

PM's gifts

FROM PAGE 1
She is to gift a Rajshahi silk sari to the Indian PM's mother.

Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj would get a Rajshahi sari, a tea set, 2kg rosgolla and kalojam, 1kg sandesh and 2kg yogurt from the Bangladesh PM as gift.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee would receive a Benarsi sari, 2kg rosgolla and kalojam, 1kg sandesh and 2kg yogurt from Hasina.

A silver boat each for Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, State Minister for External Affairs Vijay Kumar Singh and State Minister for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Babul Supriyo is on the gift list.

The PM is now on a four-day official visit to India.

From Khulna

FROM PAGE 2
Around nine years ago on April 14, 2008, the first passenger train service between Dhaka and Kolkata -- Maitree Express -- was launched. There had been no train service between the two nations since 1965.

On March 1 this year, the number of Maitree Express' trip increased to four days a week, catering to the growing demand of passengers from both sides.

[Our correspondents in Khulna and Benapole contributed to the report.]

'Cyborg'

FROM PAGE 16
parties for those willing to get implanted.

The process is simple. Someone has to inject the implants -- using pre-loaded syringes -- into the fleshy area of the hand, just next to the thumb. The process lasts a few seconds, and more often than not there are no screams and barely a drop of blood.

"The biggest benefit I think is convenience," said Patrick Mesterton, co-founder and CEO of Epicenter. As a demonstration, he unlocks a door by merely waving near it. "It basically replaces a lot of things you have, other communication devices, whether it be credit cards or keys."

The technology in itself is not new. Such chips are used as virtual collar plates for pets. Companies use them to track deliveries. It's just never been used to tag employees on a broad scale before. Epicenter and a handful of other companies are the first to make chip implants broadly available.

And as with most new technologies, it raises security and privacy issues. While biologically safe, the data generated by the chips can show how often an employee comes to work or what they buy. Unlike company swipe cards or smartphones, which can generate the same data, a person cannot easily separate themselves from the chip.

"Of course, putting things into your body is quite a big step to do and it was even for me at first," said Mr Mesterton, remembering how he initially had had doubts.

"But then on the other hand, I mean, people have been implanting things into their body, like pacemakers and stuff to control your heart," he said. "That's a way, way more serious thing than having a small chip that can actually communicate with devices."

Epicenter, which is home to more than 100 companies and some 2,000 workers, began implanting workers in January 2015. Now, about 150 workers have them. A company based in Belgium also offers its employees such implants, and there are isolated cases around the world where tech enthusiasts have tried this out in recent years.

Ben Libberton, a microbiologist at Stockholm's Karolinska Institute, says hackers could conceivably gain huge swaths of information from embedded microchips. The ethical dilemmas will become bigger the more sophisticated the microchips become.

"The data that you could possibly get from a chip that is embedded in your body is a lot different from the data that you can get from a smartphone," he says. "Conceptually you could get data about your health, you could get data about your whereabouts, how often you're working, how long you're working, if you're taking toilet breaks and things like that."

CIA knew in summer of Russian effort to back Trump: report

AFP, Washington

The CIA had evidence that Russia was interfering in the 2016 US election to boost Donald Trump earlier than previously thought, the New York Times reported Thursday.

Russia's interference was not made public until months after Trump's November 8 election victory, with US intelligence chiefs openly accusing Russian President Vladimir Putin of masterminding a hacking and disinformation campaign to skew the election results.

The Bangladesh Police would dis-

9 killed as US fires missiles

FROM PAGE 1

"The United States took a very measured step last night.... We are prepared to do more, but we hope it will not be necessary," Haley said.

The strike -- the first direct US action against Assad's government and Trump's biggest military decision since taking office -- marked a dramatic escalation in American involvement in Syria's six-year civil war.

It followed days of outrage at images of dead children and victims suffering convulsions from the suspected sarin gas attack in the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhun.

US officials said 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles were fired from Navy ships in the Mediterranean at the Shayrat airfield at 3:40am (0040 GMT), dealing heavy damage to the base from where Washington believes Tuesday's deadly attack was launched.

"The United States attacked the territory of sovereign Syria," Russian Deputy Ambassador Vladimir Safronkov told the Security Council.

"We describe that attack as a flagrant violation of international law and an act of aggression," he added.

The US didn't seek Security Council authorisation for the military action.

While threatening further strikes, the US envoy also said it was time to press on with diplomatic efforts to achieve a political solution to end the war.

sion, the Syrian army confirmed the strike and said it had caused extensive damage.

The Russian military said the strike had an "extremely low" military impact, with fewer than half of the 59 missiles reaching the base.

The strike destroyed six planes under repair and several buildings, including a storage depot and radio station, it said.

