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**High School: 1st place
winner**



IndiaFEST 2011– Essay Contest

Lessons learned from India's Independence 60 plus years

Bharat Ganarajya the Republic of India This upcoming August marks the sixty-fourth year of independence for India A feat in itself, but not as nearly as grand as the accomplishments Indians have made during this time. Our India nation is one of the rising nations on Earth, and at the same time, a little world of its own. India has managed to depart from its reputation of being English property and gain recognition as an iron fist all in less than a hundred years much to the envy of her fellow countries There are many lessons to be learned from these sixty plus years and they come from a plethora of categories economics, culture, and, what I consider to be most important, personal ethics The twenty-first century has brought about many advancements but in terms of moral values, the world in general seem to be back-pedaling. Indians, closely knit by their rich culture, embody those principles that, in my opinion, our modern world has given up for personal success

Throughout the battle for freedom from the United Kingdom and the struggle to establish itself as one of the world's top nations, perseverance has been crucial to India The determination to become a leading country, and to gain respect from the rest of the world played a key role in the development of India into the country we know it as today. A weak backbone would have severely hindered India in its journey to the top. Once Indians realized what they wanted for their country, they did not hold back. Breaking down boundaries, they protested until their demands were met, and always kept their beliefs centered in their line of sight. Other countries currently grappling for their own independence would do well to take example of India, and note that Indian citizens saw past the dark nights and towards the brighter days

Perseverance would have not been possible if it had not been for the unity of India's citizens. Many countries to this day and age suffer from a lack of unity of its people, though India is not one of them. Indians have a strong sense of pride for themselves and for their country. These things, along with the dream of one day being a revered nation, bound Indian citizens together, and helped them to seek out their goal. Today, many people in America and other Western countries feel a detachment from their country. Their sense of national pride has slowly dwindled down with younger generations. India exemplifies a united people, and enough paid interest towards this example can help re-instill other people's pride in their country.

While India certainly can teach the world a thing or two, I believe it can also learn from other countries. Lessons can be learned from both sides, and in my opinion, one of the biggest things that India can benefit from is a more equal and open society. Perseverance and unity are two critical attributes of a fruitful country, but neither of them necessarily entails fairness between its citizens. Yes, India is constantly moving upwards in terms of economic expansion, but its society remains at an almost medieval level. Women and men are still regarded differently, as are people of different personal preferences. Marriage remains the number one goal that women should strive for, and female empowerment is somewhat lacking in India. If they could take a leaf out of another nation's book, perhaps one regarding gender or sexual equality, then India would just take another step forward towards being an even greater power. I realize this may not be easy, since there are factors that are blatantly against any sort of equality, but the very same perseverance and unity that liberated us and brought us to top could also bring about radical change within the structure of Indian society. We could be even greater than we are now, with a little nudge and a helping hand from more open-minded countries.

In only sixty-four years, India has made advancements in a numerous amount of areas. We've dabbled in everything from science, to math, to fashion and even entertainment (how can anyone forget the impact Bollywood has had on the entire world). Our people have touched ground in countless bases. We are responsible for inspiring some of the greatest minds of today, and for sparking hope and the idea of independence in the minds of so many people that, at the moment, only dream of free days. Although we have much room to grow and learn, the world can also learn from us. India symbolizes hard work, determination, unification, hope, and so much more. We have been, and continue to be an inspiration to the entire world, and it is my belief, as well as the belief of innumerable others that we have not even grazed the surface of our potential as a nation.