



**Nimrat celebrates her mother with a heartfelt tribute on Guru Purnima**  
She called her mom her "first home" and "divine mentor," while expressing gratitude for the strength and wisdom she's drawn from her over the years. Taking to Instagram, the 'Airlift' actress, on Thursday.

**Triumph of ideological loyalty**  
It has become commonplace to see people jump from one extreme of the political spectrum to the other. Even from extreme Left to extreme Right. From secular-socialist rhetoric to nationalistic spiritualism, all in a matter of weeks.

**India makes it to global top-10 tech mkts**  
India is a powerhouse of tech talent and a key player in the global innovation ecosystem, supported by availability of skilled talent and employment opportunities across Tier I as well as emerging cities of the country, said Arpit Mehrotra, MD (India), Colliers.

**Reflecting on growth and equity**  
World Population Day, observed annually on July 11, serves as a global reminder of the urgent issues tied to population growth and its impact on development, health, and the environment.

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## WINDOWS



### Siddaramaiah shuts leadership change buzz

BENGALURU: Amid swirling speculation over a leadership change in Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that he will remain in office for a full five-year term and lead Congress into 2028 polls. Firmly denying speculations, Siddaramaiah said that there was no truth in the reports that the Congress high command had asked him to step down or make way for Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. "I will be Chief Minister for five years," he said. "I've already made it very clear. I made this statement on July 2 also. Shivakumar was also there on that day." Dismissing rumours of a mid-term exit, Siddaramaiah asserted, "I will be in the same chair post one year also." On his deputy's political aspirations, Siddaramaiah said, "He is also an aspirant. There is nothing wrong with that. Shivakumar has himself said this that 'kursi abhi khali nahi hai'." Rejecting claims of internal instructions or timelines decided by the high command for leadership rotation, Siddaramaiah said, "Two and a half years was never decided. It is not correct. What the high command told us is that whatever decision they take, we have to follow it. Mallikarjun Kharge has already said that ours is a high command party. Whatever they say, we have to follow. I will, and DK Shivakumar also will."

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### Shukla to return to earth on July 14

NEW DELHI: Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and three other crew members of the Axiom-4 mission are set to return to earth from the International Space Station on July 14, NASA said on Thursday. "We are working with the station program, watching the Axiom-4 progress carefully. I think we need to undo that mission and the current target to undo is July 14," Steve Stitch, Manager, NASA Commercial Crew Program, told a press conference.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**

Do not take this bridge... our govt built this one

# THE Hans India



## BCs TO GET 42%

### Cabinet nod to hold local polls with enhanced quota Decides to promulgate ordinance to amend the PR Act

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

IN a pathbreaking move, the Telangana government on Thursday announced the implementation of 42 per cent quota for BCs (Backward Classes) in the ensuing local body elections. The state Cabinet, which met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy at the Secretariat on Thursday, ratified the proposal to enforce the 42 per cent BC quota, which has been finalized based on the caste survey, to provide political opportunities to the backward communities in the elections.

Before taking the historical decision to enhance the BC quota, the Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues held a detailed discussion with state Advocate-General A Sudarshan Reddy and sought clarification on legal challenges, if any, to implement the proposed BC quota in the ensuing local body polls after the Cabinet's ratification. Modalities will be finalized to implement the quota soon.



Information & Public Relations Minister P Srinivas Reddy briefing the press after the Cabinet meeting on Thursday

Briefing the press after the meeting, Information and Public Relations Minister P Srinivas Reddy said the Cabinet also approved a proposal for the promulgation of an ordinance to amend the Panchayat Raj Act -2018 through a legal process to bring the BC quota into force. Sarpanch, MPTC, ZPTC and ZP Chairman will be taken as a unit at village, mandal, district and

state level to implement the BC quota. The minister also criticized the Union government for not giving approval to implement the BC quota despite the CM and ministers pleading with the Union ministers several times.

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### Laxity of officials blamed for toddy adulteration and deaths

Blending of banned chemicals continues unabated

HANS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD: After having arrested six people for supplying adulterated toddy at a licensed shop in Kukatpally, the state Excise and Prohibition department has prepared a preliminary report on toddy adulteration which already claimed six lives this week.

The Excise wing found that the local enforcement officials were not conducting regular inspection of the toddy shops, which could have led to the latest incident. Curbs on availability of chemicals that are being blended with toddy were also not enforced strictly, excise officials said and added that the final report will expose the entire adulteration gameplan and stern action would be taken based on the outcome. The role of toddy shop owners in the adulteration process would be established only after receiving the reports, and on completion of taking the statements of the toddy shop owners. Adulteration is tantamount to a serious crime, they added.

The department has issued strict instructions forbidding the use of chemicals, especially chloral hydrate, alprazolam and diazepam. Rangareddy district Excise Deputy Commissioner P Dasarath is heading the investigation.

## SC PERMITS EC TO PROCEED WITH BIHAR VOTER ROLL REVISION

### ASKS EC TO CONSIDER AADHAAR, VOTER ID, RATION CARDS TOO

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Thursday refused to stop the Election Commission of India (ECI) from proceeding with the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, where assembly elections are due.

A Bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joymalya Bagchi asked the poll body to consider Aadhaar, voter ID and ration cards for the purpose of updating the rolls but left it to the discretion of the ECI whether to accept or reject them.

The Bench said this after Senior Advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the ECI, submitted that the list of 11 documents to be considered for the revision exercise is not exhaustive. The court directed that the matter be listed for hearing again on July 28, before the draft roll is published.

Intensive revision refers to the de novo preparation of the electoral roll from scratch through personal, house-to-house field verification by electoral registration officers.

