

RAJENDRA PRASAD MEMORIAL DEBATE 2019

RPMD 2019

14-16 NOVEMBER, 2019

I. Preliminary

These rules will be hereby referred to as the Rajendra Prasad Memorial Debate Rules (“**Rules**”) and must be strictly adhered to while participating in the 3rd Edition of the Rajendra Prasad Memorial Parliamentary Debate.

II. Format of the Tournament

The Rajendra Prasad Memorial Parliamentary Debate, 2019 will follow the ‘3-on-3’ Asian parliamentary style of debating governed by the following rules, regulations, and guidelines:

- a) Each debating match will consist of two teams; one to propose the motion and one to oppose it. The team proposing may be known as ‘The Proposition’, ‘The Affirmative’ or ‘The Government’. The team opposing may be known as ‘The Opposition’ or ‘The Negative’. Teams will be designated as the Proposition or the Opposition for each round of the competition.
- b) Each debate shall be adjudicated by a panel comprising of an odd number of adjudicators. One of these shall be designated as chairperson. In exceptional situations, and only in Pre- Break Rounds, a debate may be adjudicated by a single experienced adjudicator.
- c) Each debate shall be timed by a timekeeper. In the absence of a timekeeper, a member of the adjudication panel will time the speeches.
- d) A team will comprise of the following members:

Proposition:

Prime Minister (P.M.).

Deputy Prime Minister (D.P.M.). Government Whip.

Opposition:

Leader of the Opposition (L.O.).

Deputy Leader of the Opposition (D.L.O.). Opposition Whip.

- e) Debaters will speak in the following order:

- Prime Minister
- Leader of Opposition
- Deputy Prime Minister
- Deputy Leader of Opposition
- Government Whip
- Opposition Whip
- Opposition Reply Speech (to be given by either the 1st or 2nd Opposition Speaker).
- Government Reply Speech (to be given by either the 1st or 2nd Proposition Speaker).

f) Speakers not 'holding the floor' may not rise during a speech unless it is to offer a 'Point of Information'. Speakers doing so, or considered to be heckling, barracking or whose behaviour is interfering with the acceptable course of a debate will be declared 'out of order' or will be 'called to order' by the Chairperson.

III. Motions

- a) The motions for each round will reflect a specific and well-known theme, and each round of the competition will comprise of three motions.
- b) On release of the motions, both teams in a match-up shall rank their preferred motions. The third option of both teams is immediately dropped. If the teams have the same most- preferred motion then that will be the debate motion. In case of an undecided tie between the two remaining motions, the motion for that round and match-up will be decided on the basis of toss of a coin. It is the responsibility of the timekeeper to oversee the choice and selection of the motion.

IV. Preparation

- a) Match-ups and venues will be announced before motions are revealed.
- b) Once the motions are released, teams must immediately proceed to their venues, where the motion is decided upon. From the time of selection of the motion, teams have 15 minutes preparation time until the commencement of the debate in that round.

- c) The Government has the right to prepare in chambers (venue).
- d) No access to any printed material or electronic media or electronic storage or retrieval devices is permitted after motions have been released. This includes but is not limited to, all kinds of books, printed notes, computers, electronic data banks, cellular phones, etc. time may be accessed during a debate, but may not be used by a speaker holding the floor.
- e) Teams must prepare on their own and not seek any external assistance. Once motions have been released, there must be no contact between debaters in a particular team and coaches, trainers, friends, observers or any other individual for the purposes of assistance in the context of the debate. Such contact and assistance will be deemed as 'cheating' and will be penalized strictly.
- f) Teams failing to arrive in time for the debate will forfeit that particular round and a walkover would be granted to the other team present. Failure to turn up for two consecutive rounds will lead to the team being disqualified.

V. Timing

- a) It is the duty of the timekeeper, or of a panellist or Chair (in absence of a timekeeper), to time all the speeches in each round.
- b) The timing of each speech starts at the moment that the member begins speaking.
- c) Time for speeches:
- Substantive speech: 6+1 minutes
 - Reply speech: 3+1 minute
- d) Time signals will be given in the following manner
- End of first minute – Single tap.
 - End of sixth minute – Single tap.
 - End of seventh minute – Double tap.

e) After the double tap, speakers have a 20-second grace period, during which they should conclude their speech. After this grace period has elapsed, there will be a continuous tapping, and adjudicators must disregard the rest of that particular speech. +If the speaker concludes his/her speech before the second single tap, he or she should be penalized under Method and possibly also under Matter. The latter, assuming that less matter was advanced, or that it was clearly underdeveloped.

