

INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORPS STUDY GUIDE

Dear International Press Corps,

It is with immense pride and great anticipation that I welcome you to the International Press Corps at BBMUN 2026.

We live in an age defined by paradox, where rapid technological advancement coexists with deepening geopolitical fault lines, and where truth itself often becomes a matter of perception. Journalists today navigate not just wars or crises, but the very architecture of information and influence. The panorama of global news that greets us each morning is both bewildering and compelling, a theatre of nations, ideologies, and human stories that refuse simplicity. Yet, amid this noise, journalism remains the quiet force that steadies the world, a current of intellect and conscience that both records and reimagines reality.

As members of the International Press, you will function not as representatives of individual news agencies, but as part of an impartial and collective body committed to truth and clarity. The International Press will uphold its integrity by eschewing bias while embracing depth, nuance, and independent thought. Within that objectivity, however, lies the full breadth of your creative freedom, to question, to satirize, and to illuminate. Journalism remains one of the most formidable institutions of the modern world, a discipline that shapes public consciousness, questions authority, and occasionally, rewrites history itself.

Our collective vision this year is to curate a journal that celebrates the power and precision of the written word, a publication that marries research with reflection, wit with wisdom. The finest pieces are those that challenge the intellect while stirring the imagination, that balance insight with humour, and fact with feeling. A distinguished journalist within a simulation of global diplomacy requires not only command over knowledge, but also agility of thought and depth of analysis. For the press to exist without research is to speak without reason.

The newsletter that will emerge from this cohort will be a living chronicle of BBMUN 2026, a record of its debates, its ideation, and the vibrant interplay of minds that define its spirit. Through op-eds, analytical essays, investigative reports, and creative commentaries, your work will encapsulate the essence of this conference: inquiry, collaboration, and intellectual evolution.

This background guide will serve as your compass, acquainting you with the methodology of journalistic writing and the rhythm of the conference. Should you have any questions or require guidance during your preparation, please do not hesitate to reach out.

With warm regards and best wishes,

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General Outline- Journalist

The reporter will not merely report the council proceedings but also draw upon the debate and analyse it. The essence of this newsletter will be the analytical articles on debate, thoughtful interviews, well-framed photographs and collaborative pieces containing all of the above. We are looking at a simulation of Press Corps which is deliberative and well researched. AIMUN 2019 is simulating Press Corps with an idealistic vision and it would not be simulating any news agency but come out as an indigenous journal that reflects the editorial policy of Reuters and Al-Jazeera

Contrary to popular belief, there is not much difference in their reporting style. All three of them are objective and pursue a level of neutrality. The only difference that therein lies is the issues that they pick up. A detailed presentation will be sent to you to propagate this theory and thought once all reporters are on board.

The reporter will not merely report the council proceedings but also draw upon the debate and analyze it. The essence of this newsletter will be the political analytical articles and debate drawings and interviews. We are looking at a simulation of the press corps which will be deliberative and well researched. It will be filled with articles, editorials, Op-eds, Interviews, press conferences and a subtle form of intelligent humour.

You shall be familiarized with all these forms in one-by-one manner through this guide.

Reporting (Formal)

One of the most important tasks that journalists in the International Press perform is formal reportage. They are primarily required to cover the event and describe it to others in the most structured and concise way possible, and for this purpose, they take notes and submit articles that contain the major happenings/discussions in their respective councils. A good news report ought to be articulate, succinct, neutral in tone and opinion, and be able to convey the essence of a discussion/occurrence to someone who has not personally witnessed it.

The key points to remember while writing are:

- 1) Keep your article brief and to-the-point. Council reports should ideally not exceed 300-350 words.
- 2) Your article **must not** betray your personal perspective on the agenda. It is very important to maintain objectivity and report the incidents/conversations with as much neutrality and accuracy as possible. This is a key difference between reporting and writing an Op-Ed article. For this purpose, you are advised to be meticulous with your notes and include quotes as much as possible, with due credit to the speaker. The correct format and punctuation required for quoting is, for example:

"Those people are criminals who want to take over the city and kill the community," said Sheikh Rafe'a Abdulkareem Albu Fahad, who is leading the tribal fight against al-Qaeda in Ramadi.

