

Chapter 1 : Indian National Congress - Wikiquote

The last phase of political awakening is reflected in the Quit India Movement launched on 9 August British rulers were called upon to leave India. The movement was a mass upheaval in which youth and students played a major role in threatening the Raj.

Why the process of political awakening in India needs protest singers like Pete Seeger Updated: Feb 02, , This is particularly galling since India has a long and rich heritage of music. By Harish Nambiar Legendary American folk singer Pete Seeger was born to intellectually gifted and musically inclined parents within a month of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the year after World War I ended. Seeger was a liberal by temperament and a socialist by alliance. Unfortunately his adulthood ran smack into the McCarthy era witch-hunt that would be one of the most famous tests of his character. He acquitted himself splendidly, though his musical career in the public eye lost nearly a decade. Left Turn After his death on Monday, his Communist alliance was most excoriated by the few who were worried that American mourning might get too maudlin. The Atlantic took the cue quickly enough to underline his anti-national alliance to communism, for which he had paid the heavy price of being banned for years from most public broadcast platforms. However, his influence over popular culture and his pioneering effort to resuscitate folk music as well as his transparently clear-headed moral stand was never in question. His connect to communist ideals was essentially folk. The biggest charge against Seeger was that he held on to Stalin much after the gulags and purges had made the Russian leader detestable. Far more sophisticated men of the western world were similarly guilty of misreading the Soviet Union. Notable among them was Jean Paul Sartre, the foremost public intellectual of the western world; he forsook Stalin in Seeger took much longer and his remorse seemed reluctant to many even when he attempted to make his case by saying he should have asked Stalin to take him to the gulags. That said, Seeger was not the greatest musician of his generation. But, much like Eliot, his influence was way beyond his own talent for singing or composing. Songs of Protest Seeger was the font from where protest music drew deepest. And yet, all of them are now eminences grises of mainstream conformism of the ageing West. However, the protest song did move to other parts of the world. During the recent protests in Istanbul, a song sung by protestors using kitchen utensils went viral on the social media. However, there were not many songs that were used throughout the Arab Spring protests that knotted across the Arab world. In India, despite variously rich and diverse ethnic strands of folk music and long traditions of the singing minstrels, the protest song has never taken root. There are some instances but they are few and far apart. Tanvir, a doyen of theatre, progressively infused folk elements into his plays and created a troupe of performers from non-trained actors. Bengali singer Kabir Suman is one of those who drew deep from the history and practice of protest songs in the West and is credited with reinvigorating modern Bengali music and lyrics in popular culture. He was followed by Nachiketa. To be sure they were merely extending a tradition set by Hemanga Biswas, who was born before Seeger and cut his teeth on folk tunes he created for IPTA performances. And yet, the most popular folk tunes that crossed over into popular culture tended to be in the form of film music, where they lost the flavour of protest and was often concocted as romantic ditties. Forgotten Tunes In Pakistan, often, there are protest songs against orthodoxy and its cruel hold on people. Yet, these too never make it to the street; protests rarely benefit from sing-alongs that bind and unite protestors to a cause in the outdoors. Why is it that in India, a country teeming with protests, social unrest has not quite connected to music? This is particularly galling since India has a long and rich heritage of music, both classical and folk. He proved that folk music can also influence public opinion. The NBA protests did see some songs but these never invaded popular consciousness, primarily because they were happily clapping along like old Indian aartis minus instrumental accompaniment. The last few protests in India have brought hordes of people, especially young people, into the streets: There have been other protests too. All these protests have not been identified with any song in public memory. As the indie music scene is girding up with more and more distinct voices, especially riding the fusion of Indian music and instruments with its Western counterpart, the time is ripe. Raghu Dixit, Indus Creed or Indian Ocean, as much as Palash Sen could give musical voice to the heinous form of feudal

vigilante justice of the khap panchayats, or work on the sensuousness of Niyamgiri hills and its plunder, or the way individual freedom is denied by the state to Binayak Sen or Nandini Sunder. There are so many John Sinclairs waiting for their John Lennon. Or Niyamgiri is the Hudson waiting for its Seeger. The writer, a former journalist, now travels and writes 0Comments.

