they were doing.

Earlier on October 6, at least 10 workers were burnt to death at a chemical factory in the capital's Dakkhin (South) Jatrabari. Four others, including three women, were severely injured.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Police gather lighter refill canisters from a Nazimuddin Road house yesterday. Two youths were badly burned in a chemical blast while refilling cigarette lighters at the house.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Mega projects in huge mess

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most projects the Awami League government has taken up to improve the traffic situation in Dhaka failed to meet deadlines due to lack of coordination between different ministries and agencies.

Although construction of the Jatrabari-Gulistan and cantonment flyovers has begun recently, the projects of the elevated expressway, metro rail, a few underpasses and overpasses are facing delays.

Against this backdrop, an inter-ministry meeting was held at the communications ministry yesterday where a committee was formed to coordinate quick implementation of the projects.

A Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) official will lead the committee, which will also have representatives from the communications, public works and planning ministries, Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and the army.

Construction of first metro rail from Uttara Third Phase to Sayedabad, chalked out in the Strategic Transport Plan (STP), is still in the primary stage and the government requires at least a year to complete all the procedures.

In the first phase of the construction, the metro rail will be built between Pallabi and Hotel Sonargaon intersection between 2013 and 2015.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

**now**

It's just a click away !

Yes, after years of longing, the dream comes true for our passengers !

From 1st November, 2010 Biman Bangladesh Airlines has introduced Internet Booking Engine to its ticketing systems thus making seat reservation easier than ever before !

To book your seat on Biman flights, you need not to go to any agent nor do you have to lie in wait. All you need is a web-based computer and a mouse !

By visiting our website [www.biman-airlines.com](http://www.biman-airlines.com) you can now book and confirm the flights, retrieve information about flight schedule, hotel booking, holiday packages and a lot more--plus 5% commission.

Be Smart. Be Digital.

**Biman**  
BANGLADESH AIRLINES  
we fly your dreams

Musharraf/10