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High School: 3rd place
winner



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What resources could India offer the U.S.A. and vice-versa?

The Gift of Giving

Imagine two of the world's most influential nations coexisting side by side and prospering. Far-fetched? Hardly. India and the United States have a myriad of resources to contribute to the well-being of each other's socioeconomic, political, and cultural well-being.

An issue plaguing India since the beginning of modern times is its sanitation. Clean water, sewage, and sanitary engineering are staggering problems in India. In the United States, residents have the added assurance that their water is in the purest and most sanitary form possible. This is due to the fact of constant observation, experimentation, and concern over the water supply; as universities and health institutions are habitually examining it. So the United States could offer waste management technologies to India to increase the level of hygiene and sanitation. Contaminants like fluorine, arsenic, and selenium are threatening the Indian groundwater systems; scientists estimate over 80 million people in over 20 states are affected by the elevated toxic qualities of the water. These impurities can cause arsenicosis, dysentery, and birth complications if ingested frequently. Inferior sewage maintenance also has led to the outbreak of a multitude of harmful pathogens in urban centers, ranging from *Escherichia coli* to *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and other coliform groups causing diarrhea, gastritis, and abdominal discomfort. This sanitation concern, coupled with the close proximity and high population densities, surely will cause harm in the near future if the problem is not addressed immediately.

Traffic flow in the crowded streets of Mumbai, Bangalore, Kolkata, and New Delhi is far from organized. Regarding transportation, there exists a stark contrast between United States mega cities and those in India. The United States could offer some models of management for traffic flow: wider roads, lane establishments, and uniform

traffic laws In 2009, over 118,000 Indians were killed in traffic accidents, surpassing fatalities in the United States over the course of five years. India's traffic deaths have spiked an alarming 40%. Contrast this with the United States statistic, with 33,963 (and declining) automobile fatalities in 2009. Greater security on the roads would stimulate a safer, more attractive environment, thus stimulating the tourist industry and economic growth. The Indian government is realizing the extent of the traffic chaos but in order for changes to take place, India requires a great deal of assistance from its Western counterpart.

The United States educational system for young adults is worth noting. In India students are too focused on their studies, grades, and exams. This academic structure leaves no room for extracurricular activities such as sports, music, and clubs. The concept of a well rounded individual in India is virtually nonexistent. There exists no "community service requirement" or "National Honor Society." *The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others*, Gandhi constantly advocates. Unselfish service is marked by humility, a hard-to-find trait in this age of egoism; often referred to as individualism and incivility. Thus, there is no incentive whatsoever for upper level students to exceed in areas outside of academics. Moreover, scholarship opportunities in sports are few; as the youth view the prospects of becoming a doctor or engineer greater than becoming next best cricketer or field hockey player. For instance, Pierre Garçon, a football player, graduated from John I. Leonard High School in Greenacres of Haitian descent, this young man was drafted by the NFL after a successful college career. From nothing, Garçon was able to take advantage of the American athletic and educational system. No one needs to go to the big named preparatory schools in New York or California. United States academics coupled with athletics is certainly effective, even at the local level, as exemplified by Garçon. Often scrutinized for its substandard schooling, the United States educational system also stresses creativity. Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, and one of the main founders of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, both were educated in America. These men were able to apply themselves to aspects other than those of studies. So India needs to break this rigid model and adopt an American-fashioned educational base for all of its upcoming scholars. Straight forward "book smarts" are not the only skills one needs to possess in the world's largest democracy.

An expanding, growing middle class in India provides an immense market for consumption of a wide variety of goods. Western brands like Coca-Cola, BMW, Audi, Levi's, and the enormous sector for fast foods are taking their markets east. India is providing a vast supply of customers and a large consumer base for these goods. This enhanced middle class is ready to spend and increase its standard of living. Also, the sales generated by each Indian citizen, multiplied by approximately one billion, surely will generate economic growth and prosperity. With a market as vast as India's, this market is one resource other nations would not want to overlook.

People should take note of the more liberal, democratic government in India as opposed to the communist government of China. With this regulatory freedom, the healthcare industry in India has been revolutionized. Pharmaceutical companies such as Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceutical Works are India's largest and oldest government owned manufacturers. These industries have generated over 137 billion rupees, easily claiming the world's second greatest drug manufacturing sector by volume. In other words, industry has experienced a 16.79% augmentation of revenue for the 2009-2010 year. Clearly, India is holding fast to a near monopoly in pharmaceuticals. Moreover, an educated, English speaking population is able to provide much needed manpower while ensuring quantity and quality to the rest of the world. In 2009 China made headlines for its toxic toys containing excessive amounts of lead and carcinogens and for the faulty drywall placed in homes. Issues like these have failed to rear their head in the Indian manufacturing establishments. The production of reliable and safe products is something India prides itself on; thus the boundaries are limitless for what this nation could do for the rest of the world.

One of the most important and influential aspects India has displayed impeccably to the rest of the world is peace. Through the independence movements with Gandhi, to the increased tensions with Pakistan, the Indian concept of peace is certainly one worth accrediting. Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. largely based his movement in the 1960s from Gandhi's bloodless resistance against the British. In contrast with the French, American, and many South American Revolutions, the Indian fight for Independence was far less bloody. The ideas and principles of King were largely those implemented by Gandhi: *peaceful resistance is the strongest resistance*. This concept has had everlasting effects on American and Indian society, as well as the whole world. Through this peaceful message, India is enlightening the United States and more importantly, the rest of the world.

It is through these symbiotic relationships that unbreakable bonds form, no matter how different one culture is from the other. Nature has been taking advantage of the symbiotic relationship for ages now; it all but makes sense for humans to value it as well. Thus as much as India takes from the United States it offers back, and the same holds true for the opposite. The coexistence of these diverse nations should not be hampered by differences in language, society, and technology. Rather what one lacks the other possesses in abundance. Through this exchange, a far more efficient, productive, and safer world can be realized.