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## THE EDITORIAL PAGE

**KARTARPUR: NEED TO LEAVE PAST BEHIND**  
BY AMARINDER SINGH  
PAGE 12

## Free bus rides for over 2.2 lakh women on Day 1 of Delhi scheme

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 29

DELHI GOVERNMENT'S free bus ride scheme for women rolled out Tuesday and by 4 pm, over 2.2 lakh women constituted approximately 32% of the total ridership till then on DTC and cluster buses.

Under the scheme, women will not have to pay anything to travel on 5,589 buses that run on the city's roads. The cost of travel will be reimbursed to bus operators, with the Delhi government paying them a fixed fare of Rs 10 per commuter.

Pointing to lack of opportunities for women, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said: "Structural inequalities inherent to our society come in the way of equal opportunities to women. Out of Delhi's total work force, only 11% are women. Out of all the people taking Metro and buses, only 30% are women... The Opposition says Kejriwal is making everything free, but I believe parties should rise beyond narrow partisan interests."

The government proposed the scheme in June and had also made free travel for women on Delhi Metro part of the proposal. But that is yet to be implemented since the Centre is still to notify a new Fare Fixation Committee.

FULL COVERAGE  
PAGE 5

## SIXTH ATTACK TARGETING NON-RESIDENTS

# 5 workers from Bengal killed in south Kashmir terror attack

Militants strike in Kulgam on day team of EU MPs reaches Srinagar

ADIL AKHZER & SWEETY KUMARI  
SRINAGAR, KOLKATA, OCTOBER 29

SUSPECTED MILITANTS shot dead five labourers from West Bengal in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on the day when an unofficial EU delegation visited the Valley to assess the situation after the abrogation of Article 370 three months ago.

The five killed Tuesday evening have been identified as Naimuddin Sheikh, Murshalam Sheikh, Rafikul Sheikh, Rafique Sheikh and Kamaruddin Sheikh, all from Bahalnagar village in Murshidabad's Sagardighi.

Officials said another labourer from the same village was injured in the firing and is undergoing treatment in Srinagar.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Murshidabad SP Mukesh Kumar said: "I have spoken to Kulgam Police, we are looking into other details." West Bengal police sources said the labourers worked in an apple orchard.

Tuesday's attack is the sixth  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



About 65,000 students appeared for their Class X state board exams, in Kashmir on Tuesday. Shuaib Masoodi REPORT, PAGE 8

## Low-key inaugural planned for UTs of J&K and Ladakh

BASHAARAT MASOOD  
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29

THE CENTRE has decided against holding extravagant functions on October 31 when the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir takes effect, in line with the August 5 announcement ending the special status of the state under Article 370 and its bifurcation into two new Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The administration has ordered government officers and  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



Europe should mediate if India, Pak want, says far-right EU MP

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 29

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT member Bernhard Zimniok, who represents the German far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) and is one of the 23 MEPs visiting Srinagar, Tuesday said "if Pakistan and India make a new attempt to normalise their relations, I believe that the European community should, if desired, act as an honest broker and mediator".

In the group that met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval Monday — 23 of the 27 MEPs flew to the Valley Tuesday — Zimniok told *The Indian Express*: "PM Modi and I mainly talked about the conflict in Kashmir, but about the relationship between the EU and India as well."

"The conflict that has existed for decades has claimed many thousands of lives and also ties  
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MORE REPORTS  
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Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, P.K. Mishra, with Chief Justice of India designate, Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde (left), in New Delhi on Tuesday. ANI REPORT, PAGE 7

## CJI-DESIGNATE BOBDE

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, P.K. Mishra, with Chief Justice of India designate, Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde (left), in New Delhi on Tuesday. ANI REPORT, PAGE 7

## New energy firms & telcos stare at default, NPA fear grips banks

ANIL SASI  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 29

THERE is renewed nervousness among banks that lending to renewable power utilities and telecom companies over the last five years may turn bad.

Payment dues of renewable energy generators are mounting, primarily as distribution companies (discoms) of states such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have been falling back on payments for electricity contracted. The dues were pegged at close to Rs 10,000 crore upto July 31, 2019, according to data compiled by the Central Electricity Authority, and the amount is piling up.

Delays have started to stretch beyond 12 months in some cases, effectively impeding the working capital flows for these companies and hindering their debt servicing capability — a warning sign for lenders. In all, over 15 discoms have fallen back on their payment obligations against

**EXPLAINED**  
**Pain to sunrise sector**

THE RENEWABLE power sector, funded by FDI and domestic bank lending, may be staring at the prospect of defaulting on loans with discoms holding back payments for power contracted. Banks have turned risk averse given the NPA pile-up, and hence may not be willing to offer any reprieve. A loan default may jeopardise the gains made in the last five years.

electricity supplied by solar and wind energy developers — the only bright spark in an otherwise sluggish electricity sector.

Added to the concern for lenders is the fresh uncertainty in the telecom sector posed by  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## WORLD



**BAGHDADI BURIAL AT SEA, TRUMP SAYS SUCCESSOR KILLED**

**18 DIE IN KARBALA ATTACK AGAINST PROTESTERS**  
PAGE 14

## India, Saudi sign strategic partnership pact, focus on security cooperation

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 29

IN HIS second visit to Saudi Arabia after three-and-a-half years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud Tuesday condemned terrorism and agreed to step up bilateral security cooperation.

Led by Modi and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the two



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. PTI

countries also signed a pact for the establishment of a Strategic Partnership Council (SPC). India is the fourth country with which Saudi Arabia has formed such a strategic partnership, after the UK, France and China.

The SPC will have two parallel tracks: Political, security, culture and society, headed by Foreign Ministers; and economy and investment, headed by India's Commerce Minister and  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## After losing leg at LoC, blade runner toasts second life — with triple gold



Anandan Gunasekaran in contention for Tokyo Paralympics

PAGE 1  
ANCHOR

## SPORT



SHAHID JUDGE  
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 29

HE REMEMBERS lying in the snow, his ears ringing from the sound of the blast. He felt an excruciating pain in his left leg, and when his hearing was back moments later, he could hear his own screams along with the loud chatter from his fellow Army men who had reached the spot.

"Kuch nahin hua hai, sab theek hai. Kuch tension mat le (Nothing has happened, everything's fine. Don't get tense)," Anandan Gunasekaran recalls telling his colleagues. And yet, he couldn't dare look down at what was left of his limb after stepping on a landmine. He'd never see that foot again.

**ICC BANS BANGLA CAPTAIN SHAKIB FOR TWO YEARS**  
PAGE 20

Last week, the 32-year-old was in China's Wuhan for the World Military Games, racing away with a blade for a left foot, to gold in the 100m, 200m and 400m races. And now, he finds himself in contention for the Tokyo Paralympics next year.

"The rules have changed and qualification is based on a ranking system," he says. "The final trial is in May, but I'm sure I'll be  
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