



BISMUN 2026



**INTERNATIONAL
PRESS CORPS**



STUDY GUIDE



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Delegates,

It's with great pleasure and honour that I, Raaynaa Tripathi, your Head of Press, welcome you to BISMUN 2026. After years of MUNning, debating, doing rigorous research, and battling nerves, I still can't help but feel excited at the thought of being your chair. I have absolute faith that the International Press Corps this year will not only stun me with its enthusiastic first-timers and bright minds, but also with sharp wit, humour, and an unforgettable experience.

My journey in debate and Model United Nations has been a roller coaster, joyous climbs, merciless drops, milestones, breakdowns, and new friendships. After more than ten conferences, I've finally overcome the tingles and nausea I felt during my first MUN; the shaking hands, the blurry vision, the whispered speech. I know for a fact that a few of you, especially first-timers, are feeling exactly the same way, and I want you to know that no one is judging you for it. The anxiety only means you care and want to do your best, and I believe in each of you. If you feel scared or nervous, reach out. I've been there, and my inbox is always open for any questions, no matter how silly they may seem to you.

My favourite thing about Model UN is crises and communiqués. I'm a constant crisis delegate, and that's why I really like what I like about comms and about thinking radically and thinking faster. As a murder-mystery enthusiast, I absolutely adore a good extremist arc in committee. While violence is definitely not the answer to real-world problems, a little bit of radical extremism never hurt anyone in a MUN, not really, anyway. If you wish to impress me with your comms, make them as detailed and realistically unrealistic as you possibly can. If it seems a tad bit too much, it's probably just enough. Maintain decorum while you have fun with it.

Although my previous paragraphs make it sound like my entire life is MUN, I do have an extensive, ever-growing list of hobbies beyond it. My parents, who met when they were journalists, passed down their passion for writing and reading to me. While I'm secretly trying to get into rom-coms, recommendations needed, my forever comfort genre will always be thrilling murder mysteries and sci-fi. Movies and binge-watching old TV shows are another one of my hobbies. Bonus points if it's from the 90s and something I've watched one too many times. Besides bed-rotting & watching Big Bang Theory, I love sketching and drawing, especially during 3 a.m. bursts of creativity and energy.

I feel like that's more than enough about me, especially considering I don't know much about most of you yet. Before I end this letter, I'd like to leave you all with one last piece of advice: no sentence can be effective if it contains facts alone. It must also contain emotion, image, logic, and promise. Keep this in mind, especially when it comes to giving speeches, delegates.

I'm looking forward to your productive conversations and innovative solutions to the contemporary issues at hand. Think on your feet and battle any and every crisis we throw at you. If you have any questions, always feel free to shoot me a message.

Signing off,

Raaynaa Tripathi

Director, International Press Corps

LETTER FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Bombay International School Model United Nations 2026 edition. We're Kimaya, Kiana and Mohana, Assistant Directors of Press, and it is our privilege to welcome you to this year's International Press Conference (IPC).

We all remember our first MUN speeches back in middle school.

Kimaya presented, what she thought, was a strong speech regarding a farmer protest crisis. But after she finished, everyone looked at each other, then at her and then back at each other. She was praying that the ground would open and swallow her up before anyone could ask any follow up questions (which they thankfully didn't because no one understood the speech itself).

Kiana was praying that she would not get picked on for the Special Speakers List in her first MUN which was online, but when she did she thought, "Just my luck, why did I sign up for this again?" But the moment she just trusted herself and her research, and told herself she knows what she is talking about - and went for it, her chairs gave her the Zoom clapping reaction and told her, "Comments well noted Delegate!" and hearing these words made her see why her seniors loved MUN so much.

So if your first time, or your hundredth time, looks like this: don't worry, we've all been there. And soon enough, we joined in on the passion for diplomacy and debating.

But our best piece of advice? Just have fun with it. Be cocky. Be annoying. Build a character that brings drama to the table. Because at the end of the speech, the echoes of the hands banging the tabletops is what you'll remember.

We as your assistant directors for BISMUN 2026 cannot wait to welcome all of you to what promises to be an unforgettable conference - where we are beyond excited to see all of you embrace the curiosity and courage that comes with exceptional journalism. So enjoy the butterflies. Enjoy being naive. Enjoy the nerves, the pressure, people not knowing your name because the weekend will be over in the blink of an eye. Make the most of it.

Signing off,

Kimaya Nambiar, Kiana Chandwani, & Mohona Srivastava
Assistant Directors,
International Press Corps

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE AND AGENDA

In a modern era of transforming information and an evolving political landscape, the role of journalism, the need for transparency, accountability and accurate dissemination of information is more pronounced in today's political atmosphere. Through all of this, the role of the Press Corps and journalism at large is exemplified and pertinent now more than ever - and the world is reminded of this with every major headline, every minor development - carrying the capability to influence conversation, narratives and opinions on a global scale.

The International Press Corps (IPC) will operate as both a dynamic press room and a committee by itself in BISMUN. Its critical role as the media body for the conference will be focused on a multi-layered agenda.

As a committee, the IPC exists to promote transparency in journalism, encourage critical thinking in journalism and committee sessions, and to emulate the critical role that the media plays in today's political atmosphere.

As a conference specific entity, the IPC will develop its own framework, with procedural flexibility as per the decisions of the Director of Press and the Assistant Directors of Press.

