

Swamiji's Speech Recital Competition

Rules of the competition (Medium of speech - English only)

I. Categories and Content

1) The participants have to register in one of the following two categories for Speech Recital Competition according to their age and class.

Category I – Up to 18 years or up to Class XII

Category II – 18+ years to 25 years

2) The following are the selected contents for Speech Recital (Contents are appended at the end of this document).

Category I – *Swami Vivekananda's RESPONSE TO WELCOME - At the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 11th September, 1893*

Category II - *Swami Vivekananda's ADDRESS AT THE FINAL SESSION - At the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 27th September, 1893*

3) Both boys and girls can participate in this competition. All contestants will receive a participation certificate by e-mail immediately after the evaluation of their recorded speech. **Kindly note that the speech recital should be verbatim from memory.**

II- Registration for Participation

4) Interested candidates may register their names by paying a non-refundable entry fee of Rs.20/- through the following registration-portal:

<https://vivekanandahomeslc.org/rea/competitions/competitions.php>

5) After paying the entry fee, ensure that online official fee-receipt of Ramakrishna Mission is received. If not, registration process is not successful.

6) You may text your queries to 70032 06825 (WhatsApp message only).

7) Last date for registration – 31st July 2024. A WhatsApp group of all the candidates will be created after registration.

III- Online Speech Recital and Evaluation

8) A Google form will be posted in the said WhatsApp group for the online competition after 31st July. Candidates are requested to fill in the Google form and upload the audio file of their speech recital (maximum file size 10MB) in the Google form. Name of the audio file should be "Participant's Name + Phone Number". For example, if the name of a participant is "Motilal Biswas" and the phone number is "1234567890" then the name of the audio file will be "Motilal_1234567890". Last date for sending audio file for the online completion is 10th August, 2024.

9) The on-line contestants will be shortlisted for the final phase by 31st August 2024. Twenty contestants from each category will be selected for offline competition. Names of shortlisted contestants from the online competition as well as the exact time schedule of the offline competition will be posted in the said WhatsApp group.

IV- Offline Competition and Prizes

10) **In the offline competition also the speech should be recited verbatim from memory.**

11) The final competition will be held offline on 8th September 2024 (from 1:30 pm tentatively). The contestants selected for the finals will have to appear in person at Ramakrishna Mission Swami Vivekananda's Ancestral House & Cultural Centre on the said day. Prize distribution ceremony will be held tentatively at 4 pm on 8th September itself. These prizes will be awarded on the basis of the performance in the offline competition. Candidates are requested to come prepared accordingly.

12) Prize details:

All contestants selected for offline competition will receive a book and a photograph as gift.
For each category in the competition:

The first position holder will be awarded ₹ 3000(three thousand rupees) cash and a certificate.

The second position holder will be awarded ₹ 2000(two thousand rupees) cash and a certificate.

The third position holder will be awarded ₹ 1000(one thousand rupees) cash and a certificate.

1st Special position holder will be awarded ₹ 500(five hundred rupees) cash and a certificate.

2nd Special position holder will be awarded ₹ 500(five hundred rupees) cash and a certificate.

13) Any form of misconduct in the on-line / off-line competitions will be dealt with strictly and may lead to the cancellation of the candidature.

14) Participants of the off-line competition will have to make their own travel, lodging and boarding arrangements.

15) The decision of the authority in all the matters concerning the competition would stand indisputably final.

V- Important Dates

Last date for registration – 31st July, 2024

Last date for online submission of audio files – 10th August, 2024

Announcement of results of the on-line competition – 31st August, 2024

Offline competition and prize distribution ceremony – 8th September, 2024

Speeches for Recital

Category I – Up to 18 years or up to Class XII

Swami Vivekananda's RESPONSE TO WELCOME At the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 11th September, 1893

Sisters and Brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honour of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation.

I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: "As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gitā: "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.

Category II – 18+ years to 25 years

Swami Vivekananda's ADDRESS AT THE FINAL SESSION At the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 27th September, 1893

The world's parliament of Religions has become an accomplished fact, and the merciful Father has helped those who laboured to bring it into existence, and crowned with success their most unselfish labour.

My thanks to those noble souls whose large hearts and love of truth first dreamed this wonderful dream and then realised it. My thanks to the shower of liberal sentiments that has overflowed this platform. My thanks to this enlightened audience for their uniform kindness to me and for their appreciation of every thought that

tends to smooth the friction of religions. A few jarring notes were heard from time to time in this harmony. My special thanks to them, for they have, by their striking contrast, made general harmony the sweeter.

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if anyone here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid.

The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.