**Official** **Rulebook**

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**I.** **The** **Format**

**I.1** **Tournament** **Format**

**I.1.1** Youth Assembly NITD 2017 invites 16 teams from various colleges and educational institutions. It starts with preliminary round and is then followed by the semifinal and the grand final.

**I.1.2** For the first round, teams shall be matched up randomly. For the following rounds power match ups will be followed. After the preliminary round, the top 8

teams sorted by win/loss record and speaker scores respectively will break into the

semi-finals. Further details on scoring and tabbing shall be provided to all participants

on the first day.

**I.1.3** Each preliminary debate and the semi-finals will be judged

by an adjudicator, the designated Chairperson. The grand-final will be judged by a panel of at least 3 adjudicators.

I.1.4 The final round will have four teams with two speakers each. The teams will be further divided into groups of two each. Two of the teams (and hence four speakers) are on the government and two teams are on the opposition. The first two speakers on the government side are called the opening government, the first two on the opposition are called the opening opposition and similarly the last two speakers on the government and the opposition are called the closing government and the closing opposition respectively. Speeches alternate between the two sides, starting with the first government speech, and are usually up to either five or seven minutes in length. All the teams are trying to win the debate outright - this means that it is not the side which wins but a specific team. Hence, speakers within the same team cooperate but teams on the same side do not cooperate during the debate, and instead try to outmaneuver each other. The teams are then ranked first to fourth in the debate. Each of the teams has a specific role in the debate.

**I.2** **Debate** **Format**

**I.2.1** Youth Assembly NITD 2017 will follow a modified 2 on 2 Cambridge style of

Parliamentary Debating. In each debate, there will be two teams, called Proposition

and Opposition. There are two speakers per team, namely the Prime Minister &

Deputy Prime Minister [side Proposition] and the Leader of Opposition & Deputy

Leader of Opposition [side Opposition].

**I.2.2** The Motions for the preliminary round will be released by the organizers of the Tournament before hand. For the subsequent rounds, once all matchups have been announced, the motions will be released. In each debating room, a coin will be tossed, and

the winning side will choose its role for the upcoming debate.

The teams get **20** **minutes** of preparation time before debating commences.

**I.2.3** It is the prerogative of the Proposition to decide whether they want to prepare

in chambers or outside. If they wish to prepare in chambers, it is the duty of the

Chairperson to ensure that members of the Opposition, members of the adjudication

panel and any spectators vacate the room for the next 20 minutes.

**I.2.4** Printed and prepared materials **may** be accessed during the preparation

period. No access to electronic media or electronic storage or retrieval devices

including but not limited to personal computers, netbooks, tablet PCs, mobile phones,

PDAs is permitted after the motions have been released. Printed and prepared

materials may be accessed during a debate but may not be used during a speech.

**I.2.5** Teams are strictly **banned** from communicating or seeking help from any third

party including but not limited to coaches, seniors, other members of their contingent

once motions have been released. **Any** **team** **found** **violating** **rules** **I.2.4** **or** **I.2.5** **will**

**automatically** **forfeit** **that** **round.**

**I.2.6** The Proposition can choose to debate the motion as it stands or to define it in

suitable terms, **within the scope of the pre-defined theme for the round** [see

section III].

**I.2.7** The order of speaking is Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, Deputy Prime

Minister, Deputy Leader of Opposition. These four speeches are called **substantive** or

**constructive** speeches. These will be followed by the Interrogation round [see below].

Once the Interrogation round is completed, each team will summarize their respective

positions and why they think that the debate should be awarded to their side in **Reply**

speeches, with the opposition replying first. The debate ends at the completion of the

reply speeches.

**I.2.8** **Walkovers** Any team that fails to report to the correct room within **5** **minutes**

of match ups being announced will forfeit that round. The same holds for any team not

ready to begin debating within **2** **minutes** of completion of preparation time. A runner

will be assigned to each match. His/her job will be to guide the teams to the correct

room and help the Chair in the smooth conduct of the match.