Within the IPC, delegates will be taking on different roles and operating as journalists, editors, reporters and committee members with several rounds of publishing articles within and across committees, conducting interviews, engaging in debates and discussions, and, different from traditional functions, have committee sessions of its own with the following agenda serving as the thematic focus and foundation for the committee, promoting all round journalistic and diplomatic skills.

The powers and authorities of the IPC include publishing official committee reports, general articles, conducting intra-committee and committee interviews, press briefings, holding press conferences, investigative reporting in order to influence the information landscape of the MUN effectively.

The IPC agenda is centered around press freedom to safeguard democracy, the public's right to information and encouraging transparency in reporting. State control will also be central to the committee, including exploring the power governments hold in relation to regulating information dissemination, how this can lead to the spread of propaganda, and how state control often results in censorship and restricted press freedom. Disinformation in democracies under strain and authoritarian regimes is another focus area of the committee agenda - the role of digital platforms and social media in spreading misinformation, political polarisation, ideological divides, centrally state-sponsored disinformation, censorship and how all of these restrict the voice of independent journalists. The framework of constrained journalism will also be discussed, including internet regulations, algorithms, artificial intelligence, requirements of licensing, national security laws, surveillance and self censorship, among other legal, financial and digital enablers of the restriction of journalistic freedom. Additional topics will be on the role and adaptive demands of journalism during political conflict, how democracies and democratic principles are upheld during times of change. The aspect of rights to journalism being threatened not only by one's own state, but by other states and political actors. Why this is happening in the media internationally with respect to maintaining diplomatic ties with other nations will be touched on. There will be special focus on specific issues such as foreign information operations like the Russian interference in the 2016 US elections, AI

driven disinformation, and Indian censorship of journalists, including violations of right to freedom of speech, which are discussed in depth in the ‘Important Events’ section of the study guide.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Examining how Legal, Financial, and digital tools are used to constrain journalism in states that formally guarantee free speech, alongside the role of state-sponsored propaganda.

Legal

Despite the constitutional guarantee of press freedom, journalists in India have no statutory protection for their work. The abuse of legal loop-holes such as charging and withholding reports and information as terrorism due to broad anti-state laws such as the public safety act within Jammu and Kashmir in India, allowing for authorities to conduct raids, confiscate electronics or sources of information under the guise of evidence collections and detain journalists without trial or proper evidence. Another popular charge includes fraud or money laundering charges that require less evidence to make arrests or accusations. These tactics are used to silence or intimidate journalists writing articles that are critical of the government.

These states then delegitimize media outlets who raise concerns against state proceedings through the consistent use of labels such as “terrorist” or “anti-state”, reducing credibility in the eyes of the public while also strengthening nationalism and pushing forward a singular perspective. Directing the public to media outlets owned by big corporations backed by the government or under government contracts that flood these channels with state sponsored propaganda, drowning out independent journalists due to overwhelming quantities.

Financial

The use of civil lawsuits such as defamation lawsuits incited by large corporations against journalists or media outlets. These lawsuits are incredibly time consuming, financially draining and can lead to total company bankruptcy. Due to this, journalists would rather veer away from topics that entail such consequences to ‘safer’ areas to report on, thereby leading to self-censorship. This results in a lack of information given to the public, restricting areas of knowledge and safeguarding potentially harmful information. By creating a power imbalance, press and journalists, whose jobs are those to inform the public and call out those in authority by raising concerns and providing evidence that could affect a larger population, can no longer afford to fulfill their duties.

Government allocated funding can be used to manipulate the market by rewarding media outlets and advertisements that promote ideologies and propagate information aligning with the government. This , virtually, acts as a way of punishing media outlets who publish reports that are critical of the government by withholding proper financing, which could lead to these outlets being unable to turn a profit while pushing and giving more reach to outlets that provide state-sponsored propaganda.

The privatization of media outlets has led to the censorship of journalists, who now have to align the beliefs or political stance of the articles being published to those of the company or shareholders that

possess large stakes within the company and therefore possess greater power over the information being circulated.

Digital

The rise of fake news has accelerated with the introduction of the digital age. The easy access and lack of verification needed has allowed individuals to spread information, unchecked, leading to an increase in uncertainty between verified information and illegitimate reports. This has led to mass hysteria, and certain untrustworthy outlets being popularised and taken at face value by hundreds of individuals. This confusion has led to overall distrust towards digital dissemination of information and has made it easier for the dismissal of online reports that were critical towards the government labelling it as 'false news'. This, along with the pumping of state-sponsored propaganda, overwhelms the servings and effectively buries any legitimate or critical report from reaching a large audience. This has been aggravated by the introduction of generative AI which can falsify evidence either to rally against or sympathize with the government.

The digitisation of journalism through television and social media has allowed for government authorities to censor and sift through content. The use of IT regulations and accountability laws allow government authorities to pressurise social media platforms into removing certain content of their websites in order to maintain a good reputation and relationship with the government while avoiding fines. This can be abused, when government authorities remove legitimate reports made by journalists that go against the beliefs held by the government, by making these companies remove them under the guise of misinformation.

Digital tools can be used as a form of intimidation as nationalist, or government sponsored individuals, have been seen to harass, dox and establish smear campaigns against journalists who are a part of minorities or are vocal about concerns raised against the government. Many female journalists have fallen victim to this treatment.

Along with intimidation, it is also used as a tool of surveillance by governments such as the pegasus project which in India saw a leaked list containing 40 names of Indian journalists that had been successfully or were attempted to be hacked and monitored by the government, compromising source confidentiality and constitutional rights.

