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Unite again to consolidate democracy

President urges all in JS address

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid yesterday said the nation was required once again to forge unwavering unity to uphold the spirit of the Liberation War and rule of law, to consolidate democracy, and to develop a "Golden Bengal" as dreamt by the father of the nation.

We can repay our debt to the blood of martyrs only if we enhance the pace of democratisation and socioeconomic development ignoring our differences of party, creed and religion, Hamid said in his address to the inaugural sitting of the parliament's New Year session.

The president in his written address, which was earlier approved by the cabinet, lauded the government's role for carrying out development activities.

Upholding the constitutional process, the president said, the present government was running the country "to overcome the challenges of maintaining the progress of democracy."

"That continuation of democratic practices can resolve



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After placing wreaths at BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's grave, party supporters are being asked by police to leave the Chandrima Udyan yesterday morning. Inset, law enforcers guard the road to the Udyan.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



4 suspected ISIS men arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives arrested four suspected members of militant outfit ISIS, including its coordinator in Bangladesh, from the city's Jatrabari on Sunday night.

The arrestees were identified as Sakhawatul Kabir, a representative and coordinator of ISIS in Bangladesh, Nazrul Islam, a financier, Anwar Hossain alias Baten, a convict of an explosive case, and Rabiul Islam.

Detectives claimed that they recovered a huge quantity of leaflets, videos on militant training, laptops, four mobile phone sets, one passport, and a visa application form of Pakistan embassy from their possession.

Kabir went to Pakistan several times, received militant training and worked for al-

Qaeda under the leadership of Javed Akhter Ejaz, who along with three other Bangladeshis -- Ejaz's nephew Ovi, Baten's brother-in-law Sayem and Kabir's brother-in-law Shamim Ahmed -- were killed in a police shootout in Karachi on January 9, DB men said.

Detectives in cooperation with the Police Headquarters were conducting drives in and around the city to arrest aides of Ejaz, also known as Kargil or Sajjad in the Pakistani police records, after learning about his death.

Ejaz went to Pakistan during anti-militancy drives in Bangladesh in 2009. According to Karachi police, he joined al-Qaeda as an active JMB leader and eventually ended up becoming the Karachi commander of al-Qaeda in South Asia, a new

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Govt, 20-party urged to hold nat'l dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of political leaders and eminent personalities have called upon the government to take initiatives to sit for a dialogue with the BNP-led 20-party alliance to end the current political impasse.

A "national dialogue" should be held to resolve the political crisis and the government itself should take steps to this end, speakers said at a human chain yesterday.

The programme was organised by Gono Forum, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Rob), and Nagorik Oikya in front of the National Press Club.

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1pc owns half of world's wealth

BBC ONLINE

The wealthiest 1% will soon own more than the rest of the world's population, according to a study by anti-poverty charity Oxfam.

The charity's research shows that the share of the world's wealth owned by the richest 1% increased from 44% in 2009 to 48% last year.

On current trends, Oxfam says it expects the wealthiest 1% to own more than 50% of the world's wealth by 2016.

The research coincides with the start of the World Economic Forum in Davos. The annual gathering attracts top political and business leaders from around the world.

Oxfam's executive director Winnie Byanyima, who will co-chair the Davos event, said she would use the charity's high-profile role at the forum to demand urgent action to narrow the gap between rich and poor.

In a statement ahead of the gathering, Byanyima said the scale of global inequality was "simply staggering".

"It is time our leaders took on the powerful vested interests that stand in the way of a fairer and more prosperous world."

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Anarchists to be resisted

Says Rab chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Rapid Action Battalion chief Benazir Ahmed yesterday said a certain quarter has waged an "undeclared war" against people which should be resisted by forging unity between them and the law enforcement agencies.

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PRAYER TIMING January 20

	Asan	Jamaat
Fazr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-43	5-47
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Suspected militants arrested in the capital's Jatrabari are paraded at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Media Centre yesterday. Inset, the items found with them are also shown to the media.

PHOTO: STAR



SEDITION CASE EIV boss gives statement to court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

ETV Chairman Abdus Salam yesterday gave his statement before a Dhaka court in a sedition case filed against him.

Sources said he told the court that he was not involved in any seditious activity. Further details of the statement could not be known immediately.

On January 8, a sub-inspector filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station against Salam and Tarique Rahman, BNP senior vice-chairman, in connection with a "false, fabricated and instigating" speech of the BNP leader aired on Ekushey Television on January 5.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Forkan's war trial begins

Witness accuses him of rape in Patuakhali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The trial of war crimes accused Forkan Mallik opened yesterday with the first prosecution witness accusing him of taking part in a gang-rape of a woman in Patuakhali for three days during the Liberation War.

Witness Habibur Rahman Badshah of Kakrabunia village in Mirzaganj upazila of Patuakhali also told the International Crimes Tribunal-2 that Forkan had shot the woman's father dead when he tried to save his daughter from being taken to a Pakistani army camp.

Earlier on the day, prosecutor Mukleshur Rahman Badal made the opening statement with a brief account of the accused, his alleged role in 1971 and the charges framed against him.

An alleged Razakar commander from Mirzaganj, Forkan faces five charges including murders committed in the southern district during the war. The 63-year-old accused, however, pleaded not guilty.

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The Daily Star
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ONLINE POLL
Do you think it was justified for the chiefs of police, Rab and BGB to comment on political issues?

Yes (16%)
No (84%)

TOTAL VOTES: 528

TODAY'S POLL
Do you think BNP's decision to continue the nonstop countrywide blockade is justified?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

EU ministers meet to unite against terror

Urges broad alliance with Muslim nations to tackle 'foreign fighters'

AFP, Brussels

EU foreign ministers met yesterday on building an alliance -- including with Muslim countries -- against a growing Islamist militant threat, with Europe on high alert after deadly Paris attacks and anti-terrorism raids in Belgium.

The immediate focus for the 28-nation European Union is how to prevent citizens known as "foreign fighters" returning home from the battlefields of Syria and Iraq even

more radicalised and well trained.

"We will start with a discussion on how to counter terrorism not only in Europe but in other parts of the world," EU foreign affairs head Federica Mogherini said as she arrived for the meeting.

"We need to share information more, we need to cooperate more," Mogherini said, welcoming the presence of Arab League secretary general Nabil al-Arabi at the talks.

"We will discuss with the secretary

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Two planets hiding in our solar system?

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

At least two planets that could be bigger than Earth might have been hiding at the edge of our solar system, scientists have claimed.

The undiscovered planets are thought to be even further from the Sun than Neptune and the dwarf planet Pluto.

Evidence of the two planets comes from watching a belt of space rocks known as "extreme

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