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Truth, Grit, and Glory: The East India Debates Return

- Aanya Paul Sarkar, Deputy Editor, XII

Nestled in the quiet majesty of the tea-gardens, The Assam Valley School stands as more than just an institution—it is a living, breathing legacy. And within its hallowed halls, the 19th edition of the East India Debates prepares to unfold, a tradition not merely remembered, but reverently upheld.

This edition of the East India Debates is being brought to life under the stellar leadership of the captain of the Athenaeum—Zaheen Rafia Shah.

Having begun her debating journey at school as early as grade five, she continues to ideate, inspire, and lead from the front. But beyond the podium, Zaheen has poured her heart into building this

“For nearly two decades, the East India Debates has been more than a competition; it has been a celebration of thought, articulation, and fierce intellectual spirit.”

debate from the ground up. Tireless and fiercely committed, she has carried the weight of this legacy with grace and grit.

The Athenaeum is the Assam Valley School’s debating society, and its insignia is the crest of Athena, the Greek Goddess of wisdom and warfare—and she stands proudly upholding the ethos of the school: “Truth is Strength.”

For nearly two decades, the East India Debates has been more than a competition; it has been a celebration of thought, articulation, and fierce intellectual spirit. Delegations from the farthest corners of the country converge here, not just to speak, but to listen, challenge, and grow. To debate at AVS is to stand where many great minds once stood, to raise your voice in a place where voices have always mattered.

Traditions, in legacy schools like ours, are not just habits of the past—they are rituals of remembrance, of pride, of continuity. They are threads that stitch together generations of thinkers, dreamers, and leaders. The East India Debates is one such golden thread, a badge of honour, a rite of passage, a mirror held up to the brilliance of youth. And now, as the 19th edition stands on the brink of history, we are humbled and proud to carry it forward.

It is, truly, a privilege to host.



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MORNING SESSION

"IN ART AND POP CULTURE, THIS HOUSE BELIEVES THAT CREATING NEW LEAD CHARACTERS FOR MINORITIES IS BETTER THAN RECASTING THEM IN ROLES PREVIOUSLY PLAYED BY MAJORITY ACTORS."

Delhi Public School, Guwahati
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

The Shri Ram School, New Delhi
(OPPOSITION)



- Tanveer Ahmed, Associate Editor, XII

It was a heated debate, with compelling arguments from both the government and the opposition. The proposition argued that representation does not equate to recompensation. The opposition responded forcefully, stating that minorities shouldn't be limited to roles that reinforce societal stereotypes. Their arguments were structured well, with clear burdens of proof delivered in a witty, sarcastic tone. Ultimately, the opposition's sharp reasoning and confident delivery helped them secure a decisive win in the debate.

Winner - The Shri Ram School, New Delhi

Leader of the OPPOSITION- Aryan Gupta

Deputy Leader of the OPPOSITION - Myraah Sadani

Whip of the OPPOSITION - Ranvir Singh

Result - The Motion was lost

Maria's Public School, Guwahati
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

Sanskriti The Gurukul, Guwahati
(OPPOSITION)



- Khichu Kath, Associate Editor, XII

The heated debate between Maria School and Sanskriti The Gurukul was held in the dance hall. Maria represented the government, proposing the motion against the opposition, Sanskriti. The government argued that creating new lead roles could reach a wider audience. The opposition stood firm, stating, "Minorities don't live in a fantasy world," and argued for equal opportunities to recast characters, rejecting the idea that 'whiteness' is the default. In the end, the government fell, and Sanskriti The Gurukul won the debate.

Winner - Sanskriti The Gurukul, Guwahati

Leader of the OPPOSITION - Shambhavi Khanikar

Deputy Leader of the OPPOSITION - Advay Raj
Sanganeria

Whip of the OPPOSITION - Aishani Sharma

Result - The Motion was lost



Vasant Valley School, New Delhi
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

Sunbeam English School, Varanasi
(OPPOSITION)



On the 13th of July, a charged and compelling debate unfolded in the Tihu Common Room. The Government argued for the creation of new characters to ensure authentic minority representation, especially for marginalized communities. The Opposition countered that recasting existing roles could be more impactful and practical. Despite their passionate stance, the Government's nuanced argument won the motion. The debate concluded with a powerful reminder: true representation begins with original storytelling and intentional inclusion.