Chapter 2 : Jawaharlal Nehru - HISTORY

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Tuesday, November 15, - In gets to the sixties and so -- did it the village is economically underprivileged but politically. Which is -- -- might -- which is richer and better articulate so it goes against immigrant pay Enders disproving. Like because the hungry -- name. Knowing you can say you can -- but all boats. Not that you must happen. And as opposed to you must happen if it happens so it that formulation does allow exceptions. So it he did in the democratic case is those little more educated those live picture. Those who from the upper tiers of society unlikely to more. And maybe this is the -- -- entry. And what would it. This it that it became the base. Have been in games. What might be cool machine politics. Put put you put a license. Night all have to but I someone to get the gas connection to get to but -- to get to that -- a sick. Do you want citizenship rights. And did that -- it that it transport -- should give me lessons. If I passed the test. So this week office to Begin to change that this will be based citizenship based politics. I do do the politicians. Does something for you and independents who vote for. On the -- I mean just something for you. And we have to see whether this of this plaza support of the movement and continue to support the woman continue to be active. It just actions -- -- -- -- but it could be a turning point for this application yes we still have the watchful. And the next national election and given -- any interest.

While still 68% rural, it seems India is the only exception to Democratic theory. Professor Ashutosh Varshney explains where the country's political and economic strengths lie. These -- and again.

Wed, Dec 03 We have been going above the government, below the government or around the government, but we never really engaged with the government. Suddenly, we are waking up to discover that the same state that we have ignored for the past 60 years is necessary for us to make sense of our lives a visceral glimpse into the life of the poor. And with it comes a whole new definition of the citizen-state relationship. This is existential exfoliation. Talk of unintended consequences. The political system has never felt the heat of an irate middle-class such as it has in the Mumbai aftermath. If sustained and channelized correctly—a big if—this anger has the potential to fundamentally change the behaviour of the political class. Because, unlike the poor, who can often only act once in five years by booting the incumbents out of office, this breed of voters can make life hell on a daily basis—demanding more accountability, transparency and responsiveness from their political and administrative representatives. Our past attitude of benign disregard is being replaced with ferocious annoyance. Witness the public declamation of R. Achuthanandan—the barrage of criticism has been swift, handed out to all parties and has had serious political consequences salaam to the media. Political awakening is a good thing. But there is another dimension, a troubling one, to the fallout from the Mumbai attack. Our agitation in demanding more from our politicians is going so far overboard that we are overlooking our own flaws. After all, we are the ones who provide the breeding ground for the disease of identity politics—of caste and communalism. And then, we are shocked when these same representatives prove to be utterly incompetent in discharging the complex responsibilities of running a modern state. We ask for a tough state, when we ourselves are a soft people. I mean it in the harshest sense: Most of us are selfish, inward-looking cowards who quaver at the slightest hint of risk to ourselves or our family. Witness what happened in Kandahar—most of those who had family members as hostages were pleading with the Indian government to release the terrorists. Mandatory military service of all year high school graduates, an idea that is being floated now in India. Singapore has a law that demands this of its citizens. Thousands of Indians have lived in Singapore for years, if not decades. But most retain their Indian passports—or at least those of their children—not so much out of a sense of patriotism, but so that they can avoid this year of service. The new home minister should include this as part of his solutions, and then see the public palpitations. But crises such as these are also crucibles to reinvent ourselves, to think beyond the boundaries of our own limiting lives. Maybe the latter needs to come first. Ramesh Ramanathan is co-founder, Janaagraha. It is about the continuum between the state, market and our society. Comment at mobiusstrip.livemint.com.

Chapter 4 : Essay on Political Awakening in India

I presume the question of political awakening in Telangana is prior to formation and later. Before formation, the area was politically and socially well awakened, the common man was conscious of the culture fully aware of the deleterious effects of the globalisation fully established in AP faster than expected their mentors.

However, he has not been convicted of any crimes but has spent almost ten years in prison. His connections and nexus were extensive and he had dealings with other notorious Mafia gangs such as the Dawood gang. However he successfully severed the connections with Dawood and started operating on his own when Dawood fled to Dubai because of his alleged involvement in many criminal offences including terrorism. Arun Gawli is one of the rare breed of Dons who rose to power because of support from politicians and criminals alike. He even terrorized major political fat cats in the Shiv Sena who found themselves at the receiving end of their own strong arm tactics. This was possible since he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and had political ancestral background. In Pappu Kalani was elected as a candidate for state legislature. Later he relinquished his position when a formal report reached the ruling government describing his criminal activities. His wife became the mayor of Ulhasnagar for a period of time and was involved in many rackets including liquor and illegal construction. The legacy has passed on to his son and he has also been named in many extortion and criminal activities. Prior to her political endeavors she was a dacoit who was charged with 48 crimes including dacoity and kidnapping. She managed a successful surrender in front of the Madhya Pradesh police and spent eleven years in prison due to a delayed trial period. She was assassinated on July 25th by a religious political extremist entity who said they were avenging the deaths of the people belonging to their group. However he was released following a high court order which said that the evidence was circumstantial and not admissible in court. This came after a DNA analysis of the skull samples that indicated no relation of Soren with the murder. He is also charged with mass murder and attacks on Muslim communities during his early days of politics. He has been alleged in many criminal activities including murder. He still remains active in politics and news is filtering in that he has already got a ticket from the BSP. Moreover, a Google search reveals that he is also registered on Facebook and is using advanced technology and the Internet to further his ambitions in the political arena. A large cache of weapons including a Chinese made Kalashnikov were found at his residence. He was a minister in the Samajwadi party under Mulayam Singh and was arrested after the party lost power and was thrown in jail.

