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THE PERILS OF SURVEILLANCE  
BY AVIJIT PATHAK  
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WORLD



LAWMAKERS FIRE BACK AT TRUMP REMARKS, CALL FOR IMPEACHMENT

KHAMENEI: IRAN TO KEEP ROLLING BACK N-COMMITMENTS  
PAGE 16

CLOSED AFTER BALAKOT AIRSTRIKE

## Pakistan reopens its airspace after five months, sigh of relief in India

Flights will return to normal routes, cut down on time and crew: Air India

PRANAV MUKUL  
NEW DELHI, JULY 16

IN A move that brings relief to Indian and foreign airlines, and travellers, Pakistan opened its airspace fully in the early hours of Tuesday, five months after closing it on February 26 following the IAF strike at a terror camp in Balakot.

In Delhi, government officials described it as a "strategic move"

and indicated the possibility of a diplomatic breakthrough between the two countries. The move comes days after Pakistan's civil aviation authority reportedly intimidated Indian officials that the curbs would stay in place until India withdrew its fighter jets from forward positions.

Last Thursday, Pakistan's Aviation Secretary Shahrukh Nusrat, who is also Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), had informed

EXPLAINED



THE HAGUE RULES ON JADHAV TODAY  
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the Senate Standing Committee on Aviation that the Indian government had approached it to open the airspace. He said Pakistan responded by saying that India must first withdraw its "fighter planes placed forward", PTI reported.

On July 12, Pakistan had issued a NOTAM, or Notice to Airmen, extending the airspace ban — for the fifth time — till July 26. However, the NOTAM was

EXPLAINED

Op costs will drop

THE CLOSURE of routes affected hundreds of east-west flights flying over the sub-continent but west-bound flights from airports in northern India were the worst affected. Together, Indian carriers lost over Rs 550 crore due to the airspace restrictions.



BJP leader BS Yeddyurappa with party MLAs on Tuesday. ANI

## Karnataka: SC to rule today, says Speaker's powers need relook

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G  
NEW DELHI, JULY 16

SET TO pronounce its order Wednesday on the pleas of 15 rebel Congress and JD(S) MLAs against Karnataka Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar for not accepting their resignations from the Assembly, the Supreme Court said Tuesday that the position and powers of the Speaker after the enactment of the anti-defection law in 1985 may require a re-look.

"When the 10th Schedule (Anti-Defection law) was added (to the Constitution), a very high status was given (to the Speaker). But with (what has happened in the) last 10-25 years, probably a re-look is required," observed the bench comprising Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and Justices Deepak Gupta and Aniruddha Bose.

After hearing the rebel MLAs, the Speaker and Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy, the court fixed Wednesday to pronounce its decision on the plea of

15 rebel MLAs, whose resignations have plunged the Congress-JD(S) coalition government into crisis earlier this month.

Thirteen Congress and three JD(S) MLAs have resigned since July 6, technically reducing the numbers of the coalition from 117 to 101 compared to the BJP's 105 in the 224-member House where the halfway mark is 113.

However, the numbers will reduce only when the resignations are accepted by the Speaker or if the rebels are disqualified.

In the SC Tuesday, the CJ countered arguments that the court did not have the jurisdiction to direct the Speaker to act in a particular manner at this stage.

"The extent of jurisdiction depends on the kind of restraint this court would like to impose upon itself. There is no inflexible rule," the bench told senior counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi

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RELATED REPORT PAGE 7

## 10 die in Mumbai building collapse, 3-yr-old survives in his grandmother's arms

TABASSUM BARNAGARWALA & SAGAR RAJPUT  
MUMBAI, JULY 16

JUST THREE years old, wrapped in the arms of his grandmother, Abdul Rehman was among the first to be rescued when a portion of a building, Kesarbai Mansion, in Mumbai's Dongri area collapsed Tuesday morning.

For doctors who first saw him at the Habib hospital, it was nothing short of a miracle. They found that he had survived with a few scratches. Abdul's sister Aisha, who is three months old, also survived after their father Nisar held her tight and made his way out of the debris.

That, however, was a rare glimmer of life amid the despair that hung over the debris. Officials confirmed that 10 people, including a 14-year-old boy and his 18-month-old relative, had died and seven others injured after the three-storey building collapsed around 11 am.

Among those dead was Sadiya, the mother of Abdul and Aisha.

The government has ordered a probe into the incident with residents claiming that the collapse was triggered by repair

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Rescue workers at the site of the building collapse in Dongri, Mumbai, on Tuesday. Ganesh Shirsekar

## HC quashes clearances for Mumbai coastal road project: Serious lacuna

SAILEE DHAYALKAR  
MUMBAI, JULY 16

UNDERLINING "A serious lacuna in the decision-making process" and "lack of proper scientific study", the Bombay High Court Tuesday quashed the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearances granted for the southern part of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's Rs 12,000-crore coastal road project.

