

# Youth Parliament: Voice of New India

## Draft Concept

### Background

The Honourable Prime Minister, in Mann ki Baat said,

*“I got an idea whether we could organize a mock parliament in every district of India? Where the youth between 18 and 25 could sit together and brainstorm about new India, find ways and chalk our plans. How could we realize our resolves before 2022? How could we build an India of the dreams of our freedom fighters?”*

He categorically spoke about giving a chance to the youth to put forth their views on various issues in the country.

*“I propose that a mock Parliament be organized around 15th August in Delhi comprising one young person selected from each district who would participate and deliberate on how a new India could be formed in the next five years. How can resolve be transformed into reality?”*

*(Today, a lot of new opportunities have been created for the youth. Our youth are coming forward in areas like skill development, innovation and entrepreneurship and are achieving success. I wish that the New India Youth get information and details of all these new opportunities and plans at one place and a system be created so that every young person on turning 18 should automatically get to know all this and benefit from it.)*

He reiterated his desire to organize youth parliaments in each district in his address to the youth during 22nd National Youth Festival on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Honorable Prime Minister wants to create a new India, built on policies as deliberated by new voices.

### OBJECTIVE

- To hear the voice of youth between 18 and less than 25 years of age, who are allowed to vote but cannot stand as a candidate for election, through deliberation in Youth Parliaments at district level and above.
- To make students understand public issues, the common man's point of view and form their opinion on them, and express it in an articulate manner
- To develop an ability to arrive at a decision and voice their viewpoints.
- To develop in them respect and tolerance for the views of others.
- To develop in them an understanding that respect for rules is essential for conducting any discussion systematically and effectively.
- To document their opinion on vision of New India in 2022.
- To provide their viewpoints and opinions to policy makers and policy implementers to take it forward.

### FORMAT

- Youth parliaments would be conducted across India, at the district level, with the participants being above 18 and less than 25 years old, as on 31<sup>st</sup> June, 2018.
- Youth parliament would be conducted in all districts independently. However, two or three districts may be clubbed as one District, if required. This may be done to make it more participatory and qualitative.

- There would be a set of broad issues/themes, and each youth parliament would discuss an issue from this set.
- The participants would be divided into two groups, with one side being the government and the other being the opposition.
- A secretariat would be created to record the proceedings, as later this could help in preparing knowledge reports emanating from each youth parliament.
- There would be a jury present, who would choose the best two/three speakers from each district parliament. A panel of three chosen speakers would be created on the basis of merit.
- A key point to be noted is that each speaker must be given a chance to articulate their views at least once, for a time slot of three minutes.
- There would be mainly three levels-
  - a) District- youth selected from colleges and independent (by enrolling in colleges or through videos)
  - b) State- youth selected by Jury from Districts in the State
  - c) National- youth selected by Jury from States.

## **TIMELINE**

- Preliminary rounds - up to the State Level - to be conducted tentatively between end-July and end-August in 2018.
- Advanced rounds –State levels – to be conducted in September 2018.
- Final Youth Parliament to be conducted in Delhi – October 2018.

## **PARTICIPATION CRITERIA**

- Youth who are above 18 but less than 25 years of age on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2018.

These youth are permitted to elect public representatives but cannot stand for elections. This would provide them the opportunity to understand the process involved in legislation and at the same time make their voice heard.

- The individual need not necessarily be a student of any educational institution to participate.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

### **Selection at District Level**

- 2 nominations from each college.
- Individuals upload their 90-120 seconds videos, to be screened by an independent agency.

Or

Individual candidates appear for screening at designated venue and time. There would be two types of screening at District level before conducting of Youth Parliament in the District

- 1) Screening of uploaded videos on designated social sites (facebook, twitter, youtube etc.) by a screening team.

- Videos to be of 90-120 seconds, wherein the participant will articulate his opinion on a given subject. Their video should not increase more than 120 seconds.

- To capture the demographic details of the participant they would introduce themselves in their video by giving their name, district and State, telephone/cell number.
- The screening team will have to cull out the details from the video and record for further communication with selected participants.

Rating Criteria for digital screening would be:

- Articulation/Eloquence
- Content knowledge
- Clarity of thought

The points given would be out of 100

2) Screening of youth in nodal institution in District

- Youth other than nominated by educational institutions would register in the nodal institution. Screening of youth registering at Nodal institution would be done by a two member Jury by hearing them for 2-3 minutes

- Articulation
- Content knowledge
- Clarity of thought
- Demeanor

The points given would be out of 100

- Jury would consist of one professor and one eminent person of district
- Top 50 youth would be selected for District Youth Parliament from this process

- Youth Parliament of selected youth would be conducted in the District.
- 4 best speakers from the district to be chosen by the Jury
- The selection criteria of Speakers by Jury

- Articulation
- Clarity of Thought
- Content knowledge
- Counter point
- Demeanor
- Patience in handling opposition

Each criteria would be of 100 points

- Language: English/ Hindi.