With the growing reliance on the digital world as a source of instant information and fast access to one another and the outside world, the government conducts internet shutdowns during times of political instability or uprisings in order to divide the masses that are separated geographically from a form of communication that makes it easier to deal with and gain control over the situation.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The following timeline presents a list summarising the factual milestones relevant to the agenda. However, it is not exhaustive but provides the chronological foundation required for accurate reporting and analysis in committee. Delegates are encouraged to do further research based on these events and understand their stance on each event.

2013: Russian troll farm called Internet Research Agency or IRA started grand scale social media operations, specifically targeting certain audiences in order to further reinforce socio-political divides and partisan ideologies. The main goal was to suppress voter turnout and reduce their audience's trust in democratic institutions.

2014: During and immediately after Russia's annexation of Crimea, the Kremlin utilised social media campaigns to construct a narrative and attempt to legitimise the annexation by discrediting Ukrainian narratives. While western intelligence agencies monitored the phenomenon, they didn't classify it as a threat at the time.

2015: IRA's operations expanded internationally and targeted the 2016 US Presidential Elections on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The IRA's operatives created countless fake accounts and pages to represent divergent political views and further reinforce partisan rhetoric.

2016: Russian interference in the US election reached its peak. In March, Clinton's campaign chairman, John Podesta, fell victim to a spear-phishing email, which gave the Russian military intelligence (GRU) access to thousands of emails. In June, the IRA spent over \$100,000 on ads on Facebook, specifically political ads targeting swing states. In July, WikiLeaks released the stolen Democratic National Committee emails; and US intelligence later confirmed Russian involvement. Between August and November, Russian trolls created over 80,000 posts on Facebook which reached an estimated 126 million American users. One of the most widely circulated fake news stories of the election falsely claimed that Pope Francis had endorsed Donald Trump.

2017: Special Counsel Robert Mueller was appointed to investigate Russian interference. Facebook admitted it had sold \$100,000 in ads to Russian operatives. Twitter identified over 50,000 Russia-linked accounts. Congressional investigations commenced.

2019: The Mueller Report was released. It documented extensive and systematic Russian interference but did not establish a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia. Social media platforms began deleting billions of fake accounts.

2020: Russia again attempted to interfere in US elections through more sophisticated tactics such as fake news websites, deepfake videos, and amplification of COVID-19 disinformation. US officials assessed the effort as broader but less effective due to platform countermeasures.

2021: India's Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 came into force. These changes faced pushback from observers who saw the rules as enabling broad state authority; authorities could now require takedowns, track where messages began, or order online services to hire designated complaint handlers. Press groups responded sharply, calling the structure a binding constraint on media independence and the right to freedom of speech. Though framed as oversight, its impact leaned heavily on control.

2022: Russia invaded Ukraine. Simultaneously, Russia launched a global disinformation campaign framing Ukraine as a Nazi state and NATO as the aggressor. Western platforms banned RT and Sputnik. India did not join sanctions and continued to purchase Russian oil, a fact that influenced Indian domestic press coverage of the war.

2023: The Indian Supreme Court upheld large parts of the IT Rules but struck down the provision requiring fact-checking units to be government-appointed. However, enforcement remained arbitrary. At least five journalists were arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for reporting on protests in Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir.

2024: AI-generated disinformation such as deepfake videos of politicians, including a fabricated clip of Donald Trump praising China, were widespread during the 2024 US elections. Similarly, AI-generated robocalls were impersonating multiple candidates during India's general election. Neither country had a binding legal framework for AI generated media.

2025: A consortium of international news organisations (Reuters, Associated Press, Agence France-Presse) launched a real-time disinformation tracker. The tracker was blocked in India after naming government officials as sources of fake narratives. The UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression issued a report criticising the use of financial tools – including tax audits and withdrawal of government advertising – to punish critical Indian outlets.

2026: Arrests of Indian journalists continued under colonial-era sedition laws, then rebranded under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. In Russia, independent media had been effectively extinguished; remaining reporters operated from exile or faced fifteen-year prison terms for “fakes” about the military.

ELABORATION ON IMPORTANT EVENTS

Over the past century, there has been a significant decline in press freedom despite the increase in the number of democratic states in this time period. Both strained democracies and authoritarian governments use different methods such as censorship and bribes, to silence the press in order to push a narrative that portrays them favourably. Additionally, the surge in technological advancements in the past few decades, notably social media and artificial intelligence, has reshaped modern reporting and accelerated the spread of disinformation and propaganda.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

In 1948, the United Nations presented a declaration containing a list of rights all member countries were expected to guarantee their citizens. Article 19 of this declaration states :

“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

Despite the fact that none of the members present voted against this declaration, many countries, for instance India and Russia, continue to censor their media platforms for political gains till this day.

Cold War Propaganda (1947-1991)

The Cold War was an ideological war. Both the USA and the USSR used media propaganda and state censorship to control their narratives. The superpowers used censorship as a tool to establish their geographic and ideological influence globally.

The Cold War introduced large scale information warfare tactics that are still used today. For example in the Russo-Ukrainian War where Russia falsely blamed Ukraine for violence against their Russian - speaking population.

Internet and Digital Journalism (1990s-2000s)

Thanks to the rise of the Internet since the 1990s, there has been an large expansion of independent journalism and public access to information. This led governments around the world to adapt and create digital surveillance, internet shut downs and online censorship to influence how the world perceives their nation. Governments in Egypt (during the Egyptian Revolution in 2011), Sudan (during a political opposition sit-in seeking civilian rule in 2019) and Iran (during anti-government protests in 2019).

