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IN YOUR WORDS

█ Greek vote reflects deep divide
Austerity has NOT been a failure. It has brought important structural reforms in Spain and here in Portugal. The people of Portugal have also suffered with increases in taxes and increases for public services, but those increases were necessary for the country to bring its spending in line with its revenue. Its success here is demonstrated by the dramatic drop in interest on government bonds.

JOHN-CC, PORTUGAL

Greek banks should not be kept on a very expensive life support, and loans to Greece need to be drastically revisited. Right now Greece is not growing and therefore cannot pay back these loans anyway, so the debate is almost pointless. What annoys me most, however, is German arrogance throughout the last few years. As for ideas of Ireland paying back loans, yes we are doing so, but at massive social cost.

NEVIN, CORK, IRELAND

█ New York spared worst of storm
If only we could have been spared the overblown rhetoric. I was a young child living in New York during the blizzard of 1947. So much more natural and enjoyable to experience weather without these modern-day Forecasters of Doom flooding today's media circus. Maybe Obama can issue one of his executive orders limiting the amount of airtime these things get.

MARK, PHOENIX

Another reason for the hyperbolic response is also the result of the public tending not to pay attention unless they're told a storm is going to be "one of the worst ever." It's one of the only ways to convince people to stay off the roads. When the roads aren't closed we often end up with people trapped in their cars and stranded. If people had more common sense, the mayor and state leaders wouldn't have to overreact.

KATE, CONNECTICUT

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IN OUR PAGES

International Herald Tribune

1915 Indian Receives Victoria Cross
LONDON At Buckingham Palace, yesterday, King George conferred the Victoria Cross on Sepoy Khudadad Khan, the first Indian soldier to earn the coveted distinction. Khudadad Khan, or the 129th Duke of Connaught's Own Baluchis, was the sole survivor of a gallant machine-gun team, who on October 30 heroically fought to the last, every man being bayoneted at his post. Though badly wounded, Khudadad Khan managed some time afterward to rejoin his company, but never left his gun until he had rendered it useless to the enemy.

1965 U.K. Says Farewell to Churchill
LONDON Britain began its long and sad farewell to Sir Winston Churchill today. Just as Big Ben pealed 11 a.m., the great door of St. Stephen at Westminster hall swung wide. Two lines of people, some of whom had been waiting all night, began a slow walk on each side of the ten-foot-high catafalque where Sir Winston lies in state. More than 40 000 people filed past the coffin today. Their line was more than two miles long, and growing. An observer noted the crowd's only common denominator, its silence, "utter silence," as the people passed Sir Winston. Only the shuffling of feet could be heard inside the ancient hall.

➤ Find a retrospective of news from 1887 to 2013 at [iht-retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com](#)

Chitresh Das, promoter of classical Indian dance, dies at 70

BY ROSLYN SULCAS

Chitresh Das, a teacher and performer who widely disseminated the north Indian classical dance form kathak in the United States, died on Jan. 4 in San Rafael, Calif. He was 70.

The cause was acute aortic dissection,

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a tear in the inner wall of the aorta, said Rachna Nivas, the director of the Chhandam School of Kathak, which Mr. Das founded in San Rafael in 1980.

Through his schools and his Chitresh Das Dance Company, Mr. Das played an important role in popularizing kathak, one of the most prominent forms of classical Indian dance and the only one that has roots in both Muslim and Hindu traditions.

Kathak deploys powerful percussive footwork (emphasized by the ankle bells dancers usually wear), fast turns and a constant virtuosic interplay and rhythmic exchange between the dancer and musicians. It is also a storytelling form that emphasizes abhinaya, the repertoire of nuanced facial expressions and gestures that allows a per-

former to incarnate characters and creatures in mythological tales from Indian epics like the Mahabharata.

Mr. Das, acclaimed for his mastery of these aspects of kathak when still a child, began his career in the West just as musicians like the sitarist Ravi Shankar and the tabla player Zakir Husain were gaining popularity. Although he continued to give traditional concerts in which he performed the long solo improvisations that are at the heart of kathak, he also tried to update the form by creating group dances and developing a style called Kathak Yoga, in which the performers sing, and sometimes play an instrument, while dancing.

"I will make sure that kathak lasts because I've already done the work of Kathak Yoga," Mr. Das said in an interview with The New York Times in 2005. "And that will last. That will last forever."

Chitresh Das was born on Nov. 9, 1944, in Calcutta, now Kolkata. His parents founded one of India's first government-funded dance schools, and he grew up surrounded by artists, dancers and musicians. He began to study kathak at age 9 with the master teacher Pandit Ram Narayan Misra, and by 11 was an established performer. After graduating from

Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata, he obtained a master's degree in dance from Prayag Sangeet Samiti, an Indian classical music institute in Allahabad.

In 1970, Mr. Das was awarded a Whitney Fellowship through the University of Maryland to teach kathak. The next year he was invited by the sarod player Ali Akbar Khan to create a kathak dance program at the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael. In 1979, he left to form his own school and dance company, which performed regularly in the Bay Area.

He later opened branches of the school in San Francisco, Berkeley and other cities in the area. His pupils started schools in Toronto in 1990, Boston in 1992 and Los Angeles in 2012.