Chapter 5 : Essay on the Socio-Cultural Awakening of 19th Century in India

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Quotes[edit] If India is computer, Congress is its default program. We believe that India must sever the British connection and attain purna swarajya, or complete independence We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to the rule that has caused this disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. Cited in The British Empire, ed. Oxford University Press , , I say, of the Congress, then, this Sri Aurobindo, August 28, , quoted from Sri Aurobindo ,. Institut de Recherches Evolutives. To bring in the mass of the people, to found the greatness of the future on the greatness of the past, to infuse Indian politics with Indian religious fervour and spirituality are the indispensable conditions for a great and powerful political awakening in India. Others, writers, thinkers, spiritual leaders, had seen this truth. Tilak was the first to bring it into the actual field of practical politics. Sri Aurobindo, , quoted from Sri Aurobindo ,. Whatever resolutions they pass are obligatory on all the provinces whether the resolutions suit the provinces or not; there is no room for any other independent opinion. Everything is fixed up before and the people are only allowed to talk over it When we started the [Nationalist] movement we began with the idea of throwing out the Congress oligarchy and open the whole organization to the general mass. Sri Aurobindo, December 27, , quoted from Sri Aurobindo ,. If India is computer, Cong is its default program: Rahul Gandhi, Times of India, Times of India The Congress, befitting its name of Indian National Congress, had declared itself a representative body of all groups, religious or otherwise, in the country. It was, therefore, its pre-eminent duty to stand steadfast by its commitment to the interests and integrity of the nation as a whole and never succumb to the pressure tactics of any particular section of whatever denomination. It became nervous at the prospect of being dubbed "communal" if Hindus alone participated in its activities. It is the Congress which evolved the Muslim votebank. In comparison, I prefer the BJP as an alternative, because it is less corrupt. Decolonizing the Hindu mind: Ideological development of Hindu revivalism. The Muslims think that no tyranny can be [as] great as the tyranny of the majority. Aziz , Muslims under Congress rule , vol.

Khun Hynniewtrep National Awakening Movement, a movement in India National Awakening (Iceland), a political party in Iceland from to National Awakening Party, a political party in Indonesia.

