

# Jawan's list of great Indians

## RABINDRANATH TAGORE

**Who?** The greatest poet of the sub-continent

**Why?** For refusing a knighthood, receiving a noble prize and writing enough masterpieces to make Shakespeare laughable.

**Legacy:** He penned the Bangladesh national anthem Amar Sonar (My Golden Bengal) and wrote the Gitanjali – read it. Twice

**Obstacles:** The British Raj. They didn't like the fact that all the English people they respected, like Shelley and Byron, loved him.

**Cool Fact:** A friend of H G Wells and Albert Einstein, he often floored the mad professor in theological debates.

**Cool Quote:** "O Women, God and man are ever endowing you with beauty from their own hearts. You are one-half woman and one-half dream."

### Fusion Music Explained

**Einstein:** Its seems that your melody is much richer in structure than ours.

**Tagore:** It is difficult to analyse the effect of eastern and western music on our minds. I am deeply moved by the western music - I feel that it is great, that it is vast in its structure and great in its composition. Our own music touches me more deeply by its fundamental lyrical appeal. European music is epic in character. It has a broad background and is Gothic in its structure.

**Einstein:** This is a question we Europeans cannot properly answer; we are so used to our own music. We want to know whether our own music is convention we accept or a fundamental human feeling... It would be interesting to study the effects of European music on an Indian who had never heard it when he was young.

**Tagore:** Once I asked an English musician to analyse for me some classical music and explain to me what elements make for the beauty of the piece.

**Einstein:** The difficulty is that the really good music, whether of the East or of the west, cannot be analysed.

**Tagore:** Yes, and what deeply affects the hearer is beyond himself...

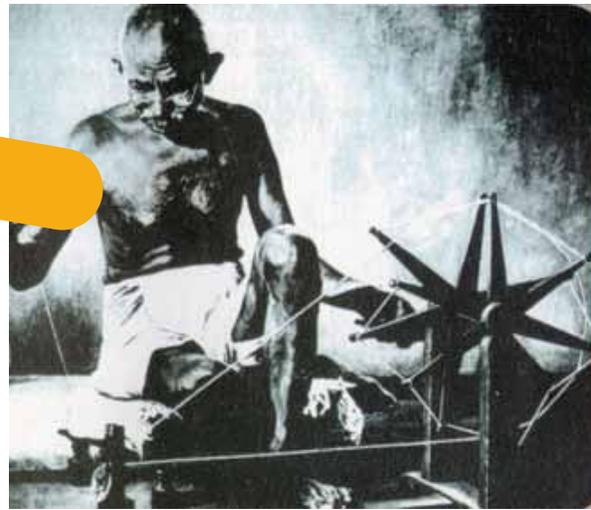
## MAHATMA GANDHI

**Who?** The peacemaker of India.

**Why?** Getting rid of an oppressive regime not fighting them, but by holding a mirror to their inhumanity and shaming them.

**Legacy:** Satyagraha his theory and practice of non-violent resistance Truth and love, It's what they world needs right now.

**Obstacles:** South Africans calling him coolie and chucking him off trains, the British throwing him into jail, his own peers like Subash Chandra Bose (who



later worked with the Nazis) telling him turning the other cheek would never work, nor would working with other religions. If they'd stood by him, the Hindu-Muslim divide may not have been as wide as it is.

**Cool Fact:** Born Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, his moniker of Mahatma (Great soul) was given to him by non other than Rabindranth Tagore.

**Cool Quote:** "I believe in equality for everyone, except reporters and photographers" (that's Jawan stuffed then)

## APU NAHASAPEEMAPETILON

**Who?** Owner of the Kwik-e-Mart in the Simpsons' hometown of Springfield.

**Why?** For being the first Indian to wind over American opening the doors for the likes of Shekhar Kapoor and M Night Shamalayan. And for making superb curry squishes.

**Cool Fact:** Tries to convert an animal culling nation into vegetarians by replacing hot dogs with tofu dogs, endorsed by the McCartneys, who holiday in his back yard.

**Cool Quote:** "Now, now, this is not a lending library. Put down that magazine or I'll blow your heads off!"

## RAVI SHANKAR

Without this man, last year's 'Indian cool' may not have happened. How cool that is, is debatable, but without his input – the Beatles would not have got sitars in their eyes, east west fusion may never happened and do not kid yourself. Music brought us all together.

## AMITABH BACHCHAN

It's not because Richard and Judy once called him the most famous man on earth, it's not because he topped the movie personalities chart in a BBC poll or that he has a wax work double at Madam Tussaud's. It's because he is the Big B - when he got injured during the shooting of Coolie, the entire nation, led by the prime Minister, came to standstill to pray for him in the temples. Nuff said.

## SATYAJIT RAY

His Apu trilogy redefined the way movies were made to the extent that the great late Orson Welles cited him as the greatest director in the world. He won awards everywhere in the world, including an Oscar, and the only people that don't seem to have honoured him much is the industry he came from.