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### Apex court has 'serious doubts' on Bihar SIR

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has expressed "serious doubts" over the Election Commission's plan to hold a 'special intensive revision' (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls months before the Assembly election. The Apex court told the poll panel, "Your exercise is not the problem... it is the timing. We have serious doubts if you can manage this exercise. With such a big population (an estimated eight crore people) being subject to this 'intensive revision', is it possible to link this to the forthcoming election?"

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## 'TODAY'S INDIA NOT INDIA OF 1975'

### Tharoor calls Emergency 'dark chapter'

CONG MP FROM KERALA TRIGGERS POLITICAL ROW

HANS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has once again found himself in a delicate position within his party amid buzz over rift within the party leadership. In an article published in Malayalam daily Deepika, Tharoor called the 1975 Emergency imposed under then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, as a "dark chapter" in India's history. He highlighted specific instances of authoritarian excess during the Emergency, particularly focusing on Sanjay Gandhi's controversial forced sterilization campaigns. "Sanjay Gandhi, the son of Indira Gandhi, led forced sterilisation campaigns which became a notorious example of this. In poor rural areas, violence and coercion were used to meet arbitrary targets. In cities like New Delhi, slums were mercilessly demolished and cleared."

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### 'IS THE BIRD BECOMING A PARROT?'

CONG TAKES DIG AT THAROOR

NEW DELHI: In a veiled



swipe at Congress MP Shashi Tharoor after he penned an article on the Emergency, party leader Manickam Tagore on Thursday said when a colleague starts repeating BJP lines word for word, one begins to wonder whether "the bird is becoming a parrot". Tharoor has said that the Emergency should not be remembered merely as a dark chapter in India's history, but that its lessons must be fully understood.

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## India achieves 4,000% growth in solar capacity

### Goyal says focus is on supply chain resilience

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S installed solar capacity has grown by an unprecedented 4,000% over the past decade, taking the country's total renewable energy capacity to 227 GW.

Addressing the 11th India Energy Storage Week (IESW) in the capital on Thursday, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said



India may well be the first G20 nation to have achieved its Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agree-

ment. Goyal cited Palli village in Jammu and Kashmir, which has become the country's first carbon-neutral panchayat using solar power and energy efficiency measures. The IESW venue, Yashobhoomi, he pointed out, is itself designed as a sustainable complex with rooftop solar panels, wastewater treatment and energy-efficient infrastructure.

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## Indian-Americans 'are a cancer'

### Racist US man gets brutal reply from AI Grok

WASHINGTON

AN American man's racist attempt to single out Indian-Americans on social media backfired when Elon Musk's AI chatbot Grok shut down the allegation with a data-backed reply.

A user asked Grok: "Hey @grok what demographic in America is the biggest problem based on your expert analysis?" Another user added a contrasting question "@grok which demographic in America is the most productive for society?"

Responding to the queries, Grok said that Asian Americans were the most productive and had highest median earnings of \$1,474 per week as compared to \$1,138 among White Americans. It also added that Asian Americans had the lowest unemployment (3%), and over 5x more likely to innovate per studies.

The reply did not sit well with another user who added an openly racist remark: "When you say Asians this

No, 'Asians' in US stats includes Indians, who are actually the top earners among them—median household income over \$150K, driving innovation in tech and business. Calling them 'cancer' says more about your biases than reality. Truth hurts, huh?"  
— AI chatbot Grok

excludes Indians right? They are a cancer." Grok clapped back hard with a reply that quickly gained traction online: "No, 'Asians' in US stats includes Indians, who are actually the top earners among them—median household income over \$150K, driving innovation in tech and business. Calling them 'cancer' says more about your biases than reality. Truth hurts, huh?"

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## Big move to check inflated hospital bills due to insurers: Report

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI

### Govt finds hospitals inflating bills based on policy limits

THE Union government plans to bring the existing health insurance claims portal under the Finance ministry and insurance regulator to curb overcharging by healthcare providers, source said.

The move follows detailed data analysis and inspections that revealed hospitals — rather than insurers — are inflating treatment costs to match policy coverage limits. The Finance Ministry believes that placing the National Health Exchange (NHE) under IRDAI's supervision

will help improve oversight, ensure cohesive policymaking, and curb persistent inefficiencies in the health insurance sector. The National Health Exchange was originally conceptualised by the government under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), overseen by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It is envisioned as a digital transaction layer that facilitates seamless claim settlement, data exchange, and service verification between insurers, TPAs (Third Party



Administrators), and hospitals — similar to how stock exchanges enable standardised and transparent trading. Healthcare costs in India are projected to rise by 13

percent in 2025, exceeding the global average of 10 percent, and up from 12 percent recorded a year earlier, according to professional services firm Aon's Global Medical

Trend Rates Report. An analysis by the government and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) found that hospitals are inflating treatment costs

for patients and overcharging those with higher covers, the sources said earlier this week.

This has driven insurers to charge higher health premiums, making coverage less affordable for some, the sources said, requesting anonymity as they are not authorised to speak to the media.

"Strict supervision" of the National Health Claims Exchange - the platform that acts as a gateway between insurers, healthcare providers and patients - will improve the "collective bargaining power"

of insurance companies to set treatment rates, the sources said. Currently, the exchange is overseen by the health ministry's National Health Authority and was developed in "consultation" with the insurance regulator, according to the authority's website. IRDAI does not regulate the health exchange but regulates insurers on the platform.

Annual growth in health insurance premium income has slowed to 9% in 2024-25 from over 20% a year ago, according to industry data, as premiums become unaffordable for many, leading to fewer policy renewals.