- 3) *Your article must be coherent and well-structured. It ought to contain an identifiable opening, two descriptive paragraphs, and a conclusion. **You must give your article a relevant headline and a by-line containing "By (Your Name)".** Lack of the same may result in negative marking.*

*Every line mentioned in the article ought to be pertinent to the idea you are attempting to convey. **(For further elaboration, read next section on Beat)***

- 4) *Grammar and punctuation must not be compromised with. A spell-check of the final draft is essential.*

Beat Reporting

*Considering that any Model United Nations conference has multiple discussions in every session, it is virtually impossible to report every Caucus/Point in your article. Therefore, your focus should not be on putting in as much information as you can, but to put in only the **relevant** information. The best way to include the most pertinent information in your article is to recognise a 'beat' and write a beat-based article.*

A beat-based article is essentially a specialized article wherein the journalist presents an in-depth coverage of a particular issue, situation, institution, or likewise, and which also involves amassment of more knowledge than a traditional news report.

The beat of such an article, then, is a central idea around which the contents of the article are formed. Ideally, it is the core concern or subject and should pertain to every single line used in the forming of the article.

You shall be able to identify the beat of the day's discussion only through careful observation and attention, so be sure you are present, mentally and physically, during all formal sessions. All the previously mentioned rules of reporting apply to beat reporting as well. Include as many factual details and quotes as possible, within the context of the article, as facts help readers understand your work better.

Beat Capturing Exercises: -

- 1.) *Consider this excerpt:- President Barack Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai agreed on Friday to speed up the handover of combat operations in Afghanistan to Afghan forces, raising the prospect of an accelerated U.S. withdrawal from the country and underscoring Obama's determination to wind down a long, unpopular war. Signaling a narrowing of differences, Karzai*

appeared to give ground in talks at the White House on U.S. demands for immunity from prosecution for any American troops who stay in Afghanistan beyond 2018, a concession that could allow Obama to keep at least a small residual force there.

Now you have three options for the beat: -

- *Obama Karzai accelerate the end of US combat role in Afghanistan*
 - *USA set to withdraw troops from Afghanistan*
 - *Afghanistan welcomes US peace talks*
-
- *The correct Answer: - **Obama Karzai accelerate the end of US combat role in Afghanistan** (Because it conveys the essence of the press statement)*

2.) We praise the courage of the Republic of South Sudan's leadership in taking this decision. As I said in Juba yesterday, the interests of their people were at stake. The oil impasse has lasted more than six months. Now was the time to bring this impasse to a close, for the good of the people of South Sudan and their aspirations for a better future in the face of on-going challenges. South Sudan's leaders have risen to the occasion. They tabled a bold comprehensive proposal at this latest round of talks, and an agreement was hammered out with the strong assistance of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan (AUHIP). The future of South Sudan is now brighter.

Try figuring it out yourself.

Examples of Beat Reporting

<http://www.rightsrisks.org/banner/india-medias-crackdown-during-covid-19-lockdown-2/>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/three-journalists-assaulted-in-northeast-delhi-while-reporting-6550947/>

<https://www.pulitzer.org/news/pulitzer-administrator-dana-canedy-steps-down-accept-publisher-role-simon-schuster>

<https://www.pulitzer.org/news/pulitzer-board-member-and-prize-winning-historian-steven-hahn-awarded-fellowship>

After you have seen the best of beat reporting, please visit www.aljazeera.com and read the daily reports. Familiarize yourself with the reporting style.

All of the articles given above talk about a specific incident/development/debate, and contain facts, figures and quotes to substantiate their subject. If you observe carefully, the contents of each article point to one core idea being communicated to the reader.

