



# All Indian Political Parties Meet

## Background Guide

# All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM)

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***Agenda:*** Discourse on reforms regarding expression of dissent in parliament

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## **Letter from the Executive Board**

Greetings Delegates!

It is our honor to introduce you all to the Indian Committee of Deens Model UN 2023, the All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM). And we truly look forward to seeing all of you passionately discuss the agenda: Discourse on reforms regarding expression of dissent in parliament.

Dissent and discourse in Indian politics is known to be polarized and diluted, making law and policy discussion to be ineffective and inefficient. And we hope to see you all use the most rebuking tones of oration and elocution. As AIPPM is not the typical soft, diplomatic General Assembly committee, where all delegates sympathize and try to live in a little, small, happy environment. The AIPPM is a committee where personal attacks, footwear flying, twisted rhetoric, fire-fueled voices and the most absurd of antics prevail for one to survive. We may have committees for problem solving, improvement of public policy etc., yet you're now in a committee that decides to change the outlook of politics in our nation according to your portfolio's stances or ambitions.

Yes, you may have been intimidated by what the committee may outline. But we assure you, this committee won't be a pain in your head or a fearful ride, but an adrenaline rush for any delegate.

So prepare well, antagonize your inner politeness, and have a flaming tongue of political rage. To put it in a sentence, AIPPM is not a debate for one to compromise, it's a debate fueled by conquest.

All the best,

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## **Introduction to Committee**

An AIPPM or All India Political Parties Meet is a forum commonly seen in Indian politics meant to harbor unrestrained political debate, deliberation and discussion. It is such a forum that isn't restricted by the strict mandate or procedure that plagues the legislature, specifically the Lok Sabha. An AIPPM is typically called before one of the sessions of the Lok Sabha or before the introduction of a bill and serves to create some form of consensus before the actual commencement of committee or the tabling of a particular bill. In essence it is a supplementary body to Parliament and has no legislative powers. An AIPPM in a Model United Nations Conference functions in a fairly similar way where instead of dealing with the strict procedure under a Lok Sabha committee, it allows more lax procedure and allows delegates to focus more on the extent of powerful debate. As the AIPPM again has no legislative powers this makes it untechnical however it is still a very powerful committee when viewed through the lens of deliberation. Delegates in this committee are expected to be well researched and aware of the occurrences happening in Indian polity. They must also seek to represent their assigned portfolios with utmost accuracy. Therefore in addition to the agenda, delegates are also required to be up to date on

current affairs and all occurrences happening in daily life in relation to their portfolio To highlight this aspect there will be provisions present within this committee such as Question Hour however the procedural basis for this committee will be the UNA-USA Model United Nations procedure.

## **Rules of Procedure**

They are a set of conduct and rules that every delegate must abide by throughout the course of the committee. The Rules of Procedure are adopted at the beginning of the committee. The flow of committee is a timeline which is usually followed in a MUN and consists of parts arranged in specific orders. The Basic flow of committee in any Committee is as follows- In a MUN, you will represent a portfolio (Nation/Person). In this committee, you will be representing one of the portfolios in the matrix.

## **Roll Call**

The Roll call is an attendance for delegates in committee. The MUN begins a roll call, where each delegate must answer one of the following

- 1) **Absent** (The Delegate is absent in committee)

**2) Present** – The Delegate may “abstain” from voting on amendments and resolutions.

**3)Present and voting**-The delegate must vote on amendments and resolutions and can't abstain.

## **Motions**

Motions are a principal tool of the delegates to communicate with each other and the rest of the committee.

It is usually a proposal for decision making . A delegate raises a motion to propose a major decision in front of the committee. The fate of a motion is usually decided by a vote.

The format for a motion is- “The delegate of (Portfolio) raises a motion to (motion)” Example- The Delegate of China raises a motion to begin the general speakers list.”

Types of Motions- - Motion to begin Roll Call. - Motion to open the (General/Special/Provisional) Speaker’s List: on passing, begins the Speaker’s list, and the EB recognizes delegates wishing to speak. Ideal time per speaker is 90 seconds.

