

# Words Worth: New Winner Crowned At Speak For India

Photo: Jatin Kumar



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**New Delhi:** The grand finale of Speak for India, a debating initiative, took place on Friday at Mata Sundri College for Women, drawing passionate young minds from across Delhi-NCR.

After a gripping contest, Shivank Trivedi, a third-year student at Maulana Azad Medical College, Delhi, emerged as the winner, walking away with a trophy and a cash prize of Rs 2.5 lakh.

An initiative by the Federal Bank Hormis Memorial Foundation in association with The Times of India and Navbharat Times, Speak for India is designed to empower youth by encouraging them to express their opinions on pressing issues through structured debate. "I came across this competition on social media and only regis-



tered because the auditions were online. If it hadn't been that accessible, I might have missed it," Trivedi shared.

The final round featured two debate sessions with four participants in each group. The judges—Jamia Millia Islamia professor Danish Iqbal, journalist Vivek Shukla and professor Suprita Jha of Mata Sundri College—chose the top speaker from each group. Trivedi and Jasmehar Kaur from DU's Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce advanced to the final round, where they debated the pros and cons of the gig economy.

Runner-up Jasmehar Kaur, awarded Rs 1.5 lakh, reflected on the experience, "This has been a journey of learning. It showed me how much more there is to grow." Kaur has taken the stage nearly 100 times before in various capacities. Each of the other six finalists received 50,000.

Chief guest and former Chief Justice of India, DY Chandrachud, emphasised the importance of listening in a divided world. "One

The PM envisions youth-led development. When youth think, change begins; when they act, progress follows. Dissent and debate are democracy's backbone. Platforms for integrity and inspiration are essential—expressing opinions is the first step towards meaningful dialogue and growth

—BANSURI SWARAJ  
| MP



thing which I learnt, I think, as a judge over 25 years serving our nation, was that you can't heal all the problems that you face in society, but listening to others helps heal so many of the injustices in society. This wonderful event is just an indicator of the importance of all of us speaking to each other, listening to each other and trying to solve the problems of the world," he said. Referring to the recent terrorist attack in Pahalgam, he added, "In the face of such tragedies, our strength lies in unity—beyond ideology, religion or caste. Even in sorrow, there is hope when we come together."

MP Bansuri Swaraj echoed these sentiments, calling platforms like Speak for India essential. "Dissent and debate are the backbone of a robust democracy. Expressing your opinion is the first step toward change." Actor Chitrangda Singh, a special guest, recalled her time in the college debating

Debate thrilled me in school. Having independent opinions is essential for democracy. Platforms like this revive critical thinking and individual voices, reminding us of what truly matters in shaping a thoughtful, democratic society

—CHITRANGDA  
SINGH | ACTOR



society. "In today's world, where youth are increasingly radicalised, platforms like this help them think critically and form their own opinions."

Anoop T, SVP and country head-GIB at Federal Bank, said, "The strength of India lies in its youth. Debate is not just about speaking—it's about listening too." Other members of the team from Federal Bank involved in its conceptualisation include Anand Chugh, senior vice-president and zonal business head (CIB); Sasidharan CM, senior vice-president and zonal head; and Alpna Gupta, vice-president and regional head.

Professor Harpreet Kaur, principal of Mata Sundri College, said, "Independent thought builds strong personalities, and women leadership is key to nation-building."

I recall my college days when I see debating platforms. It's tough yet vital. India's strength lies in youth. In the Gita, Arjuna speaks for the first 84 verses, while Krishna remains silent, choosing to listen. True debate isn't just about speaking—it's about listening. Understanding different perspectives is

what makes a discussion truly meaningful

—ANOOP T | SVP &  
COUNTRY HEAD-GIB,  
FEDERAL BANK



Listening and dialogue help solve global problems. Truth isn't singular—there are shades of reality. The journey matters as much as the goal. We must engage, reflect and collectively seek pathways to deeper truths and understanding

—DY CHANDRACHUD |  
FORMER CJI