Opinion Pieces

Op-Ed in very simple terms refers to an opinionated article. It is often understood to be an abbreviation for opinion editorials or an abbreviation for ‘opposite to the editorial’ page. Different textbooks would claim either to be the more authoritative definition but ‘opposite to the editorial page’ is a more commonly found definition, particularly in conventional books.

There are different styles of writing op-eds as different op-eds serve different functions. There are really no specific types of op-eds but familiarizing oneself with the variety of writing styles would help one write interesting and informative op-eds.

The first step to writing any op-ed is research. Research does not just include finding or verifying facts but also examining different perspectives on an issue. For instance if I am an Indian writer writing an op-ed on the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, it is imperative for me to read publications from Pakistan, India and US , at the very least to be able to comment on the issue. At the end of the day, an op-ed is very simply a comment but cannot be a senseless one.

Some of the functions that op-eds perform include, but are not restricted to:

- Debating a proposition and/or providing rebuttals
- Providing background and/or historical perspective on a contemporary issue
- Highlighting aspects/dimensions that are hitherto not covered by ‘news pieces’
- Provide suggestions and/or map out a plan of action
- Explain an idea, concept in immense detail
- Share expertise

An op-ed is almost like an essay though an essay may demand a holistic perspective or an all-round approach- something that is not mandatory for an op-ed. However, an op-ed differs from an editorial in the sense that an op-ed reflects an individual’s views while an editorial reflects a newspaper’s policy. Hence, the moral onus on an editorial is much higher and an editorial cannot take sides on an issue openly. It is supposed to be a presentation of views, yet abstain from being subjective. For instance, an editorial on US withdrawal from Afghanistan can list the repercussions of this move for the two countries in terms of possibilities but an editorial cannot take a moral high ground supporting a particular side in order to maintain neutrality and objectivity.

Things to keep in mind while writing an op-ed:

As much as an op-ed is an opinion and doesn't require one to state facts, it should still be based on facts, verified accurate facts. I need not mention the date of US troops' withdrawal but if I am examining the immediate aftermath of this move, not knowing the right date defeats the entire purpose of my op-ed.

Again, since an op-ed is not factual, it doesn't mean one can beat around the bush easily. An op-ed is a fairly long piece of writing and hence, it is important to structure it in a way that the audience doesn't lose interest.

Even though the primary purpose of an op-ed is to express opinion, it cannot express senseless arguments. An informed opinion should find its way to the audience's mind after reading the op-ed. There is a possibility that readers may disagree with your stance but nothing is worse than arguments that can't be comprehended or are too complicated. If you are attempting to express a complicated argument, try to break it down into simple concepts and use easy language to express it.

The way one structures an argument also makes a difference to how it is comprehended. In a conventional structure, it is preferable to focus on a single point and arrange arguments in such a way that they build up to the concluding, final point which is the key emphasis of the article. However, a lot of writers prefer to write op-eds that focus on more than one aspect and is multi-dimensional in its analysis of the issue at hand. What is important to always remember is that too many points can lead to confusion and one should use the given word limit as a yardstick to determine how many aspects could be covered.

The key defining feature of an op-ed is ANALYSIS. What comprises analysis? Analysis refers to examining an argument against different perspectives and paradigms. The more perspectives one would engage with, the more holistic analysis will one generate. One can derive new and interesting arguments by reading different publications with different ideologies. Further, a smart journalist/op-ed writer should be able to read between the lines as well.

What makes an argument? An argument should begin with a statement of the proposition followed by the reasoning and if possible, concluded with an example. For example, if I am trying to state that popular culture also shapes rape culture, then my argument should not just state this fact, it should also explain how that happens. When arguments are not backed with reasoning, they become assertions and assertions make an op-ed shallow.

Different styles of writing an op-ed

The following section includes some op-eds. These are not necessarily the most nuanced pieces of writing but have been included just to illustrate the different styles. More than their individual merit, it would help if you compare these with each other.