The growth of the Internet has therefore shifted government control from traditional media forms to digital platforms to continue censoring unfavourable political opposition.

Arab Spring and Digital Activism (2010-2012)

The Arab Spring was a series of pro-democracy and anti-government protests in West Asia between 2010-2012. Social media platforms, majorly Facebook and Twitter, were used by the revolutionaries to organise protests and spread awareness throughout the 2 of the 5 Arab nations (Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain). The Tunisian and Egyptian governments both were able to shut down the internet access in their countries to de-escalate the movement.

This proves that strong authoritarian regimes with high degrees of censorship in their national broadcast media are able to block communication and prevent the domestic spread of information necessary for opposition .

Russia's Interference in the US Elections (2016)

In October 2016, Russian agents allegedly hacked into the Democratic National Committee's database, releasing thousands of documents while simultaneously spreading disinformation on social media. Thousands of emails were forwarded and published prior to the election. This sparked global concerns regarding foreign international operations.

The hacking of the Democratic Party's database highlighted that democracies can easily be destabilised through digital propaganda.

Increasing Journalist Arrests (Late 2010s - Present)

Over the last decade, multiple democratic governments have faced harsh criticism for threatening journalists or using legal pressure against media organisations. Countries such as India and the United States of America raise global concerns over press freedom standards. India currently ranks 154/180 in the World Press Freedom Index, while America ranks 54/180. However it's important to note that the number of attacks on journalists have doubled since the start of Trump's presidency, owing to his pressure on news channels to soften their stance on him.

This goes to show that formal constitution protections do not always guarantee press freedom. Countries that outwardly claim they are democratic, inwardly censor their media and press coverage.

Journalism in Israel and Palestine (2023 - Present)

During war, journalists increasingly face threats, arrests, disinformation and restricted access to information. This can be seen in the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. In November 2025, the Israeli parliament voted to ban all foreign media outlets, including the Al Jazeera, due to concerns of “undermining national security” in the country. This is a common tactic used by governments to restrict media, like during the Kargil War in 1999. Furthermore, have been documented to have killed over 134 Palestinian journalists over the course of the ongoing war.

Additionally, there was a surge of independent Palestinian social media accounts that posted updates on the events taking place at the Gaza Strip. They gained followers rapidly because no foreign or national media outlets were able to get live updates for the international community.

This reveals how war intensifies the threats to press freedom and journalism as countries continue to work in their personal and selfish interests.

Rise of AI Disinformation (2022 - Present)

AI tools are used to generate fake but convincing content such as articles, deepfakes, images, etc. This means journalists are now expected to identify the truth amongst hundreds of thousands of fabricated stories in order to remain relevant. Not only that but governments, most commonly the U.S and Israel, release AI generated images on official websites and social media accounts to create support for the ongoing war with Iran and for propaganda. Developments of AI propaganda during the Trump Administration's campaign prior to the 2024 elections have raised global concerns over election interferences and led to public distrust.

The rise of AI disinformation poses a new challenge to journalism and reliable information.

CASE STUDY 1 - RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE IN 2016 ELECTIONS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Back in 2016, Russia's effort to influence the U.S. election became a key example for the group studying outside interference in discourse. Success came not from hacking vote systems rather through shaping online dialogue using major digital networks.

Operational Structure

Running across three linked phases, the effort began with the Internet Research Agency - a group based in St. Petersburg that hired hundreds working long shifts around the clock. Though appearing to be American users, more than 3,000 false profiles emerged from this setup, carefully built one by one. Behind each name lay detailed personal narratives: job records, photos, even invented stances on policy matters. Instead of random posts, what spread were manipulated images, made-up reports, and rallying tags like HillaryForPrison along with ImWithHer. While seeming casual, these messages carried strong emotional triggers meant to divide.

Next, Russian agents slipped into established U.S. groups already feeling discontent. Instead of creating new divisive ideas, the IRA tapped into genuine divisions - like racial conflict, misconduct by law enforcement, financial stress, and suspicion toward powerful figures - and boosted the loudest opinions on left and right alike. Real gatherings took shape through their efforts: one such event was a "Muslims for

Trump" gathering in Florida that drew zero Muslims because those who planned it were actually Kremlin-linked operatives. At the same moment in New York, opposing demonstrations - one backing Trump, another Clinton - were both fueled behind the scenes by identical fake online personas.

Later, the IRA turned to highly specific online ads. About one hundred thousand dollars went toward campaigns on Facebook - a small amount, yet effective due to precise audience segmentation across geographic areas. In Detroit, messages aimed at Black communities emphasized Hillary Clinton's remarks from 1996 about "super predators," framed as if they reflected her present stance. Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, advertisements shown to white residents centered on stories involving crimes committed by immigrants. Money moved through counterfeit American banking profiles and PayPal transfers, all while slipping past weak scrutiny in Facebook's ad approval system.

Content Analysis

One ecosystem favored right-wing narratives, pushing support for Donald Trump while discrediting Hillary Clinton via slogans like "Hillary Clinton wants to take your guns and your Bible," along with fabricated clips showing election fraud and images linking Clinton to demonic symbols. Following the Democratic convention, material aimed at liberal audiences shifted - though it began by championing Bernie Sanders and opposing political elites, it soon echoed criticism of Clinton, claiming the party elite had manipulated nominations and insisting civic participation was pointless due to systemic corruption across both major parties

One type of material aimed to deepen societal splits. Running under the name "Blacktivist," the IRA managed a Facebook presence reaching 360,000 people by mixing actual footage of police misconduct with fabricated statements suggesting Clinton endorsed such actions. Another outlet, titled "United Muslims of America," attracted 300,000 followers while sharing posts hostile toward Jewish and LGBTQI+ communities - pushing Muslim-Americans away from alignment with Democratic values through intentional friction.

