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LEGATIO 4.0
THE KURUKSHETRA OF DIPLOMACY

LEGATIO 4.0 / STUDY GUIDE SERIES

JOURNAL

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STUDY GUIDE

JOURNALISM

INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORPS

AGENDA / FOCUS

Reporting, analysis, press conferences and the discipline of accountable journalism.

31 JUL — 02 AUG 2026

DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL, SILIGURI

THE KURUKSHETRA OF DIPLOMACY

DELEGATE RESEARCH EDITION

LEGATIO 4.0

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Greetings to the International Press members at large. The Executive Board welcomes each one of you on-board this extravaganza of diplomacy, debates and discussions at Legatio'26.

The idea behind this committee is Team Work. All IP members are expected to collaborate and assist each other during the conference to churn out quality pieces. It is expected to uphold the principle of holding the delegates accountable for their sayings and actions with regards to world affairs. You, as IP members, are expected to be the pillar of democracy throughout the three days of the conference. That being said, over to you! Have the courage to venture beyond what is directly stated and resist being easily influenced.

Best Regards,
Drishti Kedia,
Head of Journalism
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CONCEPT

The three sections of Journalism, Photojournalism, and Caricature, will be acting as a single entity at all times. All the members will be allotted to their respective committees well before the commencement of the conference. We will be having Editors, selected based on their experience and interest. They will be co-ordinating with the journalists and collecting reports from them to submit to the Executive Board. The Editors will also be taught how to present and prioritise a piece of news for the smooth functioning of the committee.

JOURNALISM

While this part of the guide covers a section of your research, it isn't meant to be exhaustive. Please treat it only as a head-start into your research process. You are also encouraged to go through the study guides of your respective allotted committees. Keep in mind that content and style are both equal and interdependent parts of a good article. Finally, don't let a particular format restrict your own creativity. They are simply meant as samples to which you can bring your own personal style of reporting. It is essential that journalists have an in-depth understanding of not only their allotted committee and agenda but also the knowledge of the identities and stances of the countries or portfolios that have a key role to play in the conference.

While it is perfectly okay to request for clarifications from Executive Board members or IP heads in their free time or from delegates via chit, under no circumstances should you reach your

committee on the day of the final conference absolutely clueless. Research is an integral to your position as it is to a delegate or parliamentarian.

PRESS CONFERENCE

This is your platform to publicly hold the delegates accountable for their words and actions in the committee sessions. This is also a chance for you to flaunt your verbal abilities, and research on the agenda. The motive of the press conference is to elicit information from diplomats that the Press feels has not been explored or expanded upon adequately. It can be used to ensure the committee considers the humanitarian aspect of the agenda being discussed and even demonstrate public opinion to the committee at large because you act as the mouthpiece of the Press. Your goal is to ask hard-hitting questions to specific delegates, or the committee in general, leaving anyone free to answer; questions that stump even the brightest of them. You may quote a specific delegate, ask them or the committee to clear their stance, and inquire about solution. A prerequisite for the same is, of course, extensive research on the agenda and sub agendas, and your presence of mind. The key to a great press conference is, undoubtedly, confidence, but ensure that you are in no way to be rude to the delegates and especially not to the Executive Board members.

ACCURACY

Accuracy is at the heart of what we do as journalists, and takes precedence over speed.

Sourcing: Accuracy entails honesty in sourcing. Journalists are expected to use sources unaltered and avoid naming sources in the plural when only one is available. Named sources are always better than unnamed ones, and anonymous sources are the weakest. Cross-check and corroborate information wherever possible, and be honest while citing them.

Quotes: Quotes are sacred, and must never be altered except to delete a redundant word or phrase and that too only if the change doesn't alter the sense of the quote at its core. It should be representative of the speaker and elements such as sarcasm or revealing body language must always be reported as well. Quotes should be accompanied with the relevant context and circumstances. If there is any doubt whether the quote can be run verbatim, the Head of Journalism must be consulted. Mentioning who you are quoting is also encouraged.

Reflecting Reality: Often, it can be tempting for journalists to hype or sensationalise stories, skewing the reality of the situation and misleading the reader into assumptions that are wrong or potentially harmful. For instance, a "flood" of immigrants may be a small group of people in reality, or a "surge" in inflation may, in fact, be a modest rise. Stopping to consider the words being used leads to more precise and accurate reporting.