Example 1 : <http://muslimmatters.org/2013/10/25/rebuttal-should-muslims-reconsider-eid-slaughter/>

Now this article serves the sole function of providing rebuttals to another article. It is structured in the same fashion as the article it is trying to demolish.

Pros: Very structured, argument-by-argument analysis is presented, multiple points lead to a final conclusion

Cons: Since it is a response, one would want to read the original article to get a complete understanding of the issue.

Example 2:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/leah-kashar/rules-of-feminism_b_4191116.html

It is difficult to pinpoint pluses and minuses because it may work for some and not for others. But some key features are that it deals with too many issues in the same article. One can almost write an individual piece on every argument stated. The last para is a brilliant summary for someone who gets caught in the larger web of arguments.

Example 3:

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/the-cambridge-union-society/feminism-we-still-need-cambridge-union-society_b_2858567.html

Some of the best op-eds are written when they attempt to answer a why/what/how question. As a writer, coming up with a question why/what/how question helps to gain clarity and sort otherwise muddled thoughts.

Example 4:

<http://caravandaily.com/portal/muslims-aap-and-a-missed-opportunity/>

This op-ed is trying to deal with an extremely important and valid thought. But like AAP, the article too seems to have missed the opportunity. Apart from reeking with assertions, there is absolutely no substantiation. Extremely poor read. No arguments are examined, no hypothesis or if-then-else analysis. This topic easily be expanded into an excellent op-ed by creating linkages which are currently missing in this piece.

Example 5:

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/life-rape-and-death-in-an-indian-city/article5125290.ece>

Structurally, this piece goes back and forth from facts to opinion and vice versa. It contains background information about the people. The facts are provided to us as a build up to the arguments. This op-ed can almost be mapped diagrammatically as it attempts to build linkages- like understanding a rapist and his circumstances in the context of the city and its geography, just an example of the several intricate links that the author attempts to build.

Example 6:

<http://www.livemint.com/Leisure/BS11s0yHnHLQRLiyJCfiOO/Essay--A-feminist-conversation.html>

This piece is interesting because of its conclusion. Compare this conclusion with that of example 2. While one is a summary, the other states the framework within which one is expected to examine these arguments.

Some more examples:

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/national-interest-mere-paas-media-hai/1108319/0>

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/mehdi-hasan/as-a-muslim-i-struggle-wi_b_3306168.html

<http://www.openthemagazine.com/article/true-life/women-don-t-bleed-blue>

<http://www.tehelka.com/why-im-not-a-part-of-the-aam-aadmi-party/>

<http://www.tehelka.com/for-manmohans-dream-team-ignorance-is-bliss/>

At the end of the day, there is not really a standard way of writing op-eds. However, some strategies and structures make some articles more readable than others. And the only way to learn those is by reading and analysing as many op-eds as possible.

Interviews

Conducting interviews for news stories is an important skill for any journalist. A “source” – anyone a journalist interviews - can provide the following elements that are vital to any news story:

- basic factual information
- perspective and context on the topic being discussed
- direct quotes
- ideas on how to approach the story
- names and contact information of other people to interview

Interviews in MUNs

The constant debating may provide with little opportunities of you getting ample time for a detailed interview. The ideal interview times are refreshment breaks and through chits. Chits are one tool which we encourage you to use for substantive purpose only. You can bring out the relevant points through chits and you can take permission for a prior interview through them.

Preparing for the Interview:

Research – Do as much research as you can. If you’re going to interview, say, a head of state, read up on the subject and make sure you understand basic terms such as “fiscal policy.” A well-prepared reporter inspires confidence in the person being interviewed.

Developing Questions – Once you’ve thoroughly researched your topic, prepare a list of questions to ask. That will help you remember all the points you want to cover once the interview is underway.

Keys to a Successful Interview

Establish a Rapport – When starting out, don’t abruptly launch into your questions. Chitchat a little with your source. Compliment them on their office, or comment on the weather. This puts your source at ease.

