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news of the day

1Telangana row

Cong MLAs on Monday defied the high command and pressed their agitation against the proposed Telangana state even as the 20 AP ministers decided not to insist on their resignations. **Pg 5**

2High alert

New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Gujarat were placed on high alert on Monday following intelligence inputs that Taliban-trained terrorists have sneaked in to target vital installations there. **Pg 5**

3More trouble

There is more trouble for beleaguered Karnataka Chief Justice PD Dinakaran, as a petition seeking impeachment proceedings against him was moved by 75 Rajya Sabha members on Monday. **Pg 5**

4Inflation

The annual rate of inflation based on wholesale prices rose sharply to 4.78 per cent in November from 1.34 per cent in October, mainly due to a 16.71 per cent jump in prices of food articles. **Pg 5**

5Hope for Dubai

An announcement by Abu Dhabi on Monday of a \$10-billion assistance to help neighbouring Dubai to tide over its debt crisis sent shares soaring in the United Arab Emirates. **Pg 7**



Battle moves to Rajkot

Skipper MS Dhoni has cautioned Team India against overconfidence in the run-up to the first of a five-match ODI series in Rajkot on Tuesday. India have won the Test series and shared honours in the T20 battle. **PAGE 13**

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St Nicholas, who inspired Santa, is 'buried in Ireland'

● Asian News International
London, December 14

HISTORIANS BELIEVE that the remains of St Nicholas, the man who inspired Father Christmas, who is known by several names, including Santa Claus, are buried at Jerpoint Abbey in County Kilkenny, Ireland.

The bishop was buried in the cathedral church in Myra, which became a pilgrimage site, but Irish historians claim that the early crusaders brought his remains back to Jerpoint Abbey.

"It is an amazing story and yet very few people in Ireland know about St Nicholas's connection with this country. Every year now we get visitors to the site, but still not that many," *The Telegraph* quoted Philip Lynch, an historian and chairman of Callan Heritage Society in Co Kilkenny, as saying. "There is a great story about a notorious old miser. He never gave the children any Christmas presents, instead he delighted in bringing them to Jerpoint and showing them Father Christmas's grave," he added.

It has previously been believed that St Nicholas's remains were taken to Bari in southern Italy in the 11th century after Italian sailors looted his grave.

However, Lynch claims there is evidence to suggest that a French family who settled in Ireland shortly after 1169 were responsible for moving his remains. He believes that the crusading family, called the de Frainets, exhumed the tomb after they were routed by their enemies, and brought the content to southern Italy, which was then Norman lands. When they were subsequently forced out of Italy by the Genoese, the remains were entrusted to relatives in Nice, who moved them to family lands in Kilkenny for safe keeping.

Nicholas de Frainet built a dedicated Cistercian Abbey at Jerpoint where St Nicholas's remains were then interred in 1200. "St Nicholas Church is still standing and there is a slab on the ground which marks St Nicholas's



St Nicholas' remains are buried at Jerpoint Abbey in County Kilkenny, Ireland

DANCING FREE

Dancers performing an innovative show titled *Fuerza Bruta*, (which means 'Brute Force' in Spanish), directed by Diqui James, on a watery stage suspended above the audience in New York on Sunday. The show is meant for people who don't really like theatre. Viewers are not required to think, feel or even sit down for this hour-long bath. Standing and gaping are all that is strictly necessary, although jumping up and down and dancing are intermittently encouraged.



REUTERS



What do you think of these pictures? Write to us at feedbacknext@hindustantimes.com

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Every good cause is worth some inefficiency — Paul Samuelson

IN MEMORIAM



SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
(October 31, 1875 — December 15, 1950)
Popularly known as the Iron Man, he played a major role in India's freedom struggle. He was awarded with Bharat Ratna in 1991

E-LEARNING

Texting, tweeting may play effective role in learning

TEXTING AND tweeting could play a bigger role in for children in learning at schools, says a new study.

Critics who argue that texting is synonymous with literary degradation should not overlook the role of texting and its distant cousin "tweeting". These could play a bigger role in education and research.

Carol L. Tilley, professor of library and information science at University of Illinois, said: "Over 70 per cent of teens have a cellphone, so I think it's a viable alternate means of engaging with that age group." "Teachers could send reminders about assignments, links to study guides or updates on their progress grading major projects by text or by tweet," Tilley said.

"If they're away at a conference or need to use a sub for a day, they could use *Twitter* to stay in contact with their class without having to physically be there."

Students could text reference questions to school librarians without having to ask for a hall pass or having to wait until lunch, Tilley said, and librarians might tweet about new materials added to their collections.

Texting and tweeting could be seen as continuing the tradition of play and economy in language, which Tilley argues is good preparation for formal writing assignments. IANS, Washington

BUDDING STARS

Meet Delhi schoolchildren who won accolades at Singapore film fest

● Avishek Topno
New Delhi, December 14

MOST OF US wish to be famous and to receive kudos from peers as well as elders. For the majority, it takes many years to achieve this objective but for a tiny minority that is blessed with extraordinary talent as well as the favour of Lady Luck, such an objective comes early in life.

