



ICRC

Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition 2026 India National Rounds

Organized by
**Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi and the
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**

Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition: Rules and Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Indian Society of International Law (ISIL) was founded in 1959 and was inaugurated in the same year by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India. The principal objective of the ISIL is to “foster nationwide, the study and development of International Law and to encourage the comparative study of the application of International Law in other States”. The ISIL has been publishing the Indian Journal of International Law since its inception, which has attained a high standard and is held in great esteem the world over. It also publishes the ISIL Yearbook on Humanitarian and Refugee Laws. The ISIL runs post graduate diploma courses on International Law & Diplomacy; Human Rights, International Humanitarian & Refugee Laws, International Environment Law, Intellectual Property Laws and International Trade and Business Laws. It has been actively collaborating with the ICRC in organizing the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court since 2001.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a private, independent humanitarian organization, based in Geneva, Switzerland. The ICRC has been conferred a mandate by the international community to protect and assist persons affected by armed conflict.¹ This mandate includes the promotion and development of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), including in times of peace. In the fulfilment of this responsibility, the ICRC is active in disseminating and promoting IHL in academic circles. This includes developing IHL curricula for universities, conducting university teacher training programmes in IHL and organizing events such as the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition.

1.1. The Moot Court

In 2001, ICRC Regional Delegation for South Asia initiated the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition, with the aim of promoting better awareness of IHL among law students at universities throughout India. This competition is named in memory of Mr Henry Dunant, the co-founder of the ICRC and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 1863.

¹ The ICRC's initial mandate is derived from the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols. The ICRC's mandate was expanded by the Statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which were agreed upon by the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions. To date, 194 countries have ratified the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

The reputation and status of the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition has grown steadily since its inception in 2001. The national Moot Court has grown to include more than 60 teams, representing universities from across India. The success of the competition prompted the ICRC, in collaboration with its partner organization for this activity, the ISIL, to expand the Moot Court beyond India in 2005. As a result, the Henry Dunant Moot Court Competition was expanded to include a regional competition, drawing teams from countries across South Asia between 2005 and 2022.

The winning (one) team of the national rounds of the Moot Court Competition in each country would be entitled to participate in the Asia Pacific round in Hong Kong.

1.2. Objectives

The principal objective of the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition is to develop an increased awareness and interest in IHL in academic institutions throughout South Asia. A further objective is to use IHL to further academic excellence in the student community and to develop their advocacy skills in an environment of friendly competition.

2. Administration and General Rules

The official name of the competition is *The Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition* (the "Moot Court"). The ICRC and ISIL are the official organizers of the National Moot Court competition in India. National competitions in other participating countries will be organized by the ICRC, in collaboration with partner institutions.

2.1. Eligibility

All universities, colleges, and institutions imparting legal education on a regular or evening basis in a program of study that leads to a Bachelor's degree in law (LL.B / BL) or Master's degree in law (LL.M./ML) are eligible to participate in the Moot Court competition. All students enrolled on a full-time or evening basis in a program of study leading to or equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in law (LL.B./BL) or Masters in law (LL.M./ML), are eligible to participate.

Students who have participated in this Moot Court competition on a previous occasion are not eligible to participate again.

2.2. Official Language

The official working language of the Moot Court is English.

2.3. Team Composition

Each participating university/college/institute shall nominate only one team consisting of **three** student members. It is optional for the teams to be accompanied with a coach from the faculty of the university/college/institute that they represent. The **3 member composition is mandatory** for participating in the competition.

2.4. Assistance to Teams

All research, writing and editing of written memorials for the Moot Court must be the exclusive product of the team members. Faculty members, coaches and team advisors of the participating team may only render external assistance to the team. During oral presentation, consultation with coaches shall be strictly prohibited.

2.5. Implementation and Interpretation of Rules

Regarding Moot Court practice and procedures, the final decision on the interpretation and implementation of rules lies with the organizers.

2.6. Application of Rules

Rules contained in this document will be applicable to the India National Rounds of the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court competition.

3. Procedure

In 2026, the national rounds of the Moot Court competition shall consist of written submission and oral pleadings rounds. The Moot Court problem for all rounds, including all national competitions, shall be the same. The Moot Court problem shall be prepared annually by a suitably qualified person(s), to be selected by the organizers. The person(s) selected to prepare the problem shall be provided with instructions by the organizers concerning the nature, scope and issues that should be included in the problem.

All registered teams will have the opportunity to make written submissions in the form of memorials and counter memorials in the format prescribed under Section 4 of these rules.

The top 16 teams based on the total scores obtained in the evaluation of written submissions for their Prosecution and Defence memorials combined will be invited to participate in the oral rounds of the competition to be held at the Indian Society of International Law at New Delhi.

