

REPORT OF THE TNNLS DEBATE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 2016 – 17

I. Background – Formation of TNNLS Debate Committee

The following members of the Debate Committee (DC) were elected in February 2016 through popular vote:

- Pradyumna Narasimha, 3rd Year B.Com., LL.B (Hons.)
- Raghav Rajeev, 3rd Year B.Com., LL.B (Hons.)
- S. Shashank, 3rd Year B.A., LL.B (Hons.)
- Sany Antony, 2nd Year B.A., LL.B (Hons.)
- Tanushree Arvind, 2nd Year B.A., LL.B (Hons.)

The Committee was elected for the purpose of promoting Parliamentary Debating in the University. Through the course of the year, the DC has conducted weekly Parliamentary Debating sessions on Mondays every week. The theme of the debates alternated between Asian and British Parliamentary Debates.

II. One Day Workshop on the Rules and Regulations of the Two Forms of Parliamentary Debating

In the month of August 2016, the DC organized a one day workshop by Mr. Tanmoy Chakraborty, former debating convenor of Christ University, Bangalore on the rules and regulations of the two forms of Parliamentary Debating. He gave valuable suggestions and words of advice on how to improve the framing of arguments. There were also a couple of mock debates in which Mr. Tanmoy himself participated and gave advice to the other participants on where they went wrong and where they could improve.

III. Induction of New Members

In February 2017, the Debate Committee decided to induct one member each from the First and Second Year Batches of TNNLS to make the DC more egalitarian. The following members were inducted to the DC with effect from 9th February 2017 by way of show of hands:

- Sarthak Mishra, 1st Year B.A., LL.B (Hons.)
- S.S.S.L.V. Prasad, 2nd Year B.A., LL.B (Hons.)

The Official Convenor for the DC is Tanushree Arvind from 4th Year. Raghav Rajeev from 3rd Year is the official nominee representing the DC for the TNNLS Website Committee.

IV. Activities in the First Semester of 2017

1. *Open Policy Debates*

The DC of TNNLS has grappled with the issue of lack of participation from students since its inception. Despite our efforts to bring in the best people to train students in the art of debating, the turnout was very minimal. Sensing that there is a bigger and sensitive issue causing

this lack of participation, the DC decided to send out a questionnaire to all the students asking for their earnest and honest feedback. An analysis of the answers made us realize that that main reason for this lack of participation is stage fear and the structured format of Parliamentary Debating.

To ensure that there is free flow of ideas and perceptions without any hindrances, we have decided to organize **Open Policy Debates (OPD)** every month. Students as well as Faculty Members can participate in this Debate. These debates will be notified a week in advance along with the theme and motion so as to give students enough time to gather information and make an informed opinion. **The Policy Debate will not follow any structure like that of the Parliamentary Debates and will be more of a free discussion of ideas and perspectives. Students and Faculty Members are encouraged to speak in English, Tamil or Hindi.**

The theme shall be decided by the DC based on a popular vote conducted through Google forms. The DC also wrote to the Faculty Members seeking their participation in these debates, since we believe that the best kind of learning takes places through discussions and debates. Accordingly, the first OPD was held on 8th February 2017 based on the following theme, context and motion:

Theme – *Protectionist and Exclusionary Policies of Governments!*

Context – Trump signed an executive order temporarily suspending the US Refugee Program and banned citizens of 7 predominantly Muslim countries. ISIS in reply, hails Trump's Muslim immigration restrictions as a 'blessed ban'.

Motion – Are such Protectionist and Exclusionary Policies justified?

Subsequently, the Second OPD was held on 02/03/2017 with the following theme, context and motion:

Theme – *Violation of Privacy in the Name of Social Security by the Government.*

Context: Leaving the decision to sign up for Aadhaar entirely to citizens, the Supreme Court on December 2015 ordered that “*balance of interest*” was better served, if obtaining the unique identity number was made optional and not mandatory. Recently, the Government has made Aadhaar card mandatory for all competitive exams and Central Government scholarships.

Motion: Whether the Government’s policy to impose Aadhaar card in the name of social security measures amounts to violation of right to privacy of its citizens?

