

Lex-Knot-2017

Rules for Vox Populi 2017- Asian Parliamentary Debate

Introduction:

The 2nd annual Vox Populi 2017 will follow the Asian parliamentary style of debating governed by the following rules, regulations, and guidelines.

Number of participants: Four in a team

Prizes

First Prize- Rs 20,000/-

Second Prize- Rs 10,000/-

Best Adjudicator- Rs 5,000/-

Best Debater- Rs 5,000/-

General Rules and format of the competition:

- 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’ or ‘The Government’. The team opposing may be known as ‘The Opposition’. Teams will be designated as the Proposition or the Opposition for each round of the competition.
- Each debate shall be adjudicated upon by a panel comprising of an odd number of adjudicators who shall be the participants of the competition.
- Each debate shall be timed by a timekeeper. In the absence of a timekeeper, a member of the adjudication panel will time the speeches.
- Teams will comprise the following members.
 1. The Government or The Proposition will consist of
 - a. Prime Minister
 - b. Deputy Prime Minister,
 - c. Government Whip,
 2. The Opposition team will consist of
 - a. Leader of the Opposition,
 - b. Deputy Leader of the Opposition,
 - c. Opposition Whip.
- The order of the speech and the basic structure of the speech is as follows
 - i. Prime Minister: The Prime Minister Defines the topic, identifies issues which will be in contention, team structure, team split and present his arguments.

- ii. Leader of Opposition: identify major areas of disagreement with the proposition case, any disagreement about the definition, rebut the major arguments put forth by the Prime Minister.
- iii. Deputy Prime Minister: rebut major arguments, identify the major areas of disagreement with the other team.
- iv. Deputy Leader of Opposition: defend own case against rebuttal by previous speaker, present arguments allocated to the second speaker.
- v. Government Whip: present an overview of the debate, identify the essential issues upon which the teams disagree and summarize own case.
- vi. Opposition Whip: same as that of Government Whip.
- vii. Opposition reply
- viii. Government reply

MOTIONS

- The motions for each round will reflect a specific and well-known theme. There will be 3 motions released and 1 motion is to be chosen for the debating purpose.
- On release of the motions, both teams will rank the motions on the basis of their preferences. The third option of both teams is immediately dropped. If there remains a clear favorite, that motion is directly selected. 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 coin. It is the responsibility of the timekeeper to oversee the choice and selection of the motion.
- Preparation: before the topic is announced, debaters will already know whether they will be proposing or opposing the motion. From the time of announcement of the motion, teams will have 20 mins preparation time until commencement of the debate in that round. Once the debate has begun, debaters may use notes prepared during their designated preparation time, but shall not have access to any electronic media during the debate.
- Teams must prepare on their own. Once motions have been released, there must be no contact between debaters in a particular team, trainers, friends, observers or any other individual for the purposes of assistance in the context of the debate. Such contact and assistance is deemed as 'cheating'.
- Teams should arrive at their debate venue 2 minutes before the scheduled starting time for that debate.

TIMING

- It is the duty of the timekeeper, or of a panel member or Chair (in absence of a timekeeper), to time all the speeches in each round.
- The timing of each speech starts at the moment that the member begins speaking.
- Substantive Speeches:
 - All rounds (except Finals): 6 + 1 minutes.
 - Finals: 7+1 minutes
 - Reply Speeches (All rounds): 3+1 minutes in all rounds.
- A buzzer will be used to signal the time at the **end** of the following minutes
 - Preliminary/Quarter Finals/Semi Finals: First, Fifth and Sixth minute.
 - Finals: First, Sixth and Seventh minute.
 - Reply Speeches (for all rounds): Third and Fourth minute
- Once the time signal is given after the last minute, 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 buzzing, and adjudicators must disregard the rest of that particular speech.

POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Points of Information (POIs') may be offered during the six substantive speeches only, after the first single buzz and up to the second single buzz. Points of Information may not be offered during the first and last minutes of substantive speeches. If a Point of Information 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.
- POI may only be offered to speakers on the opposing round. A POI must be indicated by rising from his/her seat. A member offering a Point of Information may draw attention to the offer by saying "on that point Sir/Madam," or a short word calling attention to the member of the opposing team raising the point of information. Points of information must be brief and should be raised in the form of a question or clarification.
- A member holding the floor can either reject or accept the offer of POI. The rejection be by a hand signal or a verbal rejection. 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 necessitated.
- 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.

DEFINITIONS

- The definition is the interpretation of the motion as put forward by the Prime Minister, or First Affirmative, in his opening remarks. The onus for establishing how the definition ties in with the given motion lies completely upon the Prime Minister. The definition should state the issue or issues arising out of the motion to be debated, state the meanings of any terms in the motion requiring clarification and display clear and logical links to the wording and spirit of the motion.
- The definition should not be:
 - 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 (displaying no clear or logical links to the motion).
- Only the Opposition may challenge the definition advanced by the Proposition on the basis of one of the above-mentioned conditions, and must clearly state which individual condition based upon which it is challenging the definition.

CHALLENGING THE DEFINITION

- 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. If the Leader of the Opposition does not challenge the definition, no other speaker may do so.
- In the event of a challenge, the Leader of the Opposition must justify his/her rejection by supplying the grounds on which the original definition has been rejected. Furthermore, a substitute definition must be supplied, which the Opposition benches must then go on to negate.
- The onus to prove that a definition is unreasonable is on the Opposition, and should not be presumed by the adjudicators. Neither team should abandon either the definitions or the challenges of its opening speakers.
- 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. Adjudicators are expected to make a holistic decision about the debate on the parameters including the success or failure of the challenge, as well as how well both teams defend their definitions and fulfil their role in proposing and opposing the definitions they have assumed. A definitional challenge should take place in the rarest of rare cases.

MARKING THE DEBATE

- At the end of every debate, each adjudicator must complete their adjudication forms
- The marking scheme allows a maximum of 100 marks to be awarded for each speaker, subdivided into 40 marks for each of matter and manner and 20 marks for method. An 'average' speech shall be awarded a score of 30 marks for each manner and matter and no less than 26 in each under any circumstance and shall be awarded 15 marks in method for a average speech and no less than 13 in this criteria under any circumstances. The debater should not awarded more than 34 for each matter and manner and not more than 17 in method. That makes the least score of a speaker in any debate 65/100 and the best score would not be more than 85/100.

WIN LOSS MARGIN

- 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.
 - Close win: 1 to 4 points.
 - Clear win: 5 to 9 points.
 - Thrashing: 10 points.

MATTER

- ‘Matter’ is the content of the speech. It includes issues in debate, the arguments and the material used to support the arguments and analysis. The rebuttal and points of information are also considered as Matter. In Points of Information both the question and the content of the answer are included within the category of matter.
- The most important elements of Matter are logic and relevance. Matter should be relevant, both to the issue in contention and the cases being advanced.
- Matter will be assessed not only based on presence of matter but also the quality of the matter presented should be considered.
- A debater should ideally take at least two points of information during a speech.
- The Opposition Whip may not introduce any new matter in to the debate. Similarly, no new matter may be introduced in both Reply speeches.

MANNER

- The presentation style of a speaker is the Manner. The elements of manner are body language and vocal style.
- The presentation style varies from speaker to speaker. Hence the adjudicator should only focus on whether the speaker’s manner is effective in advancing the case.
- Debater and adjudicators in the competition must be aware that they will experience many different debating styles different colleges. 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.
- As with Matter, personal bias must not be allowed to influence an adjudicator’s assessment of Manner.

METHOD

Method is the structure and organization of the speech. It shall be comprising of Individual Method; Team Method, Overall response to the debate. The important elements of method are responsiveness and structure.

- The method 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. 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).
- Individual Method pertains to good time management and good time keeping. Team Method pertains to the effectiveness of the team's case organization and structure which can be evidenced from the proper division of roles of the speakers and responsibilities and effective discharge of the same by the speaker.