- Motion to enter a Moderated Caucus: on passing, the committee exits formal debate to discuss a specific topic pertinent to the agenda; example: Agenda of Iraq; topic-

Legality of invasion. Topic, time (total time and time for each speaker) should be mentioned in the motion.

- Motion to enter an Unmoderated Caucus: the committee exits formal debate, and the delegates are free to lobby, work on papers, etc without the moderation of the EB.

## **Points**

Points are the 2nd tool which a delegate uses throughout the committee. They are of 4 types

**1- Point of Personal Privilege-** used to resolve a personal issue. Points of Personal Privilege can be brought up any time during committee.

**2- Point of Parliamentary Enquiry-** used to ask a question/doubt directed at the Executive board regarding procedure, committee, agenda, etc

**3 - Point of Information-** raised by a delegate to ask a question to another delegate about something they have said in committee. The use of the Point of Information is presided by the EB and can be suspended.

**4 - Point of Order-** The Point of order is used to point out a flaw in another delegate's speech or statement. The flaw can either be a factual inaccuracy or a logical fallacy.

## **General Speaker's List-**

The General Speaker's List (GSL) is the first set of opening speeches in a committee. Once a motion for a GSL is passed, the chair recognizes speakers for the GSL.

The GSL is a non-exhaustive list i.e, once the list is finished, the committee ends. The chair entertains speakers for the GSL in frequent intervals. The GSL does not have a fixed subject, and the delegate may address any matter in the GSL. The usual time period for a GSL speech is 90 seconds.

## **Moderated Caucus**

A moderated caucus is similar to the GSL, however it has a specific subject and topic which must be addressed in the speech. Once the motion is passed, the chair recognizes speakers for the Moderated Caucus. They possess the greatest weightage when it comes to grading, and the delegate must specify the topic, and the time for a moderated caucus. Points of Information are generally not entertained on a Moderated Caucus. Example- The Delegate of ABC would like to raise a motion for a moderated caucus on the topic “xyz” for a duration of “q” minutes allotting “z” minutes to each speaker.

## **Unmoderated Caucus**

The Unmoderated Caucus is a period of free debate and the delegates are allowed to leave their seats and interact with each other. The Unmoderated Caucus is usually used by the delegates for making the resolution, working paper, or discussing crisis updates, etc. It also has a specific time period, and lapses.

## **Question Hour and Zero Hour**

The Question Hour is an essential component of the Lok Sabha where politicians can question each other over their duties, responsibilities or even on any of their allegations. It is the first proceeding conducted in committee after roll call, the questions are usually pre-decided and authorized by the Executive Board.

The Zero Hour is very similar to the Question hour, in that it is also a platform for questions to be asked. However, the Zero Hour happens in an All India Political Parties Meet(AIPPM) and is more informal, with more time and leeway present for questioning and follow-ups to questioning.

## **Introduction to the Agenda**

The right to disagree is a crucial component of what makes a Democracy free and fair. The open expression of dissent or disapproval with a government's actions is considered by most to be a sign of a healthy and vibrant democracy. Yet, there is often the question of when dissent turns into separatism and extremism. When disapproval morphs into destructiveness and a call for violence.

Indian democracy is not new to the challenges of treading the thin and constantly changing line that is the differentiator between exercising the fundamental right of speech and attempting to create unrest that threatens social harmony. There have been numerous calls throughout the past alleging that Indian laws controlling dissent, specifically the allegation that they must be amended or abolished. The handling of dissent by the ruling party has often fractured oppositions or in some cases intensified them. For when there is typically such overreach of power, entire lives, political careers and futures are destroyed, parties are split and walkouts are staged. At the same time, sometimes the drive to suppress dissent can only intensify it to unprecedented levels.

Dissent and its handling is as such a political discussion as much as a moral one. From their conception during the colonial era to their continued usage in modern times, laws regarding the control of free speech, i.e. Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code has attracted controversy for functioning as a tool for the ruling government to oppress and shut down all those who disagree with it. The question of what speech to restrict, how much to restrict it by, the penalty to discourage such speech and the fundamental problem that should speech and opinion ever be restricted are pressing concerns that relate to the very existence of a functioning democracy. To put it simply, dissatisfaction, dissent and disloyalty are three radically different things around whose handling revolves, the very fulcrum of democracy.