The British presence in India began in the early seventeenth century, when the British East India Company began trading on the outskirts of the Mughal empire. Though control transferred to the British crown in the nineteenth century, Indians launched a powerful nationalist movement that led to their independence from Britain in 1947. Hoping to make money trading with India, the British East India Company wins trading rights on the fringe of the Mughal empire in 1600. As a result, the East India Company takes political control over a large swath of India, despite its background as a trading company. Warren Hastings becomes the first Governor-General of India in 1773, a position he holds until 1793. While he hopes to introduce Britain to Indian history and culture, his successors launch decades of "reforms" meant to westernize the subcontinent. The scholar Ram Mohun Roy, educated in both Western and Eastern classics, believes that India can learn from the West, but that there is room for a revitalization of Indian culture. In 1813, he sets up educational societies that help revive pride in Indian culture, and his influence on later leaders places him as the founder of Indian nationalism. May 10, 1857, The Sepoy Rebellion breaks out in India. The East India Company requires sepoy, or Indian soldiers serving the company, to bite off cartridges greased with animal fat to load their rifles. The animal fat is from cows, which are sacred to Hindus, or from pigs, which are forbidden to Muslims, and angry sepoys rise up in rebellion against their British officers. After brutal massacres on both sides, the British quell the rebellion, but an atmosphere of hatred and distrust remains. August 2, 1858, Parliament puts India directly under control of the British crown. India is now governed by colonial rule, with British officials ruling in the name of the queen and holding top positions. Britain slows the reforms that so angered Hindus and Muslims, but continues to develop India for its own economic benefit. November 17, 1869, The Suez Canal opens and greatly improves British trade. The system favors the British, who flood India with inexpensive, machine-made textiles. December 28, 1885, The Indian National Congress is organized. Nationalist leaders organize the Indian National Congress in 1885, calling for greater democracy to empower professional Indians like themselves. Known as the Congress party, the group hopes to use peaceful protest to achieve its goals. Members support modernization on a western model, but their ultimate dream is to achieve Indian self-rule. December 30, 1906, The Muslim League is organized. Resenting Hindu domination of the Congress party, Muslims form the Muslim League in 1906 to pursue their goals of independence and democracy. They fear that a Hindu-run government would oppress Muslims, and they begin to form plans for a separate Muslim state. April 13, 1919, The Amritsar massacre spurs the call for independence. After World War I, Indians are growing increasingly frustrated that they fought for Britain but still have no freedom in their own land. The resulting massacre convinces many Indians that they need independence from Britain. Following the Amritsar massacre, Indian lawyer Mahatma Gandhi launches a two-year campaign of noncooperation. He encourages Indians to leave British institutions, return British honors, and practice self-reliance. While Gandhi is forced to stop the campaign upon his arrest and imprisonment in 1931, he goes on to become the most recognized leader of the Indian nationalist movement. March 12, 1930, Gandhi begins the Salt March. Aiming to raise mass support for Indian nationalism, Gandhi decides to end the British monopoly on salt. Indians are forbidden to touch any salt not sold by the British government, so Gandhi organizes a march to the sea. Gandhi and his followers begin their Salt March on March 12, 1930, and after they successfully reach the sea on April 6, the salt campaign grows exponentially. September 3, 1939, World War II postpones further action on independence. When World War II breaks out in 1939, Britain postpones further action on independence and brings India into the war without consulting them. This outrages Indian leaders, who begin a campaign of noncooperation. While the nationalist leaders are arrested, millions of Indians support Britain during the war. June 1947, Britain agrees to grant India independence. Britain decides to partition the subcontinent into two states: Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. August 14, 1947, The partition of India causes mass migration August 14 - 15, 1947. While Britain agrees to partition the subcontinent into two states, Hindus and Muslims live side-by-side, making migration inevitable. When Pakistan and India are formally created in 1947,

millions of Hindus and Muslims cross the borders in both directions. Centuries of mistrust between religious groups cause violence to explode in northern India. Nevertheless, India has finally gained independence from Britain.

Chapter 7 : criminal charged politicians in india - awakening india

By Harish Nambiar Legendary American folk singer Pete Seeger was born to intellectually gifted and musically inclined parents within a month of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the year after World War I ended. His career shot through the entire spectrum of 20th century's seminal history, and.

India passed through conflict, crisis, misfortune and factional trouble in eighteenth century. Political uncertainty obstructed the progressive evolution of Indian culture. It was a transition from medievalism to modern age. There was a mental awakening in India as a result of its contact with the forces of the west and no wonder the nation witnessed a remarkable socio-cultural upsurge. The Renaissance of the 19th century awakened the people of the India from the slumber of lethargy and infused them with a spirit of search for liberation from bondage of slavery. Bipan Chandra observes, "Thoughtful Indians began to look for the strength and weakness of their society and for ways and means of removing the weaknesses. While a large number of Indians refused to come to terms with the west and still put their faith in traditional Indian ideas and institutions, others gradually came to hold the elements of modern western thought that had to be imbedded for the regeneration of their society. They were impressed in particular by modern science and doctrines of reason and humanism. While differing on the nature and extent of reforms, nearly all the 19th century intellectuals shared the conviction that social and religious reforms were urgently needed. British imperialism brought political and administrative unification of the country. They introduced uniform system of law and introduced methods of communication. British rule marked the collapse of traditional economic structure. The economic life and lot of the Indian people got interlinked. The exploitative character of the colonial economy contributed a lot to rise of national spirit. The highly centralized character of the British rule in India promoted the growth of nationalism. The socio-cultural impact of British rule was tremendous and indeed it made a revolution in India. The emergence of a new middle class, by product of western contact, played the role of creative minority and aimed at destroying all traditions which helped the emergence of awakened India. Infused by the spirit of nationalism and rationalism the powerful middle class made serious introspection and tried their best to purge the Indian society of its vices. Another factor which helped the awakening was the coming of the Christian missionaries in India from the beginning of nineteenth century. These Christian missionaries spread education in different part of the country and undertook many welfare activities. Some section of Indian people became attracted to their creed. The activities of missionaries and their satire and condemnation of Hindu religion resulted in strong conservative and rationalist reaction. While the orthodox and conservatives opposed Christianity doggedly, the liberals made introspection and tried to purge the inner weakness of their own religion. The spread of Western education provided stimuli to socio-culture awakening. Panikar the introduction of English language helped the cause of unity in the country without which India would have been spilt into as many different units as there are languages in India. According to Naoroji, "The introduction of English education with its great, noble, elevating and civilizing literature and advanced science will for ever remain a monument of good work done in India. Desai points out that "the study of the English language unfolded the treasures of the democratic and nationalistic thought crystallized in precious scientific works. But they tried to examine every aspect of life rationally and thus helped the process of modernization. The reformative zeal of the British Government reflected in removing caste disabilities and injustice done to the women in Indian society. It made progressive forces inside the country to make a serious introspection. Press, newspapers and literature also contributed to the development of national awakening. The vitality of Indian culture also helped the advent and growth of Renaissance. Response of India to the crisis of the time had always been positive. When India got the western impact modern Indian gladly accepted the positive features of the west and adapted them to the changing condition. Thus due to the combination of forces 19th century saw a new mental awakening that led to Renaissance in Indian thought. The rational spirit of Renaissance developed a desire for reform.