**Selection at State Level**

- 4 Winners from each district to sit together in a youth parliament and deliberate on various issues, in the presence of a jury.
- The selection criteria of Speakers by Jury

- Articulation
- Clarity of Thought

- c) Content knowledge
- d) Counter point
- e) Demeanor
- f) Patience in handling opposition

Each criteria would be of 100 points

- A panel of 2 best speakers from each district to be selected.
- The best two speaker from the State to be selected and awarded.

### **National Final**

- National final to be held in New Delhi in October.
- Around 700 participants will participate in National Mock Youth Parliament, representing each district of the country, which to be graced by highest-level dignitaries.
- While only the winners from each State will compete in the national final, though winners from each district will be present in the youth parliament.
  - The selection criteria of Winner by Jury
    - a) Articulation
    - b) Clarity of Thought
    - c) Content knowledge
    - d) Counter point
    - e) Demeanor
    - f) Patience in handling opposition

Each criteria would be of 100 points

- Best three speakers would be awarded

### **LANGUAGE**

- Language for participation, would be English or Hindi

### **JURY**

- Each youth parliament would be adjudged by a five-member jury.
- Jury comprised of the following:
  - Parliamentarian/Member of Legislative Assembly/Eminent political leader
  - Retired/serving officers including uniformed service officers
  - Eminent artist /Social Personality
  - Eminent journalist/writers
  - Educationist
- At the District and State levels, local eminent personalities to form the jury.
- At the National final, nationally eminent personalities to form the jury.
- Basic guidelines for the members of the jury, containing criteria on which the participants are to be judged are:

- It should be ensured that the selection procedure is absolutely fair and transparent
- Articulation, Clarity of thought and logical idea is to be given preference. Someone who may not be the best speaker could bring up the most valuable points.
- Maximum 3 minutes would be given for a speaker to speak
- Second chance of 2 minutes can be given to rebut an opinion
- Screening only criteria of scoring given
- Political statements not to be considered for evaluation
- Average of marks of all Jury members to be merit criteria
- With participants having same scoring, merit to represent all districts
- In case same marks to participants for final selection, then marks to prioritized on the basis of selection criteria points
- The objective would be not to criticize opinions, but in fact to collate implementable and scalable ideas which come out of this discussion.

## **SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION**

- The topics to be discussed at all levels would be based on the issues raised in the New India Pledge, as part of the Sankalp Se Siddhi movement. These would include (illustrative list only):
  - Swachhta
  - Poverty
  - Corruption
  - Terrorism and National Security
  - Communalism
  - Casteism
  - Good governance
  - Environmental protection
- Additionally, the participants could debate various issues based on the Government's flagship programs, such as:
  - Digital India
  - Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
  - Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
  - Skill India
  - Startup India
  - Indradhanush (Immunization programme) and Ayushman Bharat
  - River and Soil conservation, and Namami Gange

## **TREATMENT OF DATA**

- Given the massive scale of participation, there is a chance that some good candidates could get filtered.
- To ensure that good ideas are not lost through the rounds, a local representative on the jury would help extract and implement any possible solutions at the regional level.
- From State level, a knowledge document can be created around the issues discussed.
- A final knowledge document to be created post the national round.
- It would be helpful to record the debates taking place at levels.

- Any serious complaints regarding arbitrariness could then be assessed on the basis of video evidence.
- The Hon'ble Prime Minister is keen for elements of this program to be present across platforms, such as mobile applications and web-based portals.

## **LOGISTICS**

- One educational institution with NSS Unit to be identified as nodal institution for registration of participants and conduct of youth parliament in close coordination with District Administration in order to execute this successfully at district level.
- This concept is to be activated in all districts, containing more than 39,000 colleges. The MYAS to collaborate closely with the MHRD in order to execute at the lower levels.
- At State Level, one University at State Capital or any other significant city of the State, with NSS Programme coordinator, would be the nodal agency for conducting State Youth Parliament.
- Regional Directors and State Nodal Officers would be responsible for coordinating and conducting of Youth Parliament at District and State levels.
- The selection criteria at all rounds should be fair, transparent, and without arbitrariness to minimize potential grievances.
- Edited version of program to be broadcasted to highlight valuable viewpoints and opinions through local, national media coverage.
- Youth parliaments should be organized at College and University campus or some auditorium or some space identified for it.
- It would be a challenge to average out participation from the smaller and relatively larger districts (eg. Harda v. Bhopal) to cull out the best two/three speakers from each district. A possible solution can be to divide the larger districts into further sub-divisions.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- This competition revolves around the idea of critical thinking and logical analysis. There is no need to groom participants as such, and we just need to create the right atmosphere for an energetic discussion on relatable issues.
- Exceptions aside, most of the better participants would be students from educational institutions. However, given the malleable nature of a parliamentary debate, by providing opportunity to every willing youth to participate, potential of good leaders can be tapped.