“Take no side, tell all sides.” Stories should reflect all sides of a conflict and a single stance must not be taken with the exception of Op-Eds. This objectivity doesn’t always come down to giving equal space to all sides. For instance, the perpetrator of an atrocity warrants less space than the victims. However, we must strive to be fair and balanced. Allegations shouldn’t be portrayed as fact, nor charges as a sign of guilt. Words must also be carefully considered- words like “rebut”, “refute” or “failed to comment” hint at an editorial judgement and should best be avoided.

Opinion and Analysis: We maintain a clear distinction between our factual news and our opinion pieces. Factual news articles cannot favour or disfavour a particular side of a dispute. They may showcase the opinion of others through quotes, however, they cannot reflect the opinion of the journalist, or of the Fourth Estate. This also holds true for analysis or feature articles, which offer in-depth explanations on particular issues without being biased. Opinion articles, on the other hand, provide an insight into the journalist’s stance on the matter. These naturally tilt towards one side and are vital for greater understanding of a single perspective on a certain issue.

Discriminatory Language and Stereotypes: We must avoid inappropriate references to gender, culture, religion, ethnicity, appearance or age. Journalists should be sensitive to unconscious stereotyping and their language should be neutral. Moreover, journalists shouldn’t believe that their particular cultural values and religious beliefs are the norm. Frame your writings and questions from the perspective of a third person.

TYPES OF ARTICLES

Committing statements, interviews, and discussions of a particular committee to writing is one of the most important aspects of being a journalist. The Executive Board requires the following articles from the journalists during the course of this conference:

- 1. EB PROFILE:** For this year’s MUN, we guarantee that this will be the most fun article you will write, in spite of its slightly challenging nature. An EB member profile is a fun filled, mostly humorous, and light-hearted article, the purpose of which is to essentially be an entertaining read. It can include, but is not limited to, the individual’s habits and hobbies, how they handle their respective committees, their general disposition/demeanour, and their thoughts on themselves and the surrounding environment. Keys to a good EB profile:

Research: Carry out informed interviews with your assigned EB members, their friends on and off the Executive Board, their delegates and perhaps even their committee’s logistics members. Ask interesting and funny questions to elicit the best possible answers, but be mindful of the fact that these Q&As will have to be turned into comprehensive articles. That is to say, they should not seem like a copy-pasted interview.

Observe: Sure, interviews get you a ton of interesting facts about the EB member, but it is your keen observational skills that really bring the article alive. You will have a lot of opportunities to watch your EB members in action, so use them wisely.

Flow: You've collected lots of information, full of juicy tidbits that you REALLY want to include. Excitement aside, ensure that you do not place obscure, awkward information in random, broken paragraphs. Instead, try to weave all your information together, making sure the transition is not abrupt, and leave out unnecessary details that don't seem to work. Keep it quirky, if you'd like, but maintain a smooth flow. At the same time, make sure the article does not invade their privacy or acts a stain on their reputation in any way.

2. DELEGATE INTERVIEW: While writing an interview, you are empowered with a considerable amount of freedom concerning the style. You may choose to interview any delegate from your allotted committee to get more information about them as a person or MUNer, or to inquire about their portfolio and seek clarifications on the same. Additionally, you may choose whether to make the interview humorous or formal, or even a mix of both, but ensure that you don't ask redundant and random questions. A title and a by- line are required, and a little introduction to the person/scenario is preferred.

Keys to a good interview:

Research: This is an obvious one. Be present in the committee, decide your interviewee beforehand, and pay extra attention to them. Formulate pertinent questions that are sure to elicit interest from the readers. Establish a rapport: Request politely, introduce yourself, and try to put your interviewee at ease by not ranting off your list of questions right away.

Keep it natural: An interview is not a press conference so the idea is not to ask hard-hitting questions; don't make the source uneasy. Try to maintain eye contact, and, if needed, try to record their answers. (Inform the interviewee before doing so.) Pay attention to the answers: Don't be afraid to question them on the basis of their answers and deviate from your prepared list.

Wrapping up: At the end of the interview, ask your source if there is anything else they'd like to add and double-check the meanings of their words or any spellings that you are unsure of. Don't forget to thank them.