VI. Point of Information

- a. Points of Information (POIs) may be offered during the six substantive speeches only, after the first single tap. POI may not be offered during the first and last minutes of substantive speeches. If a POI is offered in the first or the last minute of a constructive speech, it is the duty of the speaker holding the floor to reject the same as being out of order. Only if the speaker holding the floor fails to do the same, the chair of the adjudicator panel may very briefly intervene and call the house to order.
- b. A POI must be indicated by a member of an opposing team rising from his/her seat. A member offering a POI may draw attention to the offer by saying “on that point Sir/Madam,” or short headlining tags. These tags may not be more than two words long and if entire questions are posed in the tag this can be marked down under method.
- c. A member holding the floor must respond to an opposing member offering POIs, in one of the following ways:
 - A clear gesture or hand signal rejecting the offer.
 - A verbal rejection of the offer, or
 - A verbal acceptance of the offer.
- d. If a POI is accepted, the point should be phrased as a question, or clarification, or comment, and ideally made in no more than 15 seconds. POI should be such that they allow the member holding the floor some chance of responding.

- e. After a POI has been offered, no further clarifications may be sought either by the speaker holding the floor or by the member offering the Point of Information, except strictly in situations where the Point of Information is clearly inaudible, and therefore a repetition of the same is necessary.
- f. Points of Information are marked for their strategic use under Method, and for their content under Matter. Unwarranted use of points of information can be marked down under Manner. (See parts 10, 11, and 12 of this document for more on Matter, Manner, and Method).

VII. Adjudication

- a) Debates are generally adjudicated by panels of three adjudicators, or, where this is not possible, by a single, senior adjudicator. Larger panels will adjudicate the semi-finals and the finals. The 'Best Speaker' of the competition shall be determined on the basis of overall individual points in Pre-Break Rounds of the Competition.
- b) All the debaters must leave the chambers following the completion of all speeches. Adjudicators will arrive at their decisions on an individual basis, fill in the speed ballots, and pass them to the timekeeper. Adjudicators cannot confer with each other before marking and handing over their speed ballots. A majority decision will prevail for each round of the competition.
- c) The adjudicators may confer and discuss the debate and their feedback (in no event for more than 5 minutes) before announcing the results before the teams in rounds where there is open adjudication. In all of these rounds (except for the Finals), there will be an open adjudication after the decision for each debate is announced, where adjudicators will give reasons for their decision and other feedback to the teams. The last two rounds of Phase 1 will be closed rounds – that is, results will not be announced to the teams nor will be no open adjudication.

- d) Debaters should not indulge in, and adjudicators should not entertain excessive argumentation or cross-questioning, at the time of the open adjudication.

VIII. Definitions

- a. The definition is the interpretation of the motion as put forward by the Prime Minister, or First Affirmative, in his opening remarks. There must exist a clear and logical link between the definition and the wording and spirit of the motion. The onus for establishing how the definition ties in with the given motion lies completely upon the Prime Minister. All subsequent speakers have a purely clarificatory role (if any) in this regard.
- b. The definition should be reasonable.
- c. The definition should state the issue or issues arising out of the motion to be debated and state the meanings of any terms in the motion requiring clarification.
- d. The Opposition can challenge the definition advanced by the Proposition only on the basis of one or more of the following conditions:
- A truism (a matter stated as fact).
 - A tautology (a definition which, in development, proves itself).
 - Place set (setting an unnaturally restrictive geographical or spatial location as its major parameter).
 - Time set (setting an unnaturally restrictive chronological duration as its main parameter).
 - Wholly unreasonable/ Squirrel (displaying no clear or logical links to the motion also narrowing down the ambit of the motion).

It must clearly state the individual condition(s) based upon which it is challenging the definition. If there are more than one conditions of challenge, the individual conditions of challenge shall be adjudicated upon independent of each other.

The Opposition may not challenge a definition supplied by the Proposition on the basis that:

- the definition does not adhere to the theme provided for the round.
- its own definition is MORE reasonable.
- a better debate will result. Nor may the Negative re-define terms or words contained in the motion so that a completely different debate is thereby set up. However, a Negative may contend with the specific or general approach to terminology supplied by the definition of the Affirmative.