Chapter 8 : The political awakening in India. | Open Library

The awakening of India resulting in the reconstruction of the nation in socio-political and cultural fields was the result of historical forces unleashed by colonialism.

Essay on Political Awakening in India Article shared by: Essay on Political Awakening in India! The real beginning of the nationalist fervour dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century. Earlier, in the pre period, two contradictory ideas were expressed: The pro-British ideas led to the emergence of nationalism and patriotism as a reaction to the devotion of the people to the principles of British administration and English education. The anti-British ideas resulted in several political and civil movements and uprisings. Both the stances were, in effect, against the British Raj and for freedom of India the atrocities perpetrated by the Raj generated the ideas of political awakening. The demand for political rights and social justice became a valued idea. The leaders of the freedom movement became eager for emancipation from the British yoke. The sepoys were fighting for their castes, the chiefs for their kingdoms, the landed classes for their estates, the masses for fear of conversion to Christianity and the Muslims in particular for the restoration of their old sway. Yet, all in their own way were fighting against the English. Thus, the revolt of 1857 involved all sections of Indian society under the leadership of the military. The revolt was followed by rebellions in several parts of Bengal, Bihar and Punjab in particular. Organisations such as the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society and the Ramakrishna Mission also fostered political awakening through their religious and cultural preachings. The intelligentsias were dead set against the British Raj. The economic ruin of the country, the chronic poverty of the people and the recurrence of famines were some of the factors responsible for political awakening among the people. Insults to their pride also angered the intelligentsia against the British. Rude behaviour towards Indians, brutal assaults, maltreatment of servants and men in the street were common occurrences. Englishmen were not punished for such violations and offences. This discriminatory policy encouraged educated Indians to fight against the British rule. Such a policy of discrimination against Indians was effectively implemented in recruitment of services including the Indian Civil Service. Indians were humiliated and dehumanised by the British to an unlimited extent. The British Indian Association was formed by educated Indians to fight these evils. Prominent leaders of the early phase of political and national awakening were W. Ranade gave the lead to the process of political awakening. The Indian National Congress was founded by A. Hume in for the mental, moral, social and political regeneration of the people of India. Hume, in consultation with leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Badruddin Tyabji, Pherozeshah Mehta and others, organised a conference at Bombay in 1885. The Congress developed into a powerful political organisation. It focussed on the political ideas of English-educated Indians and gave them definite shape and form. Liberalism and a sense of justice were accepted as the cherished ideals of the Congress leaders. The Congress helped the political advancement of the country, gave reality to the ideals of Indian unity, developed patriotic feelings and awakened political consciousness. However, several people made bitter and unfriendly criticism of the policies and actions of the Congress. The Muslims and Englishmen both considered it a threat to their existence. Bankim Chandra Chatterji, the author of Anandamath, ridiculed Congress policies. So did Aurobindo Ghose Bal Gangadhar Tilak, however, upheld the mission of the Congress. A great scholar, politician and a man of action, Tilak devoted himself to liberating his countrymen from foreign rule. He spread the spirit of patriotism and nationalism among the masses. He made Shivaji a symbol of these virtues. Tilak, through his newspapers, Kesari in Marathi and Mahratta in English, advocated nationalist fervour through strong constitutional means. He decried the policy of mendicancy followed by the Congress. They also worked against the use of the English language and against support to the ruling authorities. He also gave a call for self-help and political agitation by the masses. Thus, Tilak gave a new direction to politics. He disliked the attitude of prayerfulness and importunity and the method of political mendicancy of the Congress. He always thought of involving the mass of people in the nationalist movement. The British government made all-round efforts to repress the revolutionaries, particularly in Maharashtra and West Bengal. Several legislations were passed to curb their activities. The newspapers and magazines managed by the revolutionaries were censored. Several people were