Investigative Findings

The Mueller Report, released in 2019, found clear evidence of extensive Russian interference during the 2016 U.S. election. While examining more than 100 interactions involving Trump campaign members and individuals tied to Russia, investigators uncovered no proof sufficient for a conspiracy indictment. Despite numerous links observed, legal standards for criminal coordination were not met. Though patterns emerged, they fell short of prosecutable agreement under federal law.

Surprisingly, the 2020 Senate Intelligence Committee Report revealed the Trump campaign's data director relied on information tied to Russia through a Ukrainian billionaire. Because of such actions, officials described the conduct as posing a risk to national intelligence efforts

Appearing before lawmakers, Facebook, Twitter, and Google acknowledged their delayed reactions - calling themselves caught off guard by the unfolding events. Legal penalties never followed despite these admissions. By 2025, new rules required transparency around online political ads, yet oversight of recommendation systems stayed minimal. Regulation moved forward in one area while leaving core mechanisms untouched.

News Outlets and How They Shape Stories Differently

Far from uniform, coverage of Russian meddling shifted sharply based on who owned the outlet and where it stood politically. State-run Russian media like RT and Sputnik usually dismissed claims of state-led meddling, instead framing such actions as efforts by lone "patriots" acting on personal conviction. These outlets portrayed American intelligence findings as unsubstantiated narratives shaped by bias against Russia.

Some U.S. right-leaning media sources, like Fox News and the New York Post, tended to recast the matter as a controversy centered on the Clinton team and the FBI, downplaying any significant role of Russian actions while asserting these had no real impact on voting results; they also described the Mueller probe as driven more by political bias than factual pursuit.

Outlets like the New York Times, Washington Post, and CNN framed Russian meddling as a historic breach of democracy. Social media's part in spreading disinformation took center stage in their reports. The Trump administration's downplaying of the issue drew sharp scrutiny. Instead of confronting the danger, officials dismissed warnings. Coverage unfolded with alarm, highlighting vulnerabilities long ignored. While facts emerged slowly, one theme persisted - democracy faced something new. Reporting returned again to how online networks amplified foreign influence. Despite evidence, resistance within the government continued. Puzzlement crept into analyses: why ignore such risks? Attention stayed fixed on both digital tools and political denial.

State-linked Indian media, such as ANI and Times Now, redirected focus toward misinformation campaigns originating from Pakistan and China. Instead of addressing Russian involvement directly, they described it as something confined within American borders. Given the long-standing defense relationship between New Delhi and Moscow, these channels sidestepped any sharp remarks about Russia. Attention shifted outward - away from bilateral sensitivities and into broader narratives involving rival nations.

Outlets like The Wire and Newslaundry, operating independently in India, compared Russian troll factories to digital campaigns run by local political groups using IT units. While Moscow's efforts fly a foreign banner, similar tactics emerge domestically under party logos. One builds influence abroad, the other shapes opinion at home - same playbook, different uniforms. Methods mirror each other closely, despite originating on opposite sides of sovereignty lines. What separates them isn't technique but allegiance stamped on the operation. Digital manipulation wears distinct national colors, yet functions much alike beneath the surface.

CASE STUDY 2 - INDIAN CENSORSHIP OF JOURNALISM

Indian authorities are increasingly targeting journalists and online critics for their criticism of government policies and practices, including by prosecuting them under counterterrorism and sedition laws, ten human rights organizations said today on World Press Freedom Day.

Regulation and surveillance of journalists who cover government workings such as Indian military, elections, security and investigation among others. Seen through the Pegasus project where a leaked list revealed 40 journalists who were on a surveillance list created by the Indian government. This list included large names from mainstream media outlets such as The Hindu, The Wire, India Today,

Hindustan Times and Indian express as well as independent journalists. Upon further investigation, the area of expertise and reports covered topics such as election commissions, Indian military and defence, police brutality, nationwide issues and reports that criticize the current government. The electronics, namely phones of many of these journalists found traces of a spyware called pegasus which had either attempted to or successfully hacked the device. The illegal monitoring of journalists by the government poses a huge threat to freedom of speech in India, a concern expressed by 3 UN human rights experts as well.

Along with Surveillance, journalists whose reports criticize or uncover government issues or faults within the system are met with physical intimidation. Authorities in Uttar Pradesh have repeatedly filed false charges against journalists under the label of terrorism and anti-government propaganda for publishing content and social media posts that raise concerns against the government. An example of this is the imprisonment of Siddiqui Kappan, a muslim journalist who has been in prison since october 2020, after being arrested on unfounded charges of terrorism, sedition and promoting enmity between groups, among others. Kappan was arrested on his way to Hattaras District in Uttar pradesh to report on a gang rape and murder of a dalit women that had incited country-wide protests.

A growing trend shows that Journalists in small towns and villages reporting in Hindi language media are at even higher risk of being targeted and prosecuted by authorities along with any journalist belonging to minority religious groups, classes within India.

This issue is extremely prevalent within high tension areas such as Jammu and Kashmir as government authorities have intensified its control over the dissemination of information. Since the revoking of its autonomous status in August 2019, 35 known journalists in Kashmir have faced police interrogation, raids, threats, physical assault, restrictions on freedom of movement, or fabricated criminal cases for their reporting along with confiscation of mobile phones and continuous internet shut downs.