IX. Challenging the Definition

- a. The definitional challenge must be made in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, following a clear statement that the definition is being rejected. The onus for establishing the definitional challenge lies completely upon the Leader of the Opposition. Subsequent speakers are strictly permitted a purely clarificatory role (if any) in this regard.
- b. In the event of a challenge, the Leader of the Opposition must do all of the following:
 - He must justify his rejection by supplying the ground(s) on which the original definition has been rejected.
 - He must supply a substitute definition.
 - The Opposition must then go on to negate the substitute definition.

If the Opposition does not do all of the above it automatically loses the debate.

- c. If the Leader of the Opposition does not challenge the definition, no other speaker may do so.

- d. The onus to prove that a definition is unreasonable is on the Opposition, and should not be presumed by the adjudicators.
- e. Adjudicators should not indicate during the debate whether the definitional challenge has succeeded. They cannot indicate which definition they find to be (more) acceptable. The final decision as to whether a definitional challenge has succeeded must take into consideration all 8 speeches in any debate.
- f. Neither team should abandon either the definitions or the challenges of its opening speakers.
- g. Definitions should not require members of the house to have access to, or possess, specific or expert knowledge.
- h. If a definitional challenge is upheld, the team making the challenge wins by the largest possible margin. If the definitional challenge fails, then the team making such a challenge loses by the largest possible margin.
- i. If more than one condition is stated as a ground for a definitional challenge, for the challenge to succeed it is sufficient that any one condition, adjudicated upon independent of the other condition(s), is upheld.

X. Matter

- a. 'Matter' relates to the issues in debate, the case being presented and the material used to substantiate argumentation.
- b. The issues in the debate should be correctly prioritized (by teams) and ordered (by adjudicators), dealing with the most important/pertinent first. (This guideline may be departed from, in order to preserve logical continuity and coherence.)

- c. Matter should be logical and well-reasoned.
- d. Matter should be relevant, both to the issue in contention and the cases being advanced.
- e. Matter should be persuasive.
- f. Matter will be assessed from the viewpoint of 'the average reasonable person'. Adjudicators must disregard any specialist knowledge they have, even though pertinent to the issues under debate.
- g. Bias will not affect an adjudicator's assessment (objective) or evaluation (subjective) of a debate.
- h. Adjudicators and debaters must not be discriminated against on the bases of religion, sex, race, nationality, sexual preference, age, social status, accent or any disability.
- i. It is recommended that a debater should take one or two points of information during a speech.
- j. The Opposition Whip may not introduce any new matter in to the debate. Similarly, no new matter may be introduced in either Reply speech.

XI. Manner

- a. Manner refers to the presentation and delivery style of a speaker.
- b. The following list represents some of the elements that are, or may be, subsumed under Manner. The list is intended as a guide, rather than as a

number of marking categories. It is the combination of these elements (rather than the accomplishment of each), in various proportions that contributes to an individual speaker's style. The major influence on an adjudicator must be: 'Is the speaker's manner effective in advancing the case?'

- Vocal Style: Volume, clarity, pronunciation, pace, intonation, fluency, confidence, and authority.
 - Language: Conversational.
 - Use of notes: Should not distract, should not be read.
 - Eye Contact: With audience.
 - Gesture: Natural, appropriate.
 - Stance.
 - Dress: (only an issue if inappropriate to the place or occasion).
 - Sincerity: Believability.
 - Personal Attacks.
 - Humour: Effectiveness of and appropriateness.
- c. Debater and adjudicators in the competition must be aware that they will experience many different debating styles different colleges and countries. There is no single 'correct' or 'right' style to adopt in this competition. Nor should a speaker's style be dismissed as inappropriate in the national or regional context of the adjudicators or debaters who witness it.
- d. As with Matter, personal bias must not be allowed to influence an adjudicator's assessment of Manner.