These marks for written submissions will be taken into consideration, along with marks awarded by judges for the teams during the oral presentation made by them in the quarter final round of competition. The teams who secured the top four positions will be selected to participate in semi-final round competition only.

Top two teams will be selected based upon their performance on oral presentation made by them during semi-finals. The written memorial marks will not be taken into consideration to select the teams for the semi-final and final rounds of competition.

Winners of the final round will be selected based upon their oral performance during the final round of competition, written memorial marks of the teams will not be taken into consideration to select the winners of the Henry Dunant Memorial Trophy.

3.1 Timeline

Participating teams are expected to adhere to the following timelines:

- (i) 16th July 2026: Call for registration open
- (ii) 17th August 2026: Deadline for registration and Deadline to receive clarifications on the moot problem
- (iii) 31st August 2026: Registered teams receive their team codes via email, release of clarifications on the moot
- (iv) 24th September 2026: Deadline for submission of memorials in soft copy
- (v) 21st October 2026: Notification to teams qualified for the oral rounds via email

(vi) 20th- 22nd November 2026: Oral Rounds organized at ISIL in New Delhi

4. Memorials

4.1 Submission of Memorials

Each participating team shall prepare both memorials and counter memorials, in English. All teams are to submit their copies to the organizers on or before the deadline specified by the organizing committee at section 3.1 of these Rules. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the competition.

Teams that qualify for participation in the oral rounds are required to submit 4 (four) copies of each memorial and counter memorial in paper (hard copy) to the organizing committee at registration for the oral rounds in Delhi. During oral presentations, the participating teams should retain copies of their memorials for their personal use. The copies submitted to the organizing committee will not be returned to the participants under any circumstances. There will be exchange of memorials between the teams during the competition.

All memorials shall be prepared to the following specifications:

- Memorial or counter memorial shall not be more than 25 typed pages.
- Memorials must be typed and submitted on standard A4 size paper.
- Font and size of the text of all parts of the memorial (excluding footnotes) must be the same and must be in either Times New Roman 12 or Arial 11 font size.
- The texts of all parts of each memorial must be double-spaced, with one inch margin on both sides.
- The text of footnotes and headings may be single-spaced. The font size of footnotes must be 2 points less than the text font.
- There must be double spacing between separate footnotes and between each heading and the body text of the memorial.
- Quotations of sources outside of the memorial of fifty words or more in any part of the memorial shall be block quoted and must be single-spaced.
- The table of Contents, Index of Authorities and Case Title are not included in the 25 typed pages limit.

4.2 Description of Memorials

The Memorial shall consist of the following parts:

- Table of Contents
- Index of Authorities (including corresponding page numbers)
- Statement of Jurisdiction
- Identification of Issues
- Statement of Facts
- Summary of Pleadings

- Pleadings including the Conclusion and/or Prayer for Relief.

4.3 Criteria for assessment

The assessment of written submission made by the teams during the Moot Court competition shall be out of a maximum of 100 marks, set out as follows:

Knowledge of law and facts	30 marks
Proper and articulate analysis	30 marks
Extent of research	20 marks
Clarity and organization	10 marks
Style, grammar and citation	10 marks
Total	100 marks

- The written memorials submitted by participating teams shall be evaluated by an expert(s) appointed by the organizing committee and marks will be awarded for them.
- **The disclosure of the team's institutional affiliation on the memorial will result in disqualification of the team from the competition.**
- The late submission of memorials will attract a penalty of 3 marks being deducted from the total marks allocated for memorials for each day of delay.

5. Rules for Oral Pleadings and Procedures

For 2026, there will no longer be preliminary rounds in the oral pleadings. The top 16 teams selected on the basis of their written memorial submissions will be invited to participate in the oral pleadings, which will begin with the quarter final rounds. Top 4 teams from the quarter finals will advance to the semi-finals and top 2 teams from the semi-final rounds will advance to compete in the final rounds of the competition.

5.1. Rules for the Preliminary Rounds

- In 2026, no preliminary rounds for oral pleadings will be organized. Selection of teams for the quarter final rounds will be based on scores obtained by teams in their written memorial submissions.

5.2. Rules for the Quarter Final Rounds

- In India, the top sixteen teams from the written submission rounds shall qualify to participate in the quarter-final. Selection will be based upon the marks awarded by the organizing committee after the evaluation of written memorials.
- The arrangement of teams selected for the quarter-final rounds shall be as follows:

- In India, those teams that have qualified for the quarterfinal will be divided into four groups – Group A, Group B, Group C, and Group D.
- The team that attained the highest score in the evaluation of written submissions will compete against the team that attained the ninth highest score.
- The team with the second highest score will compete against the team with the tenth highest score.
- The team with the third highest score will compete against the eleventh highest score.
- The team with the fourth highest score will compete with the twelfth highest score.
- The team with the fifth highest score will compete with the thirteenth highest score.
- The team with the sixth highest score will compete with the fourteenth highest score
- The team with the seventh highest score will compete with the fifteenth highest score
- The team with the eighth highest score will compete with the sixteenth highest score
- The sides to be argued by teams will be decided by a draw of lots, prior to the commencement of the quarterfinal round of the competition. Each team shall argue both prosecution and defence during the quarterfinal round.
- There shall be a break after the first round of arguments. After the break, the teams will change, switch over their position and will have to argue against a new team, as follows:
 - The team that argued on behalf of the prosecution in the first round will have to argue on behalf of the defence in the second round against a new team. The team that argued on behalf of defence in the first round will have to argue on behalf of the prosecution during the second round against a new team/new set of judges.
- Each team will be allotted a total of 15 minutes to present its argument during the quarter-final rounds. There will be a warning bell at the end of 12 minutes and there will be a final bell at the completion of the allotted time of 15 minutes. Two minutes will also be allotted for each team for rebuttal in each round.
- There will be extra time allotted to respond to the questions posed by the judges, as necessary. Three minutes will also be allotted for each team for rebuttal in each round.
- Participating teams will be required to strictly follow the time limits.
- The assessment of the teams during the quarter final rounds of the Moot Court competition shall be out of a maximum of 100 marks, set out as follows:

Written Memorials	30 Marks
Appreciation of Fact and Law	15 Marks
Advocacy (Arguments, Framing of Issues, expression and articulation)	30 Marks
Use of Authorities and Citations	15 Marks
General Impression and Court Manner	10 Marks

5.3 Rules for the Semi-Final Round

- The top four teams from the quarter-final rounds shall qualify to participate in the semi-final.
- The arrangement of teams selected for the semi-final rounds shall be as follows:
 - In India, those teams that have qualified for the semi-final round will be divided into two groups – Group A, and Group B.
 - The team that attained the highest score in the quarter-final round will compete against the team that attained the third highest score.
 - The team with the second highest score will compete against the team with the fourth highest score.
- The sides to be argued by the teams will be decided by a draw of lots, prior to the commencement of the semi-final rounds of competition. There shall be two rounds of oral argument during the semi-finals.
- During the semi-final rounds, the teams will be required to argue on behalf of both prosecution and the defence.
- There shall be a break after the first round of arguments. After the break, the teams will change, switch over their position and will have to argue against a new team, as follows:
 - The team that argued on behalf of the prosecution in the first round will have to argue on behalf of the defence in the second round against a new team. The team that argued on behalf of defence in the first round will have to argue on behalf of the prosecution during the second round against a new team.
- Each team will be allotted a total of 15 minutes to present its argument during the semi-final rounds. There will be a warning bell at the end of 12 minutes and there will be a final bell at the completion of the allotted time of 15 minutes.
- There will be extra time allotted to respond to the questions posed by the judges, as necessary. Three minutes will also be allotted for each team for rebuttal in each round.
- Participating teams will be required to strictly follow the time limits.
- Written memorials marks will not be taken into consideration during the marking of semi-final rounds. Only the marks awarded by the judges during the oral round of presentation will be considered to select the finalists.

5.4 Rules for the Final Round

- The top two teams from the semi-final rounds will be selected to compete in the final round of the Moot Court competition.
- The sides to be argued by the teams will be decided by a draw of lots prior to the commencement of the final round of the competition. There shall be two rounds of arguments by the final teams.
- There shall be break after the first round of arguments. After the break, the team that argued on behalf of the prosecution in the first round will be required to argue on behalf of the defence; the team which argued on behalf of the defence in the first round will be required to argue on behalf of the prosecution during the second round of the arguments.
- Each team will be permitted to speak for a total of 20 minutes during the final round. There will be a warning bell at the end of 15 minutes and a final bell at the end of the allotted time.
- There will be extra time (5 Minutes) allotted to each team, as necessary, to respond to questions posed by judges. Each team will have three minutes for rebuttal in each round.

6. Awards and Prizes

Awards and prizes will be awarded for the National Moot Court competitions, as follows:

- The Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition winners will be awarded a "Running Trophy", medals for the three participants of the team, and certificates.
- The Runners up team will be awarded individual medals and certificates.
- There will be a Best Advocate prize. This prize will be awarded to the participant who is judged to have performed best during her/his oral presentations during the quarter final rounds.
- There will be a Best Researcher Prize. This prize will be awarded to the participant whose team has scored the highest marks in the criteria of use of authorities and citations (oral rounds) and extent and depth of research (written memorials).
- There will be a Best Memorial prize. All the memorials, which are submitted to the organizing committee of the competition, will be evaluated and the best memorial will be chosen among them to award this prize.
- Each participant in the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition will be given a general certificate of participation.
- The coaches and advisers of the participating teams will not be entitled to receive any kind of certificate or award.
- Since the trophy of Henry Dunant Moot Court Competition is a "Running Trophy", it is the responsibility of the head of the institution/college/university of the winning team to ensure that the trophy is returned to the organizing committee, in New Delhi, within eight months of the date of award, at the expense of the winning team's institution/college/ university.