In June of 2020, a new media policy was announced within this region that only increased the power of the authorities to censor news. The employment of preventative detention allows authorities to arbitrarily detain journalists without any evidence or thorough judicial review under the Jammu and Kashmir Public safety act. Effectively, controlling the type and amount of information circulated within and outside of the region. Combined with the new IT laws set in place, majorly curb freedom of speech on online platforms giving authorities more control on taking down or omitting information. This greatly affects independent journalists, rather than those who are a part of mainstream media as it makes it harder for these journalists to get their work across and to a larger audience.

Prominent government critics such as Rana Ayyub have been physically detained preventing her from flying to London for a journalism conference on the basis of money laundering and tax evasion, allegations that have been denied by the journalists. United Nations human right experts have alleged that this isn't the first instance but Indian authorities have been harassing Ayyub for years. Government supporters and Hindu nationalists have sent out death threats, rape threats repeatedly through social media. Seen in the fake auction app where 20 female muslim journalists were listed "for sale" as a form of humiliation, degradation and a tactic of intimidation led by account holders who majorly identify themselves as current government supporters. The women listed on the app found by the committee to protect journalists are those who have flagged how the current government's policies have affected

religious minorities. These threats and backlashes are not specifically reserved toward these journalists but a growing trend among current government supporters against female journalists.

STANCES AND BIASES

A stance is a viewpoint, position, perspective or ideology adopted by a journalist towards a particular subject. This directly affects the way a journalist reports through differences in language choices, selection of facts, interpretation of events and more to construct narratives. The existence of several differing stances contributes to varying portrayals and perspectives on international developments. Similar to the subject of biases, it is equally important to recognise different stances to be able to construct a global picture and gain a nuanced understanding of political discourse.

Examples of Stances

Left Wing Stance: Journalists or media outlets with a left stance align with and support socialist points of view, which often give importance to social equality, social reform, advocating for marginalised communities and standing against social structures such as capitalism.

Examples: People's Democracy (India), People's World (USA), Morning Star (UK), L'Humanité (France)

Center Wing Stance: Journalists or media outlets with a centric approach reject both extremist policies presented by the left wing or the right wing and instead support moderate policies and do not align on either ends of the spectrum.

Examples: The Economist (international), The Hindu (India), BBC News (international), The Wire (international)

Right Wing Stance: Journalists or media outlets with a rightist political stance align with views seeing certain social orders or stratifications as correct, natural or desirable for society to function, favouring conservatism, economics, natural law, property, religion among others.

Examples: Fox News (the USA), Republic TV (India), Daily Telegraph (the UK), Zee News (India), Daily Mail (the UK)

A bias is the reflection of an opinion which favours one group/view/ideology over another, consciously or unconsciously. In journalism, such biases, often conscious, can influence public opinion by shaping how information is presented to create a particular narrative, and since objectivity is difficult to achieve in journalism because of these biases - media is often clouded by bias which reads different from the objective truth of facts.

Examples of Biases

Confirmation Bias: a tendency to focus on and give greater credibility to information that aligns with existing beliefs and presenting only this selection in media reports. This is because journalists would not like to go against their existing beliefs and be questioned on ideology (which would impact their credibility)

Cultural Bias: news reporters reflecting the values/beliefs of one particular cultural community while dismissing another. This manifests in journalism as subtle portrayals of cultural stereotypes and selective representation of cultural groups.

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to evaluate other cultures based on the standards and values of one culture, often leading to perceptions of superiority. This is often manifested as western centric views misrepresenting narratives of the East in media.

Political Bias: the manipulation of information to side with one particular political entity - a political actor, position, party or view. In journalism this manifests as deliberate disproportionate media coverage of events, emotionally charged or framing language, selective and timed reporting of facts/events, among countless others. Political bias resulting in deliberate propaganda efforts, especially when it is state controlled, poses a threat to credible journalism - when information is disseminated such that it is not only selective but advancing particular political ideologies and altering ways of thinking for populations.

The privatisation of media outlets have contributed to censorship of journalism as individual journalists have to align to company values and larger stakeholders who hold more power and money within the system, making the news and articles released from the outlet to align with the interests of the stakeholders. India is an example of a nation that sees this effect in its media, with a large number of media ownership being concentrated with a few corporations. For example, the Adani Group, who is historically closely aligned with the BJP party, acquired NDTV, a major newshouse in India. This political bias heavily influences the narratives presented by them and has the ability to shape public perception as well.

Remember: bias is a spectrum! An article, source, person or being biased does not necessarily make the information wrong. Bias in journalism is often inevitably shaped by political, cultural and societal elements. The key aspect is being able to recognise and critically evaluate a bias and what its implications are, as well as employ them within your own delegations.

IPC delegates must be aware of their own biases, that of their own delegation, those of their fellow delegates and of various media outlets as well. You must be aware of the various stakeholders involved in one publication and be able to also incorporate appropriate biases effectively into your written work or spoken presentations.

To be able to read an article and recognise its bias is a skill that is developed over time with reading a great number of news articles, comparing different sources on a common event, verifying historical credibility of media outlets, being aware of one's own personal bias and the ability to critically evaluate and question something you read - not simply taking it for what it appears to be.