XII. Method

- a. There are three major elements in the context of Method. These are:
- Individual Method.
 - Team Method.
 - Overall response to the dynamics of the debate.
- b. Individual Method pertains to the structure and organization of an individual speech. This may be evident in a reasonably clear outline of the responsibilities of the speaker and the order of the issues to be dealt with in his/her speech. It may also be apparent in the degree of fluency with which a speech moves from one point to another in a clearly logical sequence. Similarly, a speaker may indicate his/her transitions from one phase to another.
- c. Individual Method pertains to the 'balance' of a speech. Whereby, an equable division of speaking time is made to allow each of the phases of the speech a reasonable time for development (opening remarks, rebuttal, own points, summary, etc). It also pertains to good time management and good time keeping.
- d. Team Method pertains to the effectiveness of the team's case organization and structure as a whole. It also pertains to the equable division of roles (speakers) and responsibilities during a debate and the effective discharge of those roles and responsibilities.
- e. Response to the dynamics of the debate pertains to the reactive abilities of speakers and teams to the ongoing strategies being employed by both sides, and the shifts in the balance of power from one side to another.
- f. Teams and speakers should respond to clear strategic issues, not minor 'slips of the tongue' or insignificant points, including but not limited to examples and analogies.

- g. Dynamic response could also be reflected in Matter marks for a speaker in cases where the identification of a vital point, the cogent analysis of this point in the context of the debate, and a balanced attack on the same, is developed in an ensuing speech.
- h. Team members may keep time and signal members holding the floor. Time signals may not be spoken aloud. Speakers may also keep their own time.

XIII. Marking the Debate

- a. At the end of every debate, each adjudicator must complete their adjudication forms.
- b. There are no draws in competitive debating.
- c. Teams failing to turn up for the debate on time, and with no valid reason, will lose the debate by the widest possible margin. The other team may then face-off against a stand-by swing team [non-competitive for the purposes of the competition] constituted by University, or be granted a walkover for that particular round.
- d. For constructive speeches, marks shall be awarded to speakers based on the following:
 - An average speech shall be awarded:
 - i. Matter: 30/40
 - ii. Manner: 30/40
 - iii. Method: 15/20
 - iv. Total: 75/100

- A speaker may not under any circumstance be awarded less than 28/40 in Matter and Manner, and less than 13/20 in Method. Therefore, the worst possible speech would still get 69/100.
- A speaker may not under any circumstance be awarded more than 32/40 in Matter and Manner, and more than 17/20 in Method. Therefore, the best possible speech would get no more than 81/100.

e. For reply speeches, marks shall be awarded to speakers based on the following:

- An 'average' reply speech shall be awarded:
 - i. Manner: 15/20
 - ii. Effectiveness: 22/30
 - iii. Total: 37/50
- A speaker may not under any circumstance be awarded less than 14/20 in Manner, and less than 20/30 in Effectiveness. Therefore, the worst possible reply speech would still get 34/50.
- A speaker may not under any circumstance be awarded more than 16/20 in Manner and more than 24/30 in Effectiveness. Therefore, the best possible reply speech would get no more than 40/50.

f. The 'average' mark for an 'average team' is therefore: $75+75+75+37 = 262/350$.

g. The lowest possible score is therefore: $69+ 69+69+34 = 241/350$.

h. The highest possible score is therefore: $81+ 81+81+40 = 283/350$.

XIV. Marking the Win/Loss Margin

- a. Adjudicators must determine, at the conclusion of a debate whether the overall margin of win/loss separating the teams was (independently of speaker scores) close, clear or a thrashing margin on a scale of 1 to 12.
 - Close win = 1 to 4 points.
 - Clear win = 4 to 8 points.
 - Thrashing = 8 to 12 points.
- b. Win/Loss Margins lower than 1 and higher than 12 are not permitted.
- c. The difference between the cumulative speaker scores of the two teams in the match need not be the same as the win loss margin.
- d. However, the team that wins the debate must have a higher cumulative score.

XV. Basis for Ranking Teams

Following the preliminary rounds, the top eight ranked teams break into the quarter-finals. The criterion for purposes of power-matching and ranking would be as follows:

- Win versus Loss record.
- Cumulative margins (all win/loss margins as described by Section XIII added together).
- Overall points (to decide between teams with the same number of wins and same overall average margin of victory).

XVI. Change in Rules

Any or all of the above rules, regulations, and guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the organizers, with prior intimation to the participants.

XVII. Grievance Redressal

Any serious grievances during the course of the tournament may be communicated in writing to the Conveners and will be dealt with according to University Guidelines.