## **Problems with Dissent in Indian Politics**

- **Polarity and Lack of Ideology**

In Indian politics, the differences between the two alliances we have is absolutely insane. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is seen to be having politicians discourse on the extreme right, these politicians also happen to blindly praise the functioning of the current Government in many ways and refuse to accept any other perspective. While in the opposition, we have the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) that is usually seen to be stuck on the left. Yet, it is interesting to note here that the UPA/opposition itself is not a unified coalition. The Trinamool Congress(TMC) led by Mamta Bannerjee constantly flickers on her party's position on the congress and opposition unity. Then there is the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) that cannot choose sides. Even the leader of the UPA itself, the INC, is not an exactly ideal family within where lie a variety of politicians with radically different approaches like Shashi Tharoor who has a relatively lukewarm opinion of the Gandhi family and others like Jairam Ramesh, a staunch public supporter of the Gandhi family.. Overall, the UPA has massive differences but most of them always try their best to criticize the Government in one way or the other and some even deny to praise it. In fact, most of the opposition goes by the cause to do anything but to remove the current ruling party from power.

On the other hand, certain MPs don't really rely on a fixed ideology and stand to be power hungry, this causes them to choose a side that is beneficial for them respectively. When this happens, MPs or MLAs shift sides very easily without any basis and this is called Horse trading. Now to prevent this, there is a law called the Anti-Defection Law that was passed in 2001 due to the volatile nature of the Lok Sabha in the 1990s. Now even though the law doesn't allow politicians to switch parties during their tenure as members from their constituencies, the law does not keep parties fixed to their alliances. Hence, parties can change alliances whenever they want and thus parties do not stay bound to an ideology for pity reasons and change sides at any time. Furthermore, the law does not assure keeping parties intact. Hence, parties can be divided and cause different factions. The best example we see is the current politics in Maharashtra, first the rifting of Shiv Sena and now the difference in the two Pawar factions of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).

➤ **Lack of Party Discipline**

Throughout the years, the Parliament and state legislatures have had heated discourse. Certain discourses have angered the opposition to such an extent that the opposition have decided to walk out from the house, throw footwear at each other, conduct protests in the house that have brought discussions to a halt. Here are a few cases when this was seen:

➤ **Protests in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Sessions after RaGa's Disqualification, 2023**

On 22nd March, 2023, Rahul Gandhi was convicted in Ahmedabad High Court for defamation due to his defamatory remarks on the Modi surname during his elections rally in 2019. He had stated, “Saare Modi chor hai!” This caused him to be sued in Ahmedabad high court that sentenced him for 2 years of prison. Now, Rahul Gandhi, being a Member of Parliament from Wayanad, would have the action of the Representation of People Act, 1951 upon his head, for the article 102 (1) (e) of the act provisions to disqualify him due to his two years of prison sentence. Even though Rahul was provided bail quite immediately, the disqualification hit his way regardless. Hence, on 23rd March, 2023, the Lok Sabha Secretariat disqualified the opposition leader. This was followed by angry comments from a few NDA MPs against Rahul Gandhi’s use of diction

in Parliament and tried to knock off his Adani allegations against Modi as baseless and inflammatory. While the UPA MPs questioned the disqualification process as the Lok Sabha Secretariat conducted the procedure without the interference or notification of the Supreme Court and the secretariat refused to even provide Rahul a last chance to speak in the Lok Sabha, which angered the opposition even more. To add fuel to the fire, J. Dhankar, the Vice-President of India and the Ex-Officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, made statements against Rahul's verbatim. These statements were faced by angered MPs in the following Rajya Sabha session where the house erupted into chaos and a downward spiral of MPs screaming, footwear flying and paper pelting, which led Dhankar to adjourn the session immediately. It was not so different for the Lok Sabha, Om Birla, the Speaker of the Lower House, was faced with protests in front of his podium in the house, which led him to adjourn 2-3 sessions in the row. The fire spread to the streets as opposition members conducted peaceful protests on the streets of Delhi. At this point, the discourse in parliament was dissolved into mere active dissent and the opposition had now united more than ever.