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**I.2.9** **Interrogation** **Round** At the end of the four substantive speeches, the teams

shall be asked to cross examine each other in the format of a 1 on 1 interrogation,

with one speaker from the opposition commencing the questioning by choosing

any one speaker from the Proposition. Next, one speaker from the Proposition

chooses one from the Opposition for interrogation. The same is repeated again

with the remaining speakers on either team. Each speaker will question for **3**

minutes. The teams are expected to use interrogation as a means of logically

exposing errors and inconsistencies in the arguments of the opposing side.

**I.2.10** **Guidelines** **for** **Interrogation:**

- **Introduction** **of** **new** **lines** **of** **argument** **is** **not** **allowed** **in** **the** **interrogation**

**round,** though new examples are permitted. Any such matter introduced in the

interrogation round will be ignored by the adjudicators.

- Both questions and answers should be kept brief and to the point. The

Chairperson can step in if he or she feels that a speaker is stalling or wasting

time.

- The examining team may request the Chair to interrupt the answering team in

the event of the following:

o That the latter is wasting time

o That the latter is introducing matter irrelevant to the question

o That the latter is introducing arguments not previously stated in their

constructive speeches.

The Chair may or may not accept the request. The decision of the Chair will

be final.

- The Chair may direct the examining team to keep their questioning precise and

brief, in the event that the questions are being used to further expand their

case.

- The Chair may choose to disqualify questions that are deemed irrelevant to the

purpose and scope of the debate.

- Under exceptional circumstances, the team being examined may ask the Chair

to intervene if they feel that are not being given enough time to answer.

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**II.** **Time** **Limits**

**II.1** **Preliminary** **round:**

**II.1.1** Each Substantive speech – **5** **+** **1/2** **Minutes**

The speaker will be given half a minute count on request. The timekeeper/Chairperson will

give a single knock of the gravel at the completion of the first minute, another single

knock at the completion of the fifth minute and two knocks after five and half minute.

Each speaker will get a grace period of **30** **seconds**. **Any** **points** **made** **by** **the**

**speaker** **after** **the** **6:00** **mark** **shall** **be** **ignored** **by** **the** **adjudicators.**

**II.1.2** **Once** **the** **Prime** **Minister** **completes** **his/her** **speech,** **the** **Leader** **of**

**Opposition** **will** **get** **a** **minute** **to** **prepare.** The other speakers will not be given any

preparation time. Both teams will get a **common** **minute** to prepare for the

Interrogation round. Both teams will get a **common** **minute** on completion of the

Interrogation round to prepare their Reply speeches.

**II.1.3** Each session of Interrogation – **3** **Minutes**

The Chairperson/timekeeper shall inform the examiner that he/she can ask one **more**

**question** **at** **the** **2** **minute** **mark.**

**II.1.4** Each Reply speech – **2+1** **Minutes**

The Chairperson/timekeeper will give a single knock of the gravel at the completion of

the first minute, another single knock at the completion of the third minute and two

knocks at the fourth minute. Each speaker will get a grace period of **30** **seconds**.

**II.2** **Semi** **Finals**

Each Substantive speech – **6+1/2** **Minutes**

Each session of Interrogation – **3.5 Minutes**

Each Reply speech – **3+1** **Minutes**

**II.3** **Grand** **Finals**

Each Substantive speech – **7+1** **Minutes**

Each session of Interrogation – **4.5** **Minutes**

Each Reply speech – **3+1** **Minutes**

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**III.** **Themes,** **Motions,** **Definitions** **and** **Challenges**

**III.1** Each round will be associated with a theme, with the motions for the round connected to the theme. It is the prerogative of the Proposition to define the motion. The Prime Minister has to lay out the following in his/her speech:

- The **motion** up for debate

- The definition of the **House**

- The proposition’s interpretation of the motion and its **context**, which leads to

the formulation of the **Case** **Statement** [the motion as it is finally to be debated].

- The **logical** **link** between the original motion and the Proposition’s case

statement.

- The **team** **split** – basically an outline of the arguments to be proposed by the

Prime Minister and his deputy.

- The Proposition’s **Burden** **of** **Proof** – what the proposition intends to show by

the end of the debate.