Syria's opposition and rebel fighters, who have for years urged more direct US military action in support of their uprising, hailed the strike and called for more.

The National Coalition, the main opposition grouping, called on Washington to take further steps to "neutralise" the regime's air power.

"We hope for more strikes... and that these are just the beginning," spokesman Ahmad Ramadan told AFP.

Syria's rebels have suffered a series of setbacks in recent years as Assad's forces have reclaimed much of the territory once under opposition control.

The White House was quick to paint the decision as limited to deterring the use of chemical weapons, and not part of a broader military campaign.

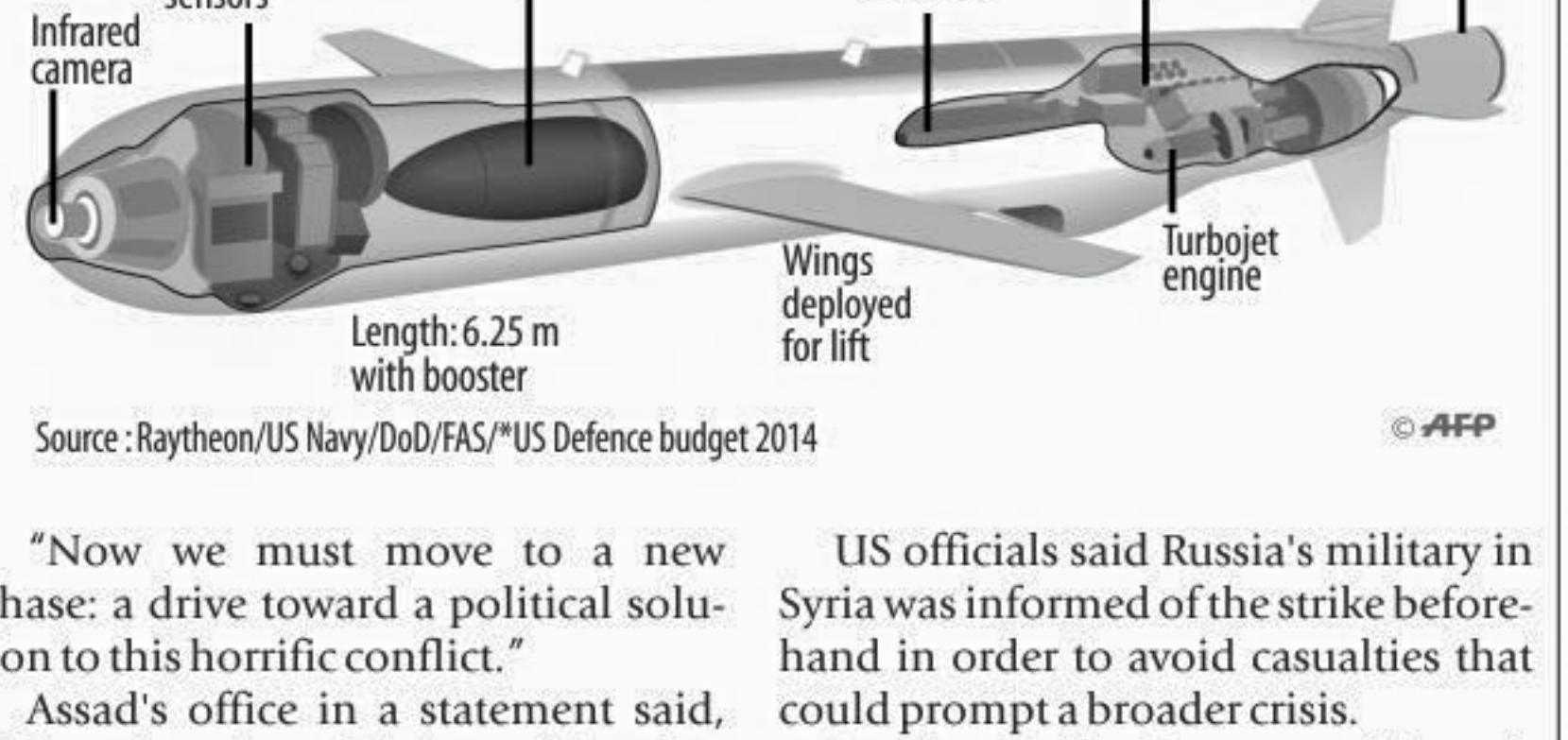
"The intent was to deter the regime from doing this again, and it is certainly our hope that this has had that effect," Pentagon spokesman Navy Captain Jeff Davis told reporters.

TOMAHAWK MISSILE

US military launched 59 missiles from two destroyers in the eastern Mediterranean, targeting the Shayrat Airfield in Syria on April 7

Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs)

- Designed for long-distance, precision strikes of land targets
- Can be redirected to new target while in flight



Source: Raytheon/US Navy/DOD/FAS/*US Defence budget 2014

"Now we must move to a new phase: a drive toward a political solution to this horrific conflict."