hanged and killed on charge of sedition. This policy also meant passing of the Acts of and which appeased the moderates in the Congress. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi then emerged on the Congress scene as leader of the moderates. He also gave top priority to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity which was endangered by the British rulers. The Lucknow session of the Congress in commented on the impaired relations between the two communities. Separate electorates for Muslims and Hindus were accepted at this session. He supported the Khilafat cause, and hence strived for Hindu-Muslim unity. Non-Cooperation Movement was launched by Gandhi in Under his leadership, the people surrendered titles and honorary offices and resigned their posts as nominated members in local bodies, law courts and legislatures. Students left colleges and schools in large numbers. Lawyers gave up practice and people boycotted the elections held in The Indian National Congress. The message of passive resistance and civil disobedience reached every part of the country. Gandhi toured various parts of the country to spread his philosophy among the masses. This demand was reinforced in at the Lahore session of the Congress. Civil disobedience and non-payment of unjust taxes had been adopted as an instrument to fight against the British Raj. The British rulers, fearing a serious threat from the Congress, engineered a split between the Muslims and the Hindus by giving a communal award in Gandhi worked towards unity between the two communities. The last phase of political awakening is reflected in the Quit India Movement launched on 9 August British rulers were called upon to leave India. The movement was a mass upheaval in which youth and students played a major role in threatening the Raj.

Chapter 9 : National awakening - Wikipedia

The East India Company takes political control in India. On June 23, , Robert Clive leads a British military force to victory at Plassey against the Nawab of Bengal. As a result, the East India Company takes political control over a large swath of India, despite its background as a trading company.

Categories A political awakening We ask for a tough state, when we ourselves are a soft people. Most of us are selfish, inward-looking cowards. We have been going above the government, below the government or around the government, but we never really engaged with the government. Suddenly, we are waking up to discover that the same state that we have ignored for the past 60 years is necessary for us to make sense of our lives a visceral glimpse into the life of the poor. And with it comes a whole new definition of the citizen-state relationship. This is existential exfoliation. Talk of unintended consequences. The political system has never felt the heat of an irate middle-class such as it has in the Mumbai aftermath. If sustained and channelized correctlyâ€”a big ifâ€”this anger has the potential to fundamentally change the behaviour of the political class. Because, unlike the poor, who can often only act once in five years by booting the incumbents out of office, this breed of voters can make life hell on a daily basisâ€”demanding more accountability, transparency and responsiveness from their political and administrative representatives. Our past attitude of benign disregard is being replaced with ferocious annoyance. Witness the public declamation of R. Achuthanandanâ€”the barrage of criticism has been swift, handed out to all parties and has had serious political consequences salaam to the media. Political awakening is a good thing. But there is another dimension, a troubling one, to the fallout from the Mumbai attack. Our agitation in demanding more from our politicians is going so far overboard that we are overlooking our own flaws. After all, we are the ones who provide the breeding ground for the disease of identity politicsâ€”of caste and communalism. And then, we are shocked when these same representatives prove to be utterly incompetent in discharging the complex responsibilities of running a modern state. We ask for a tough state, when we ourselves are a soft people. I mean it in the harshest sense: Most of us are selfish, inward-looking cowards who quaver at the slightest hint of risk to ourselves or our family. Witness what happened in Kandaharâ€”most of those who had family members as hostages were pleading with the Indian government to release the terrorists. Mandatory military service of all year high school graduates, an idea that is being floated now in India. Singapore has a law that demands this of its citizens. Thousands of Indians have lived in Singapore for years, if not decades. But most retain their Indian passportsâ€”or at least those of their childrenâ€”not so much out of a sense of patriotism, but so that they can avoid this year of service. The new home minister should include this as part of his solutions, and then see the public palpitations. But crises such as these are also crucibles to reinvent ourselves, to think beyond the boundaries of our own limiting lives. Maybe the latter needs to come first.