- Aanya Paul Sarkar, Deputy Editor, XII

Winner: The Sunbeam English School, Varanasi

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Govind Keshari

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Aayushmaan Malviya

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: Manyu Singhal

Result - The Motion was lost



Assam Valley School (Team Blue)
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

Bishop Cotton School, Shimla
(OPPOSITION)



The motion of the debate was lost, and the winner was Bishop Cotton School, Shimla. The Government emphasised the importance of authentic representation, citing examples such as Crazy Rich Asians and highlighting the need to represent people accurately. On the other hand, the Opposition argued that recasting minorities in existing roles breaks the constraints minorities face, raises awareness about their communities, and creates a greater impact for minority actors and authors.

- Vibe Zhimomi, XII

Winner - Bishop Cotton School, Shimla

Leader of the OPPOSITION - Dev Moon Jhanji

Deputy Leader of the OPPOSITION - Aarav Wadaskar

Whip of the OPPOSITION - Rajveer Kochhar

Result - The Motion was lost

Vandya International School,
Guwahati
(GOVERNMENT)
VS
Hollotoli School, Dimapur
(OPPOSITION)



A fierce debate between Vandya International School and Hollotoli School, Dimapur, kept the audience riveted. The opposition argued that recasting brings global visibility and empowers minority communities. Their rhetorical question—“Why build a separate kingdom when we can build the throne?”—struck a chord. The proposition emphasised the importance of independent culture, and innovation, with “tokenism” serving as a central theme in their argument. The debate concluded with the opposition emerging victorious, with the parting words: “Sometimes, the most revolutionary act is to boldly step into what already exists and make it undeniably your own.”

- Shababat Sabir Ansari, X

Winner - The Hollotoli School, Dimapur

Leader of the OPPOSITION: Shisalong Jamir

Deputy Leader of the OPPOSITION: Arkum

Whip of the OPPOSITION: Toshinungla Imchen

Result - The Motion was lost



The Royal Global School
(GOVERNMENT)
VS
Assam Valley School (Team Red)
(OPPOSITION)



A lively debate occurred in the dance hall between Royal Global School and The Assam Valley School (Team Red). The proposition, Royal Global School, contended that genuine representation necessitates new lead roles. Conversely, the opposition championed the normalisation of recasting, asserting it grants minorities a sense of ownership, famously declaring, “Minorities can be the face of tradition.” The central point of contention was the validity and normalisation of recasting. The motion was ultimately passed.

- Jentina Yaomei Shangkhui, XII

Winner: The Royal Global School, Guwahati

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Puranjay Chakraborty

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: DIYA SARAWGI

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: AAHAN P. KONWAR

Result - The Motion passed.

St. George's College, Mussoorie
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

St. Francis De Sales, Guwahati
(OPPOSITION)



- Carlynda Lyngdoh, XII

Jean Watson's theory consists of four steps and can apply to the fields of scientific research and medicine alike. At first, the person assesses the situation through observation, identification, and literature gathering. They conceptualize the framework and create a hypothesis. Then the planning stage can begin. During this step, the scientific researcher or medical worker figures out the measurement variables for the examination. Subsequently, they put the plan into action during the intervention stage and collect the resulting data. In the end, the data is evaluated, analyzed, and interpreted to decide the outcome of either care or research (Alligood, 2014).

Winner - St. George's College, Mussoorie

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Bhavik Gupta

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Rodas Bhatia

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: Felix Kurian

Result - The Motion was passed



EVENING SESSION

"THIS HOUSE WILL BAN TOURISM TO ECOLOGICALLY FRAGILE DESTINATIONS."

The Shri Ram School, New Delhi
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

Bishop Cotton School, Shimla
(OPPOSITION)



- Aastha Potsangbam, IX

A fierce and captivating debate took place in the AVR, keeping the audience riveted. The Government argued that tourists should be stopped from visiting ecologically fragile destinations, as they damage ecosystems and threaten humanity. The Opposition countered that locals benefit economically from tourism and claimed urban planning—not tourism—is the main cause of environmental decline. They concluded tourism should be regulated, not banned. Ultimately, the Government's stance was validated, and Shri Ram School emerged victorious in the debate.

Winner - The Shri Ram School, New Delhi

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Aryan Gupta

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT:

Evvah Mittal

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: Ranvir Singh

Result - The Motion was passed

Assam Valley School (Team Red)
(GOVERNMENT)

VS

Delhi Public School, Guwahati
(OPPOSITION)



- Tanveer Ahmed, Associate Editor, XII

The debate was a close one, with both sides presenting strong constructs and solid arguments. Centred around "Ban vs. Regulations," the Government firmly supported bans, while the Opposition consistently challenged this stance, arguing that regulations were more feasible and viable. "Bans are the only enforceable solutions," declared the third speaker of the Proposition—a quote that resonated powerfully as the motion stood strong.