Assad's office in a statement said, "What America did is nothing but foolish and irresponsible behaviour, which only reveals its shortsightedness and political and military blindness to reality."

Syria's regime has denied using chemical weapons in Khan Sheikhun, where at least 86 people, including 30 children, were reported killed and more than 500 wounded.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif of Iran, another staunch Assad ally, said on Twitter that the US strike was based on "bogus CW (chemical weapons) allegations" and would aid jihadists in Syria like the Islamic State group.

Britain, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey all supported Washington, with Ankara also calling for a no-fly zone in Syria.

Trump announced the strike in a brief televised address delivered hours after the UN Security Council failed to agree on a probe into the suspected chemical attack.

"Tonight I call on all civilised nations to join us in seeking to end this slaughter and bloodshed in Syria and also to end terrorism of all kinds and all types," Trump said.

The missiles were fired from the USS Porter and the USS Ross, which belong to the US Navy's Sixth Fleet, in the eastern Mediterranean.

The strike targeted radars, aircraft, air defence systems and other logistical components at the base south of Homs in central Syria.

US officials said measures had been put in place to avoid hitting sarin gas they said was stored at the airfield.

In a statement read on state televi-

US officials said Russia's military in Syria was informed of the strike beforehand in order to avoid casualties that could prompt a broader crisis.

Russia stood by Damascus this week despite the global uproar, insisting that the chemical weapons that caused the deaths in Khan Sheikhun had been stockpiled by "terrorists" and possibly released by a conventional strike.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson accused Russia of being incompetent or complicit in permitting Assad's actions and said yesterday's strike should leave no one in any doubt that Trump was willing to act if any actor "crosses the line."

Trump had previously indicated no willingness to engage further in Syria's civil war, beyond stepping up efforts to Syria to inform the strike before-hand in order to avoid casualties that could prompt a broader crisis.

Replying to a question on Teesta water sharing deal, he said Teesta was an important issue, but in Indian system, there were certain areas where they needed to take the state concerned in finding solution.

Asked about joint exploration in the Bay of Bengal, the minister said they were already doing some exploration activities in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh played a very important role in various issues for India, he added.

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Police look

FROM PAGE 16

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, yesterday said Raudha used WhatsApp messenger on her mobile and the laboratory would examine conversations made from her phone.

The Rajshahi DB is investigating the case of unnatural death filed with Shah Makhdum Police Station on March 29, hours after Raudha, also a model, was found dead in her dorm room of Islami Bank Medical College in the city's Nawapara area.

An autopsy ruled that she committed suicide. However, her family members claimed she was murdered.

Meanwhile, a two-member Maldivian police investigation team left Rajshahi for Dhaka yesterday after wrapping up their five-day visit.

Talking to The Daily Star at Rajshahi airport, Chief Superintendent Mohamed Riyaz of the Maldivian police said the mobile phone data would be of great help for the investigators.

The Bangladesh Police would dis-

close the details of the data in due time, he added.

Raudha's father Mohamed Athif said Maldivian cops let him see part of the text conversation.

"There was nothing abnormal. The conversation proves that Raudha was frustrated and angry. I'm sure my daughter was strong and capable enough to hold her nerves," he said.

Talking to this correspondent on condition of anonymity, a DB official said Raudha had a long conversation with her boyfriend on the night of March 28. It was evident from the conversation that she was very frustrated by her boyfriend's behaviour.

There are four more Maldivian students, including three females, at the medical college, according to the college authorities.

Asked about their security, police official Riyaz said the students were comfortable with safety and security measures.

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Eight suspected

FROM PAGE 16

The elite force arrested Jamal alias Rasel Siraj, 45, Nurul Absar, 27, Khandker Abu Naim alias Naim Jihadi, 49, Mohsin, 52, and Jaber Hawlader, 22, when they were having a secret meeting at Parijat Market at Signboard area on Thursday night.

Hours later, Rab arrested the three others -- Akterujjaman Maruf, 32, Mawlana Omor Faruk, 32, and Kashem Moonshi, 31, at Comilla's Gouripur -- based on information gleaned from the other five "JMB members", the Rab official said.

The elite force also claimed to have recovered jihadi books, splinters, gunpowder and detonators from their possession.

Kamrul said Rasel Siraj had been coordinating the group over the last one and a half year. The group was planning "subversive acts".

In primary interrogation, the arrestees admitted being JMB members, the Rab official claimed.

The arrestees also forged national identity (NID) cards to rent houses and shared their extremist views on Facebook, Kamrul added.

The White House was quick to paint the decision as limited to deterring the use of chemical weapons, and not part of a broader military campaign.

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