➤ **Parliament walk-out due to suspension of 12 MPs, 2021**

In November of 2021, the winter session of the Parliament was put to a halt as the opposition demonstrated a walk out during the discussion of the Farmers' bills. This happened due to the fact that 12 of the MPs part of the opposition were suspended due to behavioral concerns. The 12 MPs consisted of members from the TMC, Shiv Sena, CPI and CPM. The opposition, understanding that the Government was eager to pass the Farmers' bill, saw it to be an ill time for themselves to discuss the bill. Hence, Malikarjun Kharge, the Leader of Opposition of the Rajya Sabha and other opposition members met the Ex-Officio Chairman of the House at the time, V. K. Naidu, asking for the MPs to have a seat in the Sabha. Yet, Naidu denied the request and called for a session. This angered the opposition as usual and many leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Derek O'Brian, Jairam Ramesh called the actions of the Parliament undemocratic and called for peaceful protests in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue. Hence, in the Winter Session, the opposition displayed their anger by walking out of both the houses of parliament.

➤ **The M. Faizal disqualification from Lok Sabha**

In March 2023, along with RaGa's disqualification controversy, M. Faizal, the MP for Karavathi was convicted for 10 years of imprisonment due to him being guilty of attempted murder

during the 2009 Lok Sabha polls. Yet, even Faizal received bail and due to the fact that any MP who has appealed to a higher court but the case still stands pending will be restored back in power, Faizal was reinstated in Parliament. This was gossiped amongst many media outlets that if the Law Ministry recommended Faizal to be reinstated then even Rahul Gandhi should.

### ➤ Media Bias

If we were to talk about discourse and how it gets connected to the public, the media always plays an inflammatory role and tries to increase polarity in order to increase viewer count. There are numerous instances of unproven allegations, radical opinions and sometimes plain baseless statements being aired, re-airied and widely publicized even by mainstream media outlets.

Dissent that is amplified through the media typically bores itself into the minds of the public and politicians alike. It creates perceptions that last long after the factuality of the news and its context and relevance is revealed or has eroded away. Examples of such perceptions are innumerable and widespread throughout Indian political discourse:

> **The Jawaharlal Nehru University and the ‘Anti-National’ Hub**

It is extremely common to find throughout mainstream media, the question about the patriotism of the students of a particular JNU. Videos of JNU students shouting seditious slogans and being politically extremist are widespread. Yet, an ignored aspect is the very significant presence of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad(ABVP), a wing of the JNU that has contested and come runner-up multiple times in the recent past including most recently in 2019-20.. The highlighting of JNU’s communist past and leftist history often underscores or masks the very real political presence, right-wing ideologies and hindu nationalists have in the university. An example of this fact was the 2020 attack on the Jawaharlal Nehru University allegedly perpetrated by elements with links to the ABVP and yet no arrests, FIRs or trials by media were conducted. Despite the significant presence of an ideological resistance, opposition or even extremism parallel to the leftist narrative in the JNU, there is still a widespread perception amongst the Indian public due to years of media bias.

> **“Godi” Media or BJP favoring Media**

Republic Bharat, Asianet, NDTV, what do all of these news media companies have in common? A stakeholder from a BJP link, for example, Rajeev Chandrashekhar, the current Minister of IT and Entrepreneurship, held a stake in Asianet and Republic Bharat and is said to have interests in the media companies for their rightist stance. In fact, earlier this year, Ravish Kumar resigned from NDTV Ltd. when the Adani Group (Adani is allegedly a close business link to PM Modi) bought a large stake in NDTV. Ravish Kumar stated, “How can a channel, bought by a corporation whose success is seen to be linked to contracts granted by the government, now criticize the government? It was clear to me I had to quit.” This showed how the media channels were now shifting clearly in favor of BJP. Even Times Now calls rightist supporters and lauders, J Sai Deepak (A Lawyer who has previously fought at the Supreme Court) and Anand Ranganathan (A JNU Professor of Chemistry) rather often to assert a rightist narrative from the channel.