- The Proposition’s **Policy/Model** – if there is one it must come in the Prime

Minister’s speech in its entirety. **The** **deputy** **is** **allowed** **a** **purely** **clarificatory**

**role** **in** **this** **regard.** A **“floating** **model”**, i.e. a situation where some major

aspect of the model is presented in the Deputy Prime Minister’s speech is not

acceptable and any points of the Model occurring in the Deputy speech shall be

ignored by the adjudicators.

**III.1.1** The Proposition if it so wishes can forego defining the motion and propose it

as it stands.

**III.2** The Leader of the Opposition has to **state** **clearly** whether the Opposition

**accepts** the Proposition’s Case Statement. **Once** **the** **Case** **Statement** **has** **been**

**accepted,** **it** **is** **assumed** **that** **the** **Logical** **Link** **as** **proposed** **by** **the** **Proposition**

**holds.** No further contestation on the logical link will be entertained by the house.

Assuming that the Opposition accepts the case statement, the Leader of the

Opposition has to provide:

- The Opposition’s **Point(s)** **of** **Clash** – one or two major points on which the

Opposition intends to contest the Proposition’s Case Statement.

- The **Burden** **of** **the** **Opposition** – what the opposition intends to show by the

end of the debate

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- **The** **Team** **Split** – an outline of the arguments to be proposed by the Leader of

the Opposition and his deputy.

- **Part** of the Opposition’s **Model/Policy** [if one exists] must come in the Leader

of Opposition’s speech. However, the Deputy Leader of Opposition is allowed

to **add** to the policy as proposed by his/her Leader; therefore his/her role may

be more than clarificatory in this regard. If the Opposition’s second speaker

substantially alters the model proposed by the Opposition’s first speaker, then it

is to be considered a **“team** **slide”** and penalized accordingly. **The** **entirety** **of**

**the** **Opposition’s** **model** **cannot** **appear** **in** **the** **deputy** **speech** – the Leader

of the Opposition has to give fair warning about the nature of their Policy to the

Proposition.

**III.3** The Leader of the Opposition can choose to **challenge** the definition of the

Case Statement on **one** **or** **more** of the following grounds:

- **Squirreling** – This is when the logical link supplied by the Proposition is invalid

or unclear or altogether absent, resulting in a case statement significantly at

variance from the original motion. Additionally, If the Case Statement of the

Proposition does not fit the theme for the round [**“out** **of** **theme”**] then a

challenge based on **squirreling** **will** **hold**. As it will if a proposition has chosen

to define a motion and yet not given a clear Case Statement.

- **Truism** – These are definitions that are true by nature and thus make the

proposed case unarguable. For example – “Human Beings have to eat if they

have to live”.

- **Tautological** **Definition** – Also called **self-proving** **definition**. This is a

definition that cannot be negated using logical means – it is a self proving or

circular argument. For example: “No man is an island, and hence man is a

social animal”.

- **Time** **Set** – Limiting the context of the debate to a highly specific period in

history, such that the average undergraduate student is not expected to

possess sufficient knowledge of it.

- **Place** **Set** – Limiting the context of the debate to a highly specific geographic or

spatial location.

- **Specific** **Knowledge** – This is when the case as proposed by the Proposition

requires expert or scientific or technical knowledge not expected to be

possessed by an average undergraduate student.

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**III.3.1** When challenging a definition, the Leader of the Opposition can either

supply an alternative definition of the motion or provide some points in opposition

to the original motion [before it was defined by the Proposition]. In either case the

Opposition has to discharge its function of opposing the motion. **Failure** **to** **do** **so**

**would** **lead** **to** **an** **automatic** **loss** **for** **the** **Opposition.**

**III.3.2** In case the Leader of the Opposition fails to challenge the definition of the

motion in his/her speech, no further challenge will be entertained. In case the

Opposition challenges the definition on multiple grounds, then the **Challenge** **will**

**hold** **if** **the** **opposition** **can** **prove** **any** **one** **of** **the** **grounds** **to** **be** **valid.**

**III.3.3** In case of a challenge, the Deputy Prime Minister has to:

- Re-state the definition as supplied by the Prime Minister

- State why the Opposition’s challenge does not hold and why the Proposition’s

case is reasonable.