Keep it Natural – An interview can be an uncomfortable experience, so keep things natural and conversational. Instead of mechanically reading out your list of questions, weave your queries naturally into the flow of the conversation.

Also, maintain eye contact as much as possible. Nothing is more unnerving to a source than a reporter who never looks up from their notebook.

Be Open – Don’t be so focused on getting through your list of questions that you miss something interesting.

For instance, if you're interviewing the cardiologist and she mentions a new heart-health study that's coming out, ask her about it. This may take your interview in an unexpected direction – but if it leads to something interesting, so what?

Maintain Control – Be open, yes, but don't waste your time. If your source starts to ramble on about things that are clearly of no use to you, don't be afraid to gently – but firmly – steer the conversation back to the topic at hand.

Wrapping Up – At the end of the interview, ask your source if there's anything they want to discuss that you hadn't asked about. Double-check the meanings of any terms or words they used that you're unsure about. And always ask if there are other people they recommend that you speak with.

A Note about Note-taking – Beginning reporters often freak out when they realize they can't possibly write down everything the source is saying, word-for-word. Don't sweat it. Experienced reporters learn to take down just the interesting stuff they know they'll use, and ignore the stuff they won't. This takes some practice, but the more interviews you do, the easier it gets.

Taping – Recording an interview is fine, and generally it's best to get the permission of the person you're recording. Taping can be helpful if you're doing a long interview that you'll have time to listen to and type out later.

Instead of putting a lot on your plate, I will just request you to read only the following interview.

<http://www.voltairenet.org/article180124.html>

www.aljazeera.com/interviews

Elements of style

Abbreviations. No periods should be used separating letters of an abbreviated organization or agency. Only standard acronyms and approved abbreviations should be used. If questions arise see the Editor or Publisher. Some example abbreviations include: JMC MUN, CS, DS, ECOSOC, FAO, GA, HG, HSC, ICJ, IPD, NATO, UK, UN, US, USSR.

Apostrophes. This punctuation mark will only be used to indicate possessive nouns or secondary quotations. Apostrophes are never used to indicate pluralisation.

Currency. Dollar values are displayed with the appropriate currency symbol. Values on orders at or greater than one million are summarized, for example \$54,000, \$135,000 or \$214 million. Indian Rupees shall be written as INR and not Rs.

Capitalization. Nowhere shall anything but Abbreviations be capitalized.

Boldface text. There is no situation in which boldface should be used in an article. Headlines and article titles may be bolded by the Publisher.

Books and print sources. Names of all books and print sources should be capitalized and italicized, such as the the newsletter, *New York Times* and *The Economist*.

Developing nations. Within the international community, the use of the term “third world” is actively discouraged. No nation will be referred to as “Third World.”

Diplomatic courtesy. While Reporters are encouraged to faithfully report on the statements of representatives within each JMC MUN simulation, no quotation should violate the dictates of diplomatic courtesy. All articles, editorials, letters, press releases and personals to be included in the newsletter will be carefully edited to ensure that all content remains courteous to all participants at JMC MUN. If a Reporter feels that a quotation by a representative is discourteous, the representative should be encouraged to rephrase the statement in a more courteous fashion or risk having it omitted from the Reporter’s article.

Hyphenation. Hyphens should only be applied according to American English grammar. If questions arise, consult the Editors. Examples of typically hyphenated prefixes include non-, sub- and ex-. Some compound words are hyphenated as well, such as socio-political.

Member States. In print, references to United Nations "Member States" should be initially capitalized.

Names. Reporters should never guess the spelling of a person’s name to be reported. Verbal verification is mandatory on all named sources. Also note that all participants at JMC MUN wear credentials with their names prominently displayed. Naturally, all proper names are capitalized.

National references. When referring to any UN Member State or Observer, standard UN country names should be used. These names match those with which each nation signed the UN Charter. For example, the People’s Republic of China should always be referred to as “China.” Additionally, some national names are longer than those commonly used. For example, Libya is recognized at the UN as “Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.”