At this point journalism in India has been reduced to instigation of violence. During the CAA protests and farmers’ protests the media was seen to unfairly represent the two sides of the issues and tend to favor the one that matches their narrative. This is why these media channels are known to be “Godi” that means Lapdogs as they do not take a

chance to criticize the government. This is why Rajdeep Sardesai once said, “a large section of the Indian media... has become a lap dog, not a watchdog.”

➤ **SC Judgement in Lok Prahar vs Union of India**

The Supreme Court Judgement in Lok Prahar vs Union of India had the court opine that the voter's casting of ballot is protected under his Fundamental Rights. The rationale being, one's vote itself is a form of speech/expression which the individual is stating or openly expressing. As such the court held, voting itself as an exercise of this fundamental right which drove it to bring in stricter financial regulations about members of parliament and their assets, to allow voters to exercise their fundamental right effectively. In essence, it considers voting to be covered under fundamental rights and as such expression of one's opinions/views through voting (which can be interpreted as dissenting or otherwise) is also protected and re-affirmed to be as effective as possible.

➤ **Laws preventing dissent**

In India, there are not just social obstructions but also a few legal frameworks that prevent dissent. The most feared happens to be sedition. Sedition is when an individual is convicted as a criminal or unlawful for what he or she may have said may have been termed as “Anti-national”. Now, this is done under the provisions of IPC 124(A), and this has been misused by the Government on multiple occasions like the JNU Protests in 2016. Since the line for what is Anti-national or what is not isn’t clear, the term itself becomes open to interpretation and hence, even criticisms for the government are called seditious at a point. This happenstance decreases the opportunity for people to criticize the government. On the other hand, Defamation is the check and balance to the Right to Freedom of Speech (Article 19 of the Indian Constitution). It is provisioned by IPC 499 to 502 in order to ensure that nobody harms the reputation of any person or tends to create a wrong opinion of the person who is defamed, in the eyes of the public. We have seen many citizens being afraid of criticizing the government due to the possibility of politicians suing anyone for defamation. The best example would be when Rahul Gandhi launched the “adani” campaign on twitter where he promised he would expose certain allegations of corruption charges on a few set of people that included G. N. Azad and Hemant Biswa Sharma; Biswa Sharma responded that he

would file a defamation suit on RaGa. Ever since, there has been no information from RaGa about any corruption charges done by H. B. Sharma. Hence, through the threat of a defamation lawsuit, an opposition leader could not provide a possible check and balance to a Chief Minister of a state.

## **Questions A Resolution May Answer (QARMA)**

1. To what extent can party splitting in state politics be stopped? What steps may be taken to recognize a faction may be the official faction for the Election Commission? And what provisions may be set up in the Anti-Defection Law to curtail factioning?
2. How can polarity be decreased in Indian Dissent? To what extent can polarity run good discussions in the legislatures?
3. If a member is convicted but is released on bail, should he/she still have action taken against him/her on his/her legislature membership?

4. What is the rightful procedure for a MP/MLA to be disqualified by?
5. If raising voices has become a common deed in Indian law-making bodies, then to what extent can it be said to be unparliamentary?
6. How can walk-outs be curtailed in Parliament and LAs?
7. To what extent can the media invoke polarity in political discourse with its respective narrative?
8. Should alliance shifting be curtailed by the Anti-Defection Law? To what extent does alliance shifting disrupt dissent or ideological stances in political discourse?
9. To what extent should the Representation of People's Act take action on convicted members of parliament? Does the SC decision from the Jagdish Sharma case of 2013 over reinstating the convicted MP if pendency of appeal in higher courts, should still stand?

## **Further Readings**

1. Article 19 of The Indian Constitution which states “Right to dissent” .

2. Parliamentary reforms in India
3. Assessing the 10th Schedule of the Indian Constitution -  
The Anti Defection Law
4. 2013 Jagdish Kumar and Lalu Prasad Yadav  
disqualification case
5. Lily Thomas v. UOI
6. Lok Prahar v. UOI
7. Representation of People's Act [Article 102(1)(e) &  
Section 8]
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**ALL THE BEST!**

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