7. Miscellaneous Rules of the Competition

- Upon completion of the competition, the organizing committee reserves the exclusive right to use the memorials submitted to them, as they deem appropriate.
- Participating teams should carry with them required study or reference materials for their own use during the oral rounds of competition. Electronic equipment such as laptops, tablets etc. if used during oral rounds will be solely to refer to reference materials saved on the same. There will be no right granted to participating teams to access wi-fi/internet to source information or answers to respond to queries posed by the bench. Any team found violating this rule would be disqualified from the competition.
- Scouting is permitted in the competition in all the rounds.
- Participating teams shall be expected to maintain the proper decorum of the courtroom during the proceedings and shall conduct themselves in a manner befitting the legal profession.
- The organizing committee reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to take appropriate action for any unethical, unprofessional and wrongful conduct during the entire period of the Moot Court competition.
- The organizing committee's decision as regards the interpretation of these rules or any other matters related to the Moot Court competition shall be final and binding. If there is any situation, which is not covered by these rules, the decision of the organizing committee shall be final.
- The organizing committee is vested with the sole and absolute discretion to publish or not publish the scores of any of the oral rounds and memorials.
- The organizing committee reserves the right to amend, modify or repeal any of the rules if so required and as they deem appropriate. Participating teams shall receive adequate notice of any/all such amendments or modifications to the rules.
- The organizing committee shall not be held responsible for any loss or non-delivery of the Memorials.

8. Rules Regarding the Judges

8.1. Judges

- A person appointed as a Moot Court judge should be well versed in the subject of International Law, in general, and International Humanitarian Law, in particular. Judges are expected to be aware of the procedure involved in mooting and the rules.
- Judges may be selected from the following categories:
 - Academicians,
 - Legal advisers to the Government/armed forces/diplomats,
 - Serving or retired judges of the Supreme Court or the High Court, or
 - Senior advocates of the Supreme Court or the High Court.
- The judges who have presided over the quarter final rounds will not judge the semi-final or final rounds. If under exceptional circumstances, which will be determined by the organizing

committee, a judge from the quarter final rounds is required to judge at an advanced round, then he/she will not judge the team he/she has judged during the quarter final rounds.

- For the final round of the competition a fresh team of judges will be appointed.
- There should be a full bench of three judges for every session. It is preferable to have a full bench for all the rounds of the competition.
- No faculty advisers, team coaches or other persons directly affiliated with a team shall act as judges at any level of the competition. The organizing committee (staff members of the ICRC) shall not act as judges in any of the rounds of the competition. Students shall not serve as judges.
- The Bench Memorandum shall be distributed to the Judges for the purposes of briefing them on the legal issues addressed in the Moot Court competition. The contents of the Bench Memorandum are strictly confidential.

8.2. Rules for the Judges

- All written memorials and oral presentations should have a minimum score.
- Judges are instructed to follow the time limit as closely as possible. Interventions from the judges are permitted at any stage of the presentations; however these interventions must be relevant to the issues and be kept to a minimum, so as not to disrupt the presentations of the participants.
- Three minutes per team should be provided for rebuttal during the semi-final and final rounds. Two minutes per team will be permitted for rebuttals during the quarter final rounds of the competition.

8.3. Commentary by Judges

Judges in any round of the competition are encouraged to provide direct feedback to teams regarding the team's performance, at the completion of the round. In providing such feedback, Judges are cautioned to give due regard to the time limitations and the schedule of the competition as a whole.

9. Anonymity

To ensure the smooth functioning of the Moot Court and avoid any perception of bias during the competition, the organizing committee maintains anonymity of the college/university/institute names throughout the competition. To ensure this the organizing committee will allocate a code number to each participating team in the competition. This code is to be applied by the organizing committee to the participating teams during the competition, including on their written memorials.

10. Accommodation and Travel

- Qualified teams are expected to self-arrange their travel to Delhi.
- The organizing committee will provide accommodation and meals to members of the 16 qualifying teams for the duration of the competition, where it is required.
- For the Indian National Moot Court competition, ISIL will be responsible to coordinate travel, accommodation and meals for the 16 qualifying teams.
- The ICRC and its partner organizations will be responsible for coordinating all

administrative arrangements for participants in their respective national competitions.

11. Questions, Complaints and Suggestions

Any feedback concerning the organization or conduct of the Moot Court should be directed directly to the organizers. Formal complaints or suggestions for improvement of the competition should be addressed formally, in writing, to the ICRC or ISIL.