Numerals. Any numeral ten or less should be spelled out in English. Numerals over ten are reported using standard Arabic numerals, such as 2001. Numerals with five or more digits should include commas, such as 1,345,000. Fractions and decimal numbers should be reported as decimal numerals or percentages, such as 0.5 or 50% (rather than “one half” or “1/2”). Roman numerals are used only when referring to a source which was originally designated using Roman numerals, such as Chapter VII of the UN Charter (articles of the UN Charter are written as “Article 7”). Ordinal numerals are

spelled out within the text of an article, such as the First Committee of the General Assembly. In article headings or titles, the Publisher may choose to use ordinal abbreviations, such as 1st Committee

Percentages. Percent symbols will be used to report percentages, for example 35.8%.

Quotation marks. As per standard English grammar, punctuation at the conclusion of quotation must always be included inside the closing quotation mark.

Quotations. All quoted statements within articles should be incorporated grammatically into the sentence being written. Additional capitalizations should be avoided. If only part of a sentence is being used in a quotation, an ellipsis (i.e.) should be used to indicate the omitted portions of the statement. If the ellipsis comes at the end of a sentence, it should have a period at the end as well within the quotation marks (. ") to indicate the conclusion of a sentence. If, within a quotation, the speaker uses an abbreviation or reference which would be unclear to the reader, the Reporter may interject a clarification within brackets (i.e.: [...]). This indicates that the bracketed information is not a direct quotation; rather it is a clarification on the part of the author. As an illustration of these rules, consider the following example. Amb. Kamal explained that "...while the matters are being studied by the UN, there is a commitment by the UN, such as the UNV [United Nations Volunteers], to take part in conflict zones.

Spacing. One space is used to separate words, as well as following commas, semicolons, colons and periods. Since the The newsletter is published in a variable width font, two spaces between sentences will not be necessary.

Spelling. Reporters should be sure to spell check all articles before the editorial deadline. This will greatly assist the Editor.

Titles. The categories of title to be used include:

- Standard professional titles: Periods will be used on abbreviated titles, such as Mr., Ms., Amb., Dr., Pres.
- **UN titles:** These titles will not be abbreviated. UN and AIMUN official titles include Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General, Director-General, Assistant Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General. **Secretary-General shall never be abbreviated as Sec Gen.**

Research Methodology: -

The confines of an in-house conference limit us to what we want to call investigative journalism but your preparations will be severe. You can use the following guidelines for effective research. You must be adequately prepared to understand the debate.

- Go through the backgrounds for basic understanding of the agenda and then the documents and links it mentions. The background guide can be obtained from the website of the conference.
- Read about the agenda and various perspectives on it. Aid and form an opinion.

- Understanding the legal, social, cultural and economic implications of the debate.
- Read about the foreign policy and agenda perspective of nations that you might think will majorly impact the debate.
- Access the quality of research required through www.aljazeera.com and see how the research and content is balanced.

Submission Guidelines

1. You will be required to submit three formal reports over the course of two days – two committee report/beat and one opinion editorial. It is recommended that one committee report detail the proceedings of two days, while the other should follow the resolution process.
2. You are encouraged to submit your opinion editorial on day 1, and the compiled formal report for committee proceedings on day 2.
3. The word limit for the opinion piece is 500-550 words, and for the formal reports it is 400-450
4. The font used must be Times New Roman, in Size 12.
5. You are also required to submit one informal article each, of your choice, the word limit for which is 200-250 words.
6. The timings of submission will be informed to you on the day of the conference.
7. Please be timely with your work and adhere to the regulations of your work.
8. Grammar and spelling should be checked in accordance with the elements of style as provided above.
9. Research is key. It is very important for each of you to be thorough with the background guides for your assigned committees, and have other research on hand as well.

10. Make notes throughout so you don't miss out on any important committee detail!