

KATHMANDU DEBATES' 2014 : MAHAKUMBHA

by **Glocal Khabar** 12 August 2014

The amazing war of the intellect has begun, two days and six rounds of group stage debates has already been done, and the top 8 English teams and top 4 Nepali teams are well on their preparation for the upcoming tough battles. Debate Network Nepal (DNN) has successfully started the Kathmandu's Debate Mahakumbha 2014, supported by a systematic action plan, as a succession to the Kathmandu Debate 2013. This event has been supported by Asian Institute of Technology and Management (AITM) and 'Livable Kathmandu', a program of several members of parliament and Gagan Thapa's Office as well.

On the inauguration of the event, MP Gagan Thapa said, 'I didn't have such a wonderful platform to discuss and debate with other intelligent minds, in my school days. You are lucky.' The debaters from all around the valley, representing the particular institutions they belong to, had participated and went well through the qualifiers round. Those who didn't belong to a particular institution were also provided with a freedom to form independent teams and get involved.

A two day training to all the debaters to make them know the World School Style Debate Format and also to improve the standard of matches, had been organized.

The adjudicator team also comprises of judges, who are graduates of 'Tarkashala': a three days residential workshop provided by the DNN to train the debaters on judging. Moreover, there are other veteran debaters and established judges in the team, who have had experiences in international debate tournaments. The judges are also being judged by the debaters on whether they are good enough to seat in adjudicators chair, by filling up the feedback form and ranking them on the scale of 5.

The motions (topics) of the debate are related to the theme of 'Livable Kathmandu', which was a project and case study done by several MPs and 'Gagan Thapa's Office'. As per the study, the topics address the issues of Kathmandu that needs to be solved. Technically, young and fertile minds are being brought up to debate on issues of severe importance like drinking water, transportation, sewage management and so on.

Some of the motions are: This house would introduce bus rapid transportation as a major means of transportation in Kathmandu; this house believes that Melamchi water supply can't provide enough water to Kathmandu; this house believes that Kathmandu waste management system should be privatized; and so on. This clearly indicates how debating culture makes students analyze and argue on issues related to themselves as well.

The teams who progress to the upcoming rounds will be gathering for the quarter finals. One may imagine the standard of debates that is going to be presented. The team has some plans for materializing this debate movement in Nepal. Best wishes to such wonderful culture being introduced in our society.

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