- State his arguments as per the Team Split offered by the Prime Minister to the

House.

- In case the Opposition has challenged the case on ground(s) like Tautology,

Truism, Time/Place Set or Specific Knowledge, the Deputy Prime Minister is

supposed to provide explanation and examples to show how the Opposition

could have debated the case.

- The Deputy Prime Minister does not rebut the alternative case supplied by the

Leader of Opposition, if any.

- The Deputy Prime Minister’s role is purely clarificatory – he can **in no way** add

to the definition supplied by the Prime Minister, and/or redefine certain terms

and/or extend the definition in any way. Any such addition, redefinition or

extension will be ignored by the adjudicators for the purposing of judging the

Challenge.

**III.4** While judging a Challenge, adjudicators have to keep in mind the following:

- A definition challenge cannot be awarded merely because the Opposition’s

alternative definition is more “reasonable” or “appropriate” or “suitable”, or

would result in a better debate.

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- The Opposition on challenging the definition is not allowed to make an **“if** **then**

**else”** argument. That is, once the definition has been challenged, they cannot

proceed to rebut the case defined by the Proposition.

- The onus to prove that the definition is unreasonable lies on the Opposition.

- Neither team should abandon either the definition or challenge of its opening

speaker.

- An Opposition **automatically** **loses** a challenge if it:

- Supplies an alternative definition **and** fails to oppose it.

- Doesn’t supply an alternative definition **and** doesn’t oppose the original

motion.

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**IV.** **Points** **of** **Information,** **Order** **and** **Personal** **Privilege**

**IV.1** Teams are encouraged to offer Points of Information while a speaker of the

opposing team holds the floor. Points of Information may be offered **only** during a

substantive speech. Points of Information may be offered only at the end of the first

minute and before the commencement of the final minute of the speech [both

indicated by the Chairperson/timekeeper by a single knock of the gravel].

**IV.1.1** A speaker offering a PoI must stand at his/her place uttering “On that point,

sir/madam” or other words to that effect. The speaker holding the floor must clearly

indicate verbally or through gestures whether the PoI has been accepted. PoIs can be

asked only at 15 second intervals – teams violating this guideline or otherwise

heckling can be called to order by the Chairperson.

**IV.1.2** A speaker holding the floor is encouraged to accept at least 2 PoIs during

the course of his or her speech. Failure to do so would cause the speaker to be

penalized on speaker scores. Failure to offer adequate number of Points Of

Information would result in the same.

**IV.2** A team may raise a **Point** **of** **Order** in situations where they think that the

other side is violating the rules or spirit of debating. For example, a point of order may

be raised for new matter in a reply speech at the end of the debate. It is generally

advisable to raise Points of Order once at the end, so that the flow of the debate is not

disturbed. **Please note, that points of order should be raised only on rare**

**occasions.**

**IV.2.1** Once a Point of Order is raised, the Chair can choose to accept, reject or

keep it in abeyance at his or her discretion. For points kept in abeyance, the Chair

must communicate his/her final decision on the point to the other members of the

adjudication panel before they begin weighing arguments.

**IV.3** A speaker may raise a **Point** **of** **Personal** **Privilege** if he/she believes that he

or she has been personally deeply wounded by something that the other side said or

did. A Point of Personal Privilege is a serious matter, **and raised only in the rarest of**

**rare instances**. If a Point of Personal Privilege is accepted by the chair, then the

offender must be penalized severely in terms of his or her individual speaker score.

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**V.** **Adjudication**

**V.1** Once both Reply speeches have been completed every member of the

adjudication panel shall concern themselves with awarding and scoring the debate,

both of which shall be done individually for each adjudicator. It is **not allowed** for

adjudicators to confer amongst themselves before reaching a decision, **except** in the

following cases:

- The adjudicator requires a clarification of the rules. He or she may ask the Chair

for the same. In case the Chair fails to provide suitable clarification the Chief

Adjudicators of the tournament may be approached.

- The adjudicator failed to properly hear or note down a point. In such an instance

he or she may ask the Chair to furnish the required information. The Chair is only

permitted to state and **not** explain the point to the adjudicator concerned.