As a press delegate, you must see instead that it was constructed to be read one way but you make a conscious effort to read it another way. Ask questions as you read from a critical lens! What was the intention? What are its implications? What does this tell you about the source? The more you start to engage with media around you in such a manner, the more fun it gets and the better your understanding of global events and politics at large becomes.

CRISIS EXPECTATIONS

The International Press Corps at BISMUN 2026 is a crisis-integrated committee. The Executive Board may introduce Crisis Updates at any point during committee, requiring delegates to respond to rapidly evolving developments in real time.

Delegates may submit:

- Open Communiqués
- Closed / Covert Communiqués (confidential submissions visible only to the Executive Board)
- Joint Communiqués

Crisis situations are intentionally dynamic and may introduce new information, emerging actors, breaking developments, leaks, investigations, cyber incidents, diplomatic disputes, media scandals, or information operations. Delegates should therefore be prepared to think on their feet, adapt their reporting strategy quickly, and respond to developments as journalists would in real-world newsroom environments.

The Executive Board will place significant value on communiqués that are detailed, realistic, creative, and consistent with the editorial stance of the delegate's assigned publication. Strong submissions will not simply react to events; they will demonstrate initiative by investigating developments, asking critical questions, shaping public narratives, uncovering new angles, and considering the wider political implications of unfolding events.

Delegates are encouraged to think beyond straightforward news reporting. Depending on their allocation, they may choose to publish breaking news reports, investigative pieces, editorials, interviews, opinion articles, fact-checks, exposés, or special features. The most effective delegates will recognise that in IPC, influence often comes not only from reporting events, but from determining how those events are understood by the public.

All crisis responses should remain consistent with the editorial position, interests, and institutional character of the assigned media organisation. Delegates should remember that publications do not operate in a vacuum; developments introduced through crisis may affect domestic politics, foreign policy, diplomatic relations, public opinion, and media freedoms. As a result, delegates should carefully consider how their publication would realistically respond to major events, which narratives it would prioritise, and which actors it would choose to support, scrutinise, or challenge.

While collaboration is encouraged, delegates should remain mindful that different publications often have competing interests, audiences, and editorial objectives. Strategic alliances may emerge during committee, but these should remain consistent with the publication's established stance and journalistic identity.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER (QARMA)

1. **Who** is writing the resolution- co-authors and authors are important. Do their stances align? What is their motive for working together?
2. **What** is the ultimate goal? What is specifically being done and what is its purpose? Is everything clearly stated? Are there any potentially loopholes that could be exploited?
3. **When** will it be implemented? What are the timelines set in place? Who is authorising and overseeing this? Is there a neutral part at hand?
4. **Where** does it apply? Is it specifically created keeping in mind your nation's policies and the policies of the countries being discussed? How generalisable is it? Where does it fall short?
5. **Why** is this resolution important? What sets it apart from the others? Is it economically and legally feasible? How does it completely encompass the topic at hand?
6. **How** does this culturally impact any nations involved? How will these rules and regulations be enforced? Are there any safeguards in place? How will the governments and people receive this resolution? How can one counter any potential negatives?

PRESS GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

The Press delegates will be functioning as both journalists and committee members. The role of press in committee entails observing committee happenings, reporting the proceedings, documenting important events, details, statements, crises, debates and resolutions, writing and submitting reports, articles, opinion editorials, colour pieces, feature articles, crisis reports, news reports, or illustrations. Press delegates may also conduct their own interviews with delegates and chairs when permitted by the Press Directors. Aside from these reporting requirements, within written work, IPC delegates must analyse and highlight significant diplomatic developments and overall stay committed to upholding the agenda of the committee (discussed in detail in the section 'Introduction to Committee & Agenda'). Do not forget to have fun and add your own creative touch to it; be yourself as you find your own journalistic identity.

Only upon consulting the Directors, you may go beyond the traditional article formats, while staying within the three broad categories. Feel free to innovate with your articles and please feel free to exceed the outlined article number requirements (which will be conveyed to you during the start of the committee). The latter in particular will be highly appreciated!

The process of submissions is tentatively as such, the details of this will be clarified closer to the committee dates - all working digital documents must be only on Google Docs and must be shared with the email addresses of all Press Directors as soon as they are created, once completed they may inform any of the Directors.

Delegates are expected to maintain professionalism in reporting and avoid defamatory reporting or any form of misinformation that does not align with the current procedure. Professional journalism also includes a strict policy against plagiarism and the use of artificial intelligence in submissions. Plagiarism includes direct use of information, lack of proper referencing, using information from another delegate,

presenting someone else's work as your own or using artificial intelligence tools to write, edit, summarise or rephrase your work or other sources.

To avoid any unintentional plagiarism, you must:

1. Keep track of all the sources that you have used.
2. Use quotation marks to quote from a source and cite it in your bibliography.
3. Cite your sources in a bibliography by using an MLA-9 format.

Please be mindful of the policy against use of AI includes generative tools or writing assisting ones such as paraphrasers or grammar checkers. Any form of plagiarism or using AI to write submissions is considered a breach of the conference ethics and guidelines and this will result in reviews and potential disqualification from publication or awards. All of you are talented writers who do not need to brainstorm with artificial intelligence to 'improve' writing. We know you are all here to show us your writing skills in the most practical sense at this platform, so let us all be aware of these guidelines and follow them so that we all can experience originality, creativity, new ideas, and a broader understanding of global affairs with all IPC delegates and make the Press room buzzing with such energy.

Submissions must be made in time with correct spelling, grammar, punctuation and accuracy in content. All submissions are subject to review, editing and a decision to publish on the Press issues and website based on the IPC journalism standards. These calls will be taken by the Press Directors. Revisions or edits may be requested and delegates are expected to cooperate with this.