3. FEATURE ARTICLE: Language & Grammar: A feature article is an article written to give more depth to topical events, people or issues. Rhetoric and hypothetical questions can be used. It is all about the capacity of journalists to engage and hook the readers with their writing.

Features articles use a mix of first, second or third person as appropriate. First person (I, me, my, we, us, our) can be used to establish a relationship with the reader, a relationship with the person who has died and to possibly explain anecdotes. Third person is used where the speaker is providing a personal history or an outline of their life. Language choice can be formal or informal depending on the topic. The use of informal, colloquial (slang) and first-person narrative creates a personal tone to the piece. Uses mainly present tense. Variety of long and short sentences. Contractions are acceptable (didn't, it's, that's, we'll). Relevant jargon adds authenticity to information and opinions presented. Use of anecdotes or background information to maintain the readers' interest. Facts or evidence validating the writer's viewpoints. In humorous articles, exaggeration and generalisation are used to heighten humour. Emotive words are used to evoke a personal response in the reader. Figurative language may be used to engage the reader's imagination (eg. imagery, simile, description). Direct quotes can personalise the topic.

Structure of a feature:

Headline: to identify the focus of the feature; attention grabbing.

Subheading: provides an angle or point of view.

By-line: to identify the journalist writing the report.

Hook: An interesting first sentence to 'hook' readers' attention and establish a point of view through a direct statement, example or hypothetical question.

Introductory paragraph: This paragraph expands on the hook and establishes the writer's tone and focus for the article.

Paragraph 2: first main point. An explanation of how this person/issue has contributed to society. This should be an interpretation of events in the author's own words.

Paragraph 3 onwards: further main points provided to explain interesting events or achievements about the person/issue to inform the reader /delve into the issue further. Facts, evidence, quotes, challenging questions to the reader, opinions are included in these paragraphs. Photographs, tables, diagrams and graphs are often used to accompany the text in feature articles to provide facts or evidence to support the author's explanation and interpretation of the person/issue/events. Can include highlighted pieces of text to emphasise specific events or quotes.

The concluding paragraph should leave a lasting impression by: Reminding the reader of the article's main idea. Suggesting an appropriate course of action. Encouraging a change of attitude or opinion.

4. **BEAT ARTICLES:** The purpose of a beat-based article is to inform someone who was not present in the committee about its proceedings. That being said, it can be subtly opinionated, but it is preferable to keep it as neutral as possible. Ideally, a beat article is centred around a 'beat' or turning-point of the committee, consisting of what led up to the beat, what it was, how it changed the proceedings, as well as its implications. This requires careful observation and attention. You may choose to focus on one particular sub-topic in the discussion, but giving a comprehensive overview of the proceedings is highly recommended. However, the core idea of the article must be conveyed to the reader clearly and concisely.
5. **OPPOSITE- EDITORIALS (Op-Ed): 400 - 500 WORDS** Here is where the point we've been emphasising since the orientation comes into play. It's natural to form opinions on the agenda and the committee, and this is your chance as independent journalists to express it. Opinion - editorials are, simply put, opinionated articles that propose an idea, or more accurately, a hypothesis about the agenda, and strive to prove it. The first step to writing an Op-Ed is research. This does not include just verifying facts but also examining and analysing different perspectives on the issue. Thoroughly read the background guide, ask questions, research on your own, and, most importantly, listen and take notes in committee. The most important aspect of an Op-Ed is analysis. Examine an argument against different perspectives, and try to consider as many perspectives as possible so as to generate the most holistic analysis. Be precise and not vague. Since an Op-Ed is not just factual, you can't beat around the bush easily and so it is imperative that you have a thorough understanding of the agenda, your argument and its implications, so as to tackle any loopholes successfully. Lastly, for the structure, begin by stating the agenda and your opinion, analyse it, and present your arguments. A comprehensive Op-Ed addresses any counter arguments that may occur, completely convincing the reader of the truth and validity of your stance, so try to incorporate facts, information and ideas related to the same. Op-Eds are not only affirmations that the problem exists and act as a reiteration of its gravity, but they also provide viable solutions to whatever the conundrum may be. Additionally, you can also add some lines analysing the committee's proceedings and the proficiency of the committee in addressing the agenda. Sum up by reiterating your stance with the problem at hand to really drive the point home.