Ten-year-old Zoya S Hassan and Sriharsh Sharma Churai, 14, clearly belong to the second category. The duo had enacted the lead roles in a movie titled *For Real*, which bagged four awards, namely the Best Actress, Best Actor, Best Screenplay and Best Producer, at the Asian Festival of First Films 2009 in Singapore.

Hassan, who played the central character of Shruti Shukla, bagged the Best Actress award while Sharma was adjudged the Best Actor.

Looking back at her first experience of acting in a film, which was shot two years ago, Hassan was disarmingly frank in her remarks.

"It was a lot of fun and I loved missing school. It was quite hard with so much practice required for every scene," according to the class IV student at the Vasant Valley School in Vasant Kunj.

"All we had to do was practice, practice and more practice and shoot the scene till we got it right," she added.

Showering director Sona Jain with a lot credit for her achievement, the budding actress said: "Sona aunty was the one who helped me practice and encouraged me every time."

Expressing pride in Hassan's achievement, her school principal Rekha Bakshi said, "She is a very bright child — quiet but confident."

Speaking over the phone from Mumbai,



(From top) Zoya S Hassan; *For Real* Director Sona Jain; and Sriharsh Sharma Churai

Director Jain said, "One has to be real with the kids in order to gain their confidence. Besides, one has to be really patient."

On being asked about how she prepared the kids for the role, she explained, "Before the actual shoot, we had a workshop with both Zoya and Sriharsh. Since Sriharsh is bit grown up, we had a 10-day workshop with him, but for Zoya, we had a one-and-a-half-month workshop."

She also added, "Directing Sriharsh was more like working with an adult, but with Zoya we shot one scene per day."

Explaining the reason behind his sound acting skills, Sharma, a class IX student at Bluebells International, East of Kailash said, "I have been taking part in drama at school quite actively. It's thanks to my earlier drama teacher in school, Dilip Shankar, who is also my mentor and has always encouraged me."

Before acting in *For Real*, Sharma had acted in the full-length film *Darjeeling Limited* by Wes Anderson.

While the exploits of both these budding actors are commendable indeed, the duo was asked if Bollywood too figures in career plans?

Here's what they have to say: "Why not. If I get a chance to have a career in Bollywood I would definitely take it up. But it's not that easy, there is lot of competition," Sharma said, and added, "Otherwise I want to be a lawyer."

"No. It's too much you know. The actors have to go for so many interviews and parties. I would join our family business and help my parents," said Hassan.

Irrespective of the careers they opt for, the initial whiff of success that Hassan and Sharma have achieved at such a tender age surely worth cherishing.

Of Emperor Akbar, potatoes and Peru's ancient bond with India

● Indo-Asian News Service
New Delhi, December 14

THE ANCIENT Incas shared an eclectic bond with India — a deep admiration for Mughal Emperor Akbar and secrets of growing potatoes.

One of the most enduring cultural icons, historical chroniclers and fated scribe of Peru, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, a 16th century Latin American intellectual, wanted to interview Mughal emperor Akbar on his world views, but could not make it to India because of the great distance between the two countries, said the deputy chief of the Peru mission, Carlos Yrigoyen.

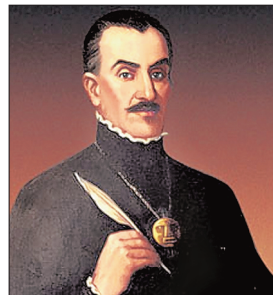
"Garcilaso, who was of royal Spanish and Inca descent, wrote about the traditions, sites and legacy of the 500-year Inca civilization, his mother's faith, in one of the first historical chronicles of Peru, *Los Comentarios Reales* (The Royal Comment) as a dossier for king Charles I of Spain. During his lifetime, he read voraciously about Mughal India and the reigning emperor Akbar, expressing in public and among friends a keen desire to interview the emperor," Yrigoyen said.

Yrigoyen delivered a lecture on "Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, First Ambassador of Peru in the World," at the Instituto Cervantes in the Capital on Monday to commemorate 400 years of the publication of the "Royal Comments". It is part of a bilateral initiative between the two countries.

"Garcilaso, born in 1539, knew what was happening around the world. But unfortunately, his dream of meeting Akbar remained unrequited, whereas one of his peers, French traveller and writer Pierre Oliver Mal Herbe, who visited India in the late 16th century, managed to interview Akbar. Herbe died around the same time as Garcilaso," Yrigoyen said.

Apart from his dream to meet Akbar, the Incas, according to Garcilaso, were the "original inhabitants of Peru", and both India and Peru worshipped the sun and "shared secrets about growing potatoes, which was first grown by the Incas".

"The Incas gave potatoes to the world and to India. They cultivated more than 200 varieties of potatoes which the Spanish traders brought to India. The Central Potato Research Institute in Shimla works closely with Peru in improving the breeds and yield. The ancient Peruvians were also known for their flutes — 32 varieties of them — a musical instrument associated with the Indian deity Lord Krishna," he said.



Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, a 16th century Latin American intellectual