The go-ahead had been granted by the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management



At site of the Rs 12,000-cr coastal road project. File

Authority (MCZMA), Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) and the Ministry of Environment and

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## In battle against spread of chikungunya and dengue, ICMR finds unlikely ally — bacteria

ASTHA SAXENA  
NEW DELHI, JULY 16

TO CONTROL the spread of dengue and chikungunya, scientists at the Indian Council of Medical Research have turned to an unlikely new ally — bacteria.

In a project under process over the last year, ICMR

researchers have developed a strain of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito — the main vector that transmits the viruses that cause dengue — into which *Wolbachia*, a naturally occurring bacteria, is introduced.

*Wolbachia* "inhibits" viral infection, which means, "people will feel the mosquito bite but they will not be infected. The



Suvajit Dey

bacteria will not allow the virus to replicate in the mosquito and so, the virus won't be transmitted through a bite," according to Dr Manju Rabi, Scientist-E, ICMR.

The mosquito variant has been named the Puducherry strain since it was developed at the Vector Control Research Centre (VCRC), Puducherry in

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



## Bail rider for woman held for offensive post: Donate Quran copies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
RANCHI, JULY 16

A 19-YEAR-OLD B.Com student, recently arrested for sharing an offensive social media post, has been granted bail by a local court on one condition: that she donate five copies of the Quran to separate institutions in the city.

Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Manish Kumar Singh, while granting conditional bail Monday, asked Richa Bharti to submit one copy of the Quran to the local Anjuman Committee in the presence of police authorities, and four more copies to different libraries in the city, said her lawyer, Pravesh Singh.

He told reporters, "She will then have to submit receipts to the court within 15 days."

Bharti was arrested on July 12 after the Anjuman Committee filed a complaint against her at the Pithora police station for sharing an objectionable post on Facebook, which allegedly hurt religious sentiments.

The judge has also directed the investigating officer in the case to be present when Bharti donates the Quran to the committee, said sources.

While the Anjuman Committee welcomed the order, Bharti told PTI: "I respect the court's verdict. I have done nothing wrong... will consult my family and lawyer if I can move the High Court."

MORE REPORTS PAGE 9

## In undecided Congress, first open call for Priyanka: She should be party chief

MANOJ CG  
NEW DELHI, JULY 16

WITH ITS senior leadership unable to arrive at a consensus on Rahul Gandhi's replacement, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) is unlikely to meet this week to appoint a new party president. But amid the chaos and uncertainty, a murmur is now gaining ground in the party for AICC general secretary



Was named Congress general secretary for UP in Jan

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to take charge.

Congress leaders have, so far, not pushed her name openly because Rahul Gandhi, while conveying his decision to step down

at the CWC meeting on May 25, had said that the party should find someone other than a member of the Gandhi family for the post.

"But many people are saying now, I, too, believe Priyankaji should become the Congress president. She belongs to the Gandhi family. She is a leader and has the quality to lead the party. She is dynamic," former Union minister Sriprakash Jaiswal told

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CITY



AFTER MISSING FIVE DEADLINES, RAO TULA RAM FLYOVER INAUGURATED

MODIFY SYLLABUS OVER PORTRAYAL OF GODS: DU COUNCIL PAGES 3, 5

IN PARLIAMENT

MODI PULLS UP MINISTERS FOR SKIPPING HOUSE PAGE 8

## NRC deadline approaching, families stranded in Assam floods stay home, don't want to be rescued

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

TORA AGARWALA  
MORIGAON (ASSAM), JULY 16

FOR TWO days now, Parvesh Kumar, a rescuer from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), has been trying to persuade Rina Begum, a resident of Tulsibari village in Assam's Morigaon district, to leave her half-submerged house.

As rescuers shuttle her neighbours from their marooned homes to dry land, Begum, a 50-year-old grandmother of four, watched but

remained defiant. "How can we leave our home?" she says, standing in waist-deep water.

Kumar says Begum's family isn't the only reluctant one. "There are many families who are refusing to leave their homes," he says. "Yesterday, we went to a very remote area. There were 20 people stuck in one house, but only seven came back with us."

The team still gave the villagers their phone number, in case they changed their mind. Later at night, as the water rose, Kumar got a call. "When it gets worse, they change their mind usually," he says.

In minority-dominated areas of Assam, home and land are



Rina Begum (left) at her home in Morigaon. Tora Agarwala

tangible markers of identity in a state that is days away from the July 31 deadline for publication

of the final National Register of Citizens (NRC). "This could be one of the reasons that they feel

so scared to leave their homes," says an official from the local administration.

According to Kumar, the families who agree to be rescued make sure that their documents are safe too. "So many times, we brought them to safety only to go back again because they realise they have forgotten their documents," says Kumar.

For Begum, her daughter, and four grand-daughters, the youngest a six-month-old, the only safe space is their bed.

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NRC IN SC: CENTRE, STATE SEEK TIME PAGE 11

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