GRAMMAR

The newsletter follows Oxford English and so should your write-ups. Re-read each line. Each word must have a purpose. Edit and re-edit. Capitalise the beginning of sentences and proper nouns. Mention the full form of the abbreviation followed by the abbreviation in brackets. For example - Republic of Korea (RoK); only 'MUN' and its committees are accepted abbreviations hence don't require this rule. Pay attention to punctuation. The Oxford comma is to be followed. Use different paragraphs for marking a change in thought, context or event. Focus on syntax and avoid long sentences. Try using and/or only once in a sentence. It makes the text easily comprehensible to the reader.

GENERAL INFORMATION

All articles must be accompanied by a title or headline, the name of the journalist, and the date.

All articles should have the filename "Committee Name - Type of Article Journalist Name."

Rules that apply to all articles: (exceptions have been mentioned)

Title: Every article must have a title. The title decides whether your piece will be read, so spend some time to make this as eye-catching/ interesting/ humorous/ dramatic/ attractive/ controversial/ intriguing as possible. While puns and playing on words are encouraged, avoid making your titles click baits.

By-lines: An integral, yet often overlooked part of your article is the by - line. It is simply a line inserted right after the title, indicating who has written the article and what the article wishes to convey. This device can even be used to add a touch of humour to your more serious articles.

British spellings: Quite self-explanatory, yet again, often overlooked. Follow British spellings and not American ones.

Originality: We simply cannot emphasise the importance of this point enough. While you are allowed to research and take inspiration from various sources (songs, nooks, etc), ONLY original pieces will be accepted. Plagiarism can result in debarment from awards.

Accuracy: Accuracy of facts, stats and quotes is of immense importance. Ensure that you do not misquote anybody and employ clichés for the same. Feel free to approach the EB members for clarification.

Filter: Most writers absolutely detest the dreaded word limit; all of us just have so much to say. While we understand that, we too, are under certain restraints and it is imperative that we keep the reader and their attention span in mind. Expression is important, but so is concision and crispness. Don't spew all the information you have onto your laptops; instead, take some time to select the key points from all the details you have jotted down and weave it into a cohesive piece.

Flow: Often, while trying to keep the point above in mind, we tend to put in disjointed ideas together with foggy connections. Read and re-read to ensure you have expressed your thoughts in a cohesive manner that is not awkward and broken by any means.

Spell check: Those squiggly lines aren't just for decoration. Use them to your advantage! Third-person: Please do not use 'I', 'my' and such words to refer to yourself, in beat-based articles specifically. You are allowed to use 'the International Press' and 'the reporter.'

Exception: Op-Eds. Less is more: 'If you can't convince them, confuse them.' This saying may be one that most delegates use when they are out of ideas, but it is definitely not one we can use. While we love complicated, mellifluous, and straight-up fancy words, do think of the reader's level of comprehension while writing your articles. Be creative by all means, but don't compromise on expressing your gift of the gab, but avoid overindulging in unnecessarily extravagant and profligate vocabulary to make your treatise surfeit with extraneous utterances.

Grammar: Correct usage of grammar is the most important aspect of your writings.

Punctuality: We know at this point, asking you to be punctual sounds like too much to ask, but this is the very role of a press member! While we just might understand a 5-minute delay, due to annoying pen drives and what not, punctuality is absolutely essential. Just one delayed article can leave us with no newsletter at all. All heads are no strangers to panicking over submissions, but it does get easier, and the satisfaction of submitting something right on time is irreplaceable. Think of yourself as a juggler, and if you can't juggle, well, learn! Read, re-read, and then re-read again: A helpful tip that was given to me: I know that one gets tired after finishing the article and just want to be done with it and submit, but it really helps to just shut down your laptop (after saving it, of course) and giving yourself a break for 5 minutes, and then re-read it like you are someone who has never seen it before. Works every time. Take it from us.

MARKING SCHEME

1. Content / Essence
2. Creativity
4. Flow of language/ Paragraph structure
5. Mood and tone
6. Grammar/ Punctuations
7. Punctuality and Instructions adhered (includes adherence to deadlines and word limits, paying attention to the requirements of the types of articles)

GUIDE FOR EDITORS

The editors need to write an editorial. Include pictures of the stories that are going to be included in the final format of the print media of the conference. We will be selecting a maximum of two-three editors to edit the articles, but the number varies on the number of total journalists. The rest will be communicated on the day prior/the day of the conference.