The use of offensive or derogatory language, making deeply personal remarks or displaying any aspects of unethical journalism are not permitted by the code of conduct.

As Press members, Delegates are encouraged to recognise others and adopt their own biases in the context that the committee demands at any given moment, put critical thinking skills to the test, be extremely well-researched and well-grounded in their application of the essential skills of a reporter in the Press Corps in order to adapt to and combat the evolving Press Committee most effectively.

Through all of these, delegates must embody principles of journalism responsibly, find a balance with accuracy, nuanced insights, and transparency in order to create an authentic and powerful body of journalism at BISMUN.

TYPES OF ARTICLES

Opinion Editorials: Often shortened to ‘Op-Eds’ in the press room, opinion editorials are articles you write regarding different committee agenda or issues/topics currently relevant to different committees, keeping in mind your delegation’s stance and reporting style. They provide a medium for delegates to express their news house’s views on a particular subject, issue, agenda, crisis or crisis update. In order to write a good Op-Ed, delegates must be well researched on the topic as well as their own delegation’s stance. Keep in mind that Op-Eds, in comparison to colour articles, have a formal tone but still interesting and engaging to read as it goes beyond the committee and procedure in terms of content.

Colour Articles: Colour articles offer delegates a chance to be as creative as possible. There is no particular prescribed format, you may choose to write a poem, a story, a comic, quiz, game, song, illustration or even make the article playful in your own creative way - the world is your stage with colour articles as long as you clear your idea once with the Directors! They provide a moment of relief in the fast-paced nature of the MUN, so please make the most of this for both yourself and for the readers of the Press issues.

Committee Reports: A committee report is an article detailing the ongoing happenings in a delegate’s assigned committee, in an informative, organised and engaging manner. It should dive into crises, updates, any exciting committee events that feel worthy of reporting and must present them in an engaging and coherent manner to a reader, who may not have been present in committee but must understand the entire essence with your report. To write a good committee report, you must take good notes and be observant and attentive in committee. A committee report may use satire depending on the requirements of your delegation, your political stance and the committee status however it must still be completely factual in nature.

POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

Press follows a different format for position papers compared to Delegate committees. Refer to the following guidelines and the subsection of Stances and Biases of the Study Guide to understand how to write a position paper for press.

Delegates are encouraged to follow the recommended font, Times New Roman, in size 12 and a line spacing of 1.5. The length of the position paper should range from 2 to 3 pages (excluding the Biblio/Webliography and Works Cited.)

Title: Position Paper

Start with the essential details on the upper left hand side of the first page,

NAME: (your full name)

ALLOCATION: (the media agency you have been allocated)

COMMITTEE: (IPC)

SCHOOL: (your school)

The rest of your position is divided into 4 main sections:

1. Introduction

This paragraph reflects the delegate's understanding of the agenda, case studies, and major events. It should set the context without the delegate's personal bias or their allocated bias present.

2. Body

The Body is the crux of the position paper. For the Body, the delegate must deconstruct the agenda, dive deep into the conflict at hand and write from their allocated perspective and bias. Delegates must highlight their media agency's involvement in the conflict. Refer to past articles from the allocated agency to understand the bias and perspective for both, the position paper and all articles, on the agenda.

3. Solutions

Write 4 to 6 detailed solutions that, from the perspective of your allocated agency, would maintain press freedom even in democracies under strain and authoritarian regimes.

Refer to the subsection, Press Guidelines & Expectations, of the study guide to understand the limitations of solutions proposed by IPC under the UN Mandate. Also refer to previous UN Resolutions for format and clauses. The mandate for IPC limits the committee's use of certain operative clauses, hence it is recommended to use cooperative and non-binding operative clauses.

Delegates must prioritise on quality over quantity under this section. Rather than listing ten solutions with little substance in each and a lack of plausibility, delegates should write 4 to 6 detailed solutions and list subclauses under each, explaining the solution in detail.

4. Bibliography

GUIDE TO FURTHER RESEARCH

Censorship and the Press

1. To what extent can governments limit the practice of journalism in the interests of national security and political stability ?
2. What balance should be created between national security and press freedom?
3. What differentiates legitimate media regulation from censorship ?
4. How can the state influence media coverage without directly violating constitutional terms regarding freedom of speech and expression ?
5. Can a country still be considered a democracy if its journalists are subjected to intimidation or legal pressure?
6. Where do you draw the line between direct censorship and regulation?
7. How do censorship methods evolve with advances in digital communication?

Technology and Disinformation

1. What role should the state play in regulating misinformation and propaganda?
2. How has social media affected the spread of disinformation and information ?
3. Are the existing laws regarding AI generated disinformation sufficient?
4. Should governments regulate AI generated content ? If so, how?
5. Describe how journalists can verify information in an increasingly digital ecosystem.
6. How can governments fight against disinformation without restricting legitimate journalism ?

Democracies in Strain and Authoritarian Regimes

1. How do methods of controlling the press differ in democratic and authoritarian governments ?
2. How do authoritarian regimes use state censorship to control the public narratives and consolidate power?
3. To what extent can governments influence public opinion without directly censoring media outlets ?
4. How do governments exploit periods of crisis to justify restrictions of journalism ?
5. How do the two types of governments differ in their use of surveillance tech against journalists?
6. How can journalists expose the misconduct of authoritarian governments in countries where information is tightly controlled.

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