Winner - The Assam Valley School (Team Red)

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Natasha

Billimoria

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT:

Aladdin Jahzara Ovung

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: Zaheen Rafia Shah

Result - The motion was passed



Sunbeam English School, Varanasi
(GOVERNMENT)
VS
Maria's Public School, Guwahati
(OPPOSITION)



- Vibe Zhimomi, XII

Winner - Maria's Public School, Guwahati

Leader of the OPPOSITION: Rryanraj Bhagawati

Deputy Leader of the OPPOSITION: Sampreet D. Malakar

Whip of the OPPOSITION: Nirvam Saikia

Reserve of the OPPOSITION: Devam Bhattacharjee

Result - The Motion was lost

"Not international problems, but more at a national level," said Maria's Public School, who won the debate. They highlighted how tourism harms the environment's ecological balance while also providing job opportunities and empowering people. They raised strong points about tourism damaging nature faster than it can recover. On the other side, Sunbeam School emphasised tourism as an international issue, contrasting the Government's stance. They also brought attention to the role of geopolitics in influencing tourism's impact on fragile ecosystems.



St. Francis De Sales, Guwahati
(GOVERNMENT)
VS
Assam Valley School (Team Blue)
(OPPOSITION)

- Khichu Kath, Associate Editor, XII



Winner - St. Francis De Sales, Guwahati

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Dharam Aditya Pradhan

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Minarva Baruah

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: Rohan Das

Result - The Motion was lost

St. Francis, representing the Government, put forward compelling points, paving their way to victory against AVS Team Blue. They highlighted the importance of protecting our environment and how easily an entire ecosystem can be destroyed, citing the example of a single Cheetos plastic wrapper that devastated a whole habitat. While AVS Team Blue proposed preventive measures such as implementing regulations and encouraging responsible tourism, St. Francis countered with the remark, "It is like a broken fence trying to hold back a flood." They also argued that tourism to ecologically fragile places does not equate to education.

Hollotoli School, Dimapur (GOVERNMENT)

VS

The Royal Global School, Guwahati (OPPOSITION)



- Shabahat Sabir Ansari, X

A lively debate between Hollotoli School, Dimapur, and RGS explored the motion: “Banning tourism to ecologically fragile destinations.” The proposition emphasised protection over exploitation, arguing that regulation fails to address the root issues. The opposition countered that tourism funds vital conservation efforts and supports local communities. With their impactful slogan, “All medicines cause side effects, but we won’t ban them,” the opposition won the debate, leaving a lasting impression on both the judges and the audience.

Winner - The Royal Global School, Guwahati

Leader of the OPPOSITION: Puranjay chakroborty

Deputy Leader of the OPPOSITION: Diya Swaraj

Whip of the OPPOSITION: Aahan Konwav

Result - The Motion was lost



A compelling debate took place between the Sanskriti Gurukul School, representing the Government (Proposition) and the St. George School, representing the Opposition. Sanskriti Gurukul passionately argued for environmental sustainability, citing Coral reefs as an example of vulnerable ecosystems. They asserted, “Nature does not need visitors; it needs protection.” St. George School countered by suggesting the establishment of multiple government agencies to manage tourism and pointed out that direct observation of ecological destruction could foster understanding, declaring, “You cannot stop a human being from exploring.” The debate mostly centred on environmental preservation, and while the Proposition put up a cogent argument, the motion was ultimately lost.

Sanskriti The Gurukul, Guwahati (GOVERNMENT)

VS

St. George's College, Mussoorie (OPPOSITION)



- Jentina Yaomei Shangkh, XII

Winner: St. George's College, Mussoorie

Leader of the OPPOSITION: Bhavik Gupta

Deputy Leader of OPPOSITION: Rodas Bhatia

Whip of the OPPOSITION: Felix Kurian

Result - The Motion was lost

The 2nd PFQ at the AVR featured a heated debate between Vasant Valley School and Vandhya International School. The Government argued that tourism harms ecosystems, stressing preservation over profit and citing corruption and ignorance as key issues. The Opposition advocated for effective regulation, emphasising tourism's role in funding conservation, supporting research, and raising environmental awareness. Ultimately, the Opposition's argument—that tourism can be a tool for protection—prevailed, and the motion was won.

- Carlynda Lyngdoh, XII

Vasant Valley School, New Delhi
(GOVERNMENT)
VS
Vandya International School,
Guwahati
(OPPOSITION)



Winner - Vasant Valley School, New Delhi

Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Aadya Seth

Deputy Prime Minister of the GOVERNMENT: Abeer Datta

Whip of the GOVERNMENT: Aabha Talwar

Result - The Motion was passed.







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