2. Vivatam’ 2017

The DC also successfully organized the *First Intra-University Debate Competition of TNNLS – Vivatam’ 2017* from 10th to 12th April 2017. The competition featured conventional style of Parliamentary Debating with regular adj. core along with trophies for winners and certificate of participation. The participants for the Final Rounds are as follows:

Amit Shukla and Sarthak Mishra;

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Vinudeep and Ramakash;

Kushagra Trivedi and Mohit Agarwal;

Aashray and Piyush.

After three days of intense debating, the final round based on theme of Politics was held on 12th April 2017 and the results are as follows:

Winners: Dead Debaters Society – Amit Shukla and Sarthak Mishra

Runners Up: Anti Romeo Squad – Kushagra Trivedi and Mohit Agarwal

Further, *Aashray Suresh* and *Karan Kumar Khetani* finished on top of speaker and adjudication tabs. Subsequently, a *Valedictory Function* was held on the same day which was presided over by our beloved Vice Chancellor.

V. Action Plan for the Forthcoming Semester

- ***Workshop:*** The DC plans to organize a workshop to be conducted by students from Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) to provide exposure and insights on the subject. The students are professionals who have achieved various accolades and renowned in the circuit. The workshop will be held for 2 days back to back.
- ***Reimbursement Proposal:*** The DC has already put forward the plan to reimburse students who represent TNNLS in various Parliamentary Debates around the country. The reimbursement amount will include a part of the registration fee and a part of the travel. Such a plan is subject to approval of the Vice-Chancellor dependent upon the finances allotted to the DC.
- ***1st Inter Debate Competition:*** The DC intends to conduct a National Level Inter College Debate Competition in the month of February second week, 2018. Preliminary discussions about the same were held and the discussions include reaching out to various sponsors, procuring adj. core, building a network with other National Law Universities which will facilitate the Committee to conduct the event successfully.

VI. Tentative Budget

1. Reimbursement (Details of money spent by students on debates in the odd semester)

- Standard registration fee per individual - **Rs. 2500 (fixed by host universities)**
- Total number of Parliamentary Debates TNNLS had taken part in the fifth semester – 4
- Total number of students who took part in PD's in the odd semester- 22
 - August 20-22nd – MSRIT, Bangalore (5 students)
 - August 27-29th – PES, Bangalore (3 students)

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- September 23-25th – VIT, Vellore (12 students)
- October 14- 16th – Ramaiah IV, MSR law, Bangalore (6 students)
- Overall amount spent on registration fees – Rs. **65,000**
- Amount spent on travel: MSRMPD, Bangalore - 520 one way ticket per person, total cost - Rs. 5200 (KSRTC bus); PES Bangalore – 520 one-way ticket per person, total cost – Rs. 3120 (KSRTC bus) ; VIT, Vellore – 225 per ticket one way, total amount- Rs. 5400 (SETC bus); Ramaiah IV, Bangalore, 520 one way ticket per person, total cost- Rs. 6240 (KSRTC bus) ;
- Total money spent on travel – Rs. **19,960**

In view of the amount spent in representing TNNLS in debates, the DC requested the University to formulate a reimbursement policy to facilitate greater representation in the future.

2. For Workshop

- Accommodation, travel and food will be taken care by the University.
- Also, as a token of gratitude, the Committee would request the University to pay Rs. 2,000 as honorarium to each presenter.
- There will also be expenditure on providing certificates to the participants of the seminar. Tentative amount – Rs. 2000 (Assuming each certificate costs Rs.20 and there would be a hundred participants).
- The previous workshop conducted by Mr. Tanmoy Chakroborthy in the month of August, 2016 incurred us cost of Rs. 2500 as honorarium and 12,500 for travel (To and from, Kolkatta to Chennai, Trichy to Chennai)

3. For First Inter Debate Competition, 2018

Flight Tickets for Core Adjudicators across the Country	70,000
Prize Money and Trophies	110000
Promotional Expenses (Posters etc.)	10000
Travel for teams from Accommodation to University	15000
Miscellaneous (Stationary and other petty expenses)	15000
Grand Total	250000

Note: The Budget is subject to exceed the tentative limit upto Rs. 400000

Accommodation for participants will adjusted with their registration fees we intend to charge Rs.2, 500 per participant who intend avail accommodation and other services