"As a solo performer, Mr. Das proved an uncommonly entertaining exponent of kathak," the critic Allan Ulrich wrote in an obituary in The San Francisco Chronicle. "His slashing rhythmic attack, electrifying footwork, dazzling turns and verbalizations, all accompanied by the ringing of the weighty bells he wore around his ankles, won him lifelong fans. He was also an extraordinary movement storyteller, with his expressive fingers evoking animal life and traditional deities."

While teaching at his schools and at Stanford University, Mr. Das created the first university-accredited kathak course in the United States, at San Francisco State University. He returned frequently to India and in 2002 reopened his parents' dance school in Kolkata. In 2003 he began working with New Light, a nonprofit community organization based in Kolkata's red-light district, teaching kathak to children of sex workers. He established a dance school in Mumbai in 2010.

He is survived by his wife, Celine; his daughters, Shivaranjani and Saadhvi Das; and his brother, Ritesh.

Mr. Das was consistent in his belief that kathak could evolve while retaining its essential characteristics. In 2005 he collaborated with the virtuosos tap dancer Jason Samuels Smith on the show "India Jazz Suites," which toured the United States, Australia and India, and was captured on film in the documentary "Upaj: Improvise," shown last year on PBS. Mr. Das also collaborated with the flamenco dancer Antonio Hidalgo Paz on the show "Yatra: Journey From India to Spain," which explored the shared roots of the two dance forms. It had its premiere this past September in San Francisco.

PHOTOS BY FOUR
"Circulation(s)," a festival of work by young European photographers through March 8 at the Centquatre in Paris, includes (clockwise from above): "Events in Nature," by Kristoffer Axén, where figures float in an anonymous world; "I would also like to be," by Jenny Rova, who admits to fol-

lowing and documenting her ex-boyfriend and his new girlfriend; from the series "Le Philosophe," which Corentin Fohlen and Jérôme von Zilw describe as "an expression of absurdity in an absurd world"; and "Masters," by Grzegorz Loznikow, a collage from an album of the 1936 Olympic Games in Germany.



KRISTOFFER AXÉN



JENNY ROVA



EPECTASE

Hugging for India's security



Ellen Barry

LETTER FROM INDIA

NEW DELHI President Obama had not been off the plane for more than a few minutes on Sunday when the first major event of his visit to India occurred: He and Prime Minister Narendra Modi embraced, like old friends, in front of a bank of cameras.

The crawl on NDTV, an Indian news channel, changed to "MODI/OBAMA HUG," because this was not expected.

President Xi Jinping of China had gotten a "firm handshake" last September when Mr. Modi invited him to a banquet in his native Gujarat for his birthday. Mr. Obama had also merited the same treatment when he and Mr. Modi first met in September in Washington.

That Mr. Obama had been upgraded on Sunday was confirmed several hours later, when the two men embraced a second time at the end of a news conference.

Mr. Modi has been known to hug other leaders whom he considers trusted partners: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan and, more recently, Prime Minister Tony Abbott of Australia. There has been a lot of talk about personal chemistry over the last few days, but Mr. Modi is extremely careful about the signals he sends. So let me suggest the following way of understanding this development: as a "quadrilateral security hug."

Eight years ago, India signed up for the "quadrilateral security dialogue," an experiment that included Australia, Japan and the United States — but not China. Introduced by Mr. Abe and endorsed by Dick Cheney, the vice president of the United States at the time, the effort eventually drew in Singapore and culminated in joint military exercises in the Bay of Bengal on a scale never previously seen in the region, anchored by an American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, the Nimitz.

It didn't last long. Even before the four countries convened for their first joint meeting, China had sent formal diplomatic protests to Washington, New Delhi, Canberra and Tokyo, complaining of what some called a "mini-NATO." Less than two years later, at a summit meeting with China, Australia announced that it was withdrawing from the quadrilateral dialogue. Mr. Abe left office after that. So did Mr. Cheney. Indian policy makers had been ambivalent to begin with. After that, the idea died on the vine.

But Mr. Modi appears interested in reviving some version of the project. When he met with Mr. Obama for one-on-one talks on Sunday, the first 45 minutes of their conversation were dominated by an animated discussion of China. The two countries then issued a joint statement on a "strategic vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean region," something India had refused to do in the past, fearing it would be read as hostile to China.

This may be the biggest surprise to come out of this meeting, and it tells us several things about Mr. Modi's intentions. One is that he has set aside, at least for the moment, his early vision of striking an economic grand bargain with China, the only country capable of injecting tens of billions of dollars for a much-needed modernization of India's infrastructure. Returning to the bargaining table with Beijing after Sunday's statement put it, a notion that dates back to the days of the British Raj, said Ashok Malik, a columnist who advised Mr. Modi's campaign last year. "America is looking at developing India into a net security provider" in the Indo-Pacific area, he said. "I think Modi recognizes that if India doesn't step up to that role, China will fill the vacuum."

In the coming months, this idea will submerge into the bureaucracies of both countries, which will take up such matters as India's membership in the Asia-Pacific Economic and Cooperation group and interoperability between the two country's armed forces. It is not likely to go away, though. Over the last three days, absent a single ground-breaking announcement, Indian news outlets have fixated on any number of details: the sight of Mr. Obama chewing gum, possibly Nicorette, at the Republic Day parade; amusement at the news that Mr. Modi wore a suit whose pin-stripes were actually tiny lines of script spelling out his name.

But let us not discount the possibility that the hug between the two leaders, for the seconds that it lasted, could be the distant opening bell of a great game.

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