**V.2** For a team to win a debate it must emerge victorious on a majority of the

adjudicators’ sheets. This is so for definition challenges as well.

**V.3** Guidelines for scoring teams shall be explained before the first round of the

Tournament and will be mentioned on the scoring sheet.

**V.4** Once all adjudicators have reached their decision **individually**, the Chair will

summon both teams to the room and announce the majority decision. Each

adjudicator including the Chair will then explain his or her decision to the teams, who

may ask for clarifications. The order in which the adjudicators shall give their feedback

is at the discretion of the Chair. Please note that certain rounds of the Tournament

may be declared closed by the organizers at their discretion. Teams shall not be

provided the decisions of closed round debates until later.

**V.5** Both teams and the Chair shall score every adjudicator on his/her decision and

the quality of feedback. Guidelines for scoring will be mentioned on the scoring sheet.

**V.6** Every debate will be awarded on the basis of matter, i.e. argumentation and

logic. While style and organization are important for the purposes of rating individual

speakers, debates are **not** to be awarded on these parameters. **Any** **adjudicator**

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**found** **to** **be** **awarding** **debates** **on** **the** **basis** **of** **manner** **or** **technique** **shall** **be**

**disqualified** **from** **the** **remainder** **of** **the** **competition.**

**V.7** **New** **Matter** – Teams are not allowed to introduce new lines of argument

during the Interrogation round or in Reply speeches. Any such matter in the

Interrogation round or in Reply speeches shall be ignored by the adjudicators. Please

note that examples, illustrations and clarifications are allowed.

**V.8** **Personal** **Knowledge** - Adjudicators must **ignore** any personal, specific or

expert knowledge they may have while judging a debate. In evaluating the relative

merits of arguments put forth by the two sides, the adjudicator is allowed to use **only**:

the record of the debate, logic [but not by reading into a debate] and **common**

**knowledge** **–** **information** **which** **can** **be** **regarded** **as** **non-technical** **general**

**information** **possessed** **by** **the** **average** **undergraduate** **student.**

**V.9** **Reading** **into** **a** **debate** – An adjudicator is said to have “read into” or “entered”

a debate when his/her decision is based on an unfair or undue extrapolation of the

arguments made by one side at the cost of the other. This is strictly disallowed.

Further, adjudicators are not to use their own arguments while judging, no matter how

obvious or truthful the argument seems to the adjudicator. Each argument which is

considered for the purposes of awarding the debate must have been explicitly

mentioned on the floor of the house.

**V.10** **Prioritizing** – Adjudicators must note that debates are **not** to be judged on a

point vs. point basis. Therefore a team winning say four out seven points in a debate

does not automatically win the debate. Adjudicators are required to rank points in

order of importance, and while judging determine which side was better able to

discharge its burden of proof.

**V.11** **Factual** **Clashes** – When two teams clash on a purely factual point, where

the veracity of one or the other side cannot be established without the use of specific

or expert knowledge, then the adjudicators are duty bound to ignore the point

altogether. Therefore, in a situation of “factual clash”, the point in question is ignored

for the purposes of judging the debate. **However,** **if** **an** **adjudicator** **believes** **that** **the**

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**factual** **clash** **lies** **within** **the** **domain** **of** **Common** **Knowledge,** **then** **he** **should**

**award** **the** **point** **to** **the** **team** **who** **he** **believes** **is** **correct.**

**V.12** **Speaker** **Roles** – See section III for what is expected of various speakers in a

debate. Speakers not discharging the burden expected of them are liable to be

penalized by the adjudication panel.

**V.13** **Judging** **Definition** **Challenges** – see section III.4 for the appropriate rules.

**V.14** **Non-discrimination** – Adjudicators will encounter a wide variety of speaking

styles during the course of the Tournament. There is no one “correct” or “ideal” style.

Adjudicators are encouraged to approach each debate with an open mind – they

shouldn’t be too specific in their expectations of technique or style. **A** **speaker** **must**

**not** **be** **discriminated** **against** **on** **the** **basis** **of** **race,** **religion,** **sex,** **nationality,**

**sexual** **preference,** **accent,** **age,** **social** **status** **or** **any** **disability.**

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