

MRA TAX CLUB CONTEST

John Kennedy State College and Belle Rose SSS Secure Spot in Grand Final

In a convincing display of oratory and intellectual rigor, the team from **John Kennedy State College** (**Mr. Pariksit Mudhoo** and **Ms. Thaiyal Appavoo**) and the team from **Belle Rose SSS** (**Ms. Yoshita Yojna Serwan** and **Ms. Nianjee Vernousha Shunmoogum**) have been crowned victors of the semi-finals of the Mauritius Revenue Authority's (MRA) prestigious Tax Club Elocution/Debate Contest 2025. They have earned the honour of advancing to the highly anticipated Grand Final this September.





The event, held at the Integrated Customs Clearance Centre (ICCC) in Plaine-Magnien, showcased the exceptional talent of eight semi-finalists who had excelled in earlier rounds. Following the preliminary rounds held on 14 and 19 August at the Custom House in Port-Louis, the semi-finals took place on 26 August at the Integrated Customs Clearance Centre (ICCC), Plaine-Magnien, in the presence of students, educators, and MRA representatives.

The semi-final format was divided into three distinct segments. The first required each candidate to deliver a five-minute elocution on the designated theme. In the second, the contestants engaged in a five-minute team debate: following a draw, one team argued in favour of the theme while the other opposed it. The third segment was a spirited “tit-for-tat” battle between the two semi-finalists, with each team given successive opportunities to refute and counter-refute their opponents’ arguments over timed exchanges of two minutes, two minutes, and one minute.

Each match featured profound themes tailored to challenge the participants' understanding of fiscal citizenship. In the first semi-final between Droopnath Ramphul and John Kennedy, the elocution theme was **“Combating Tax Evasion: A Modern Challenge for the MRA,”** and the debate motion focused on enforcement versus education: **“This House believes that stricter enforcement is more effective than taxpayer education in combating tax evasion.”**



The second semi-final, between Belle Rose SSS and Royal College Curepipe, explored a more visionary concept. The elocution theme was **“My Dream: A Mauritius Where Everyone Pays Their Fair Share of Taxes,”** and the debate motion was **“This House believes that achieving a tax system where everyone pays their fair share is essential for Mauritius’ progress.”**



The eight distinguished semi-finalists, who had risen to the top from a record 72 participants in the preliminary rounds, were:

- **Zone 1 (Droopnath Ramphul State College):** Ms. Mitisha Devi Ayushi Seegoolam and Ms. Tejaswini Nawruttun
- **Zone 2 (John Kennedy State College):** Mr. Pariksit Mudhoo and Ms. Thaiyal Appavoo
- **Zone 3 (Royal College Curepipe):** Ms. Jaanvee Kawol and Ms. Yuvena Soobramaniyan
- **Zone 4 (Belle Rose SSS):** Ms. Yoshita Yojna Serwan and Ms. Nianjee Vernousha Shunmoogum

Launched under the Tax Club, the competition aims to instil in students the values of civic responsibility and transparency, providing them with a deeper understanding of the role of taxation in society. According to the MRA, this initiative represents a long-term civic education endeavour that complements formal learning with interactive activities such as debating and public speaking.

Mr. Roshan Oree, the Chair of the Jury, was highly impressed by the caliber of the debates. "The depth of research, clarity of argument, and confidence displayed by all participants was exceptional," he stated. "Engaging our youth in such articulate discussions on complex fiscal matters is not just encouraging; it is a vital investment in fostering a generation of informed and responsible citizens."



Mr. Amick Teeluckdharry, Assistant Director of the Taxpayer Education and Communication Department (TECD), emphasised the importance of engaging the young generation in understanding the role of tax administration. He expressed his admiration for the level of performance demonstrated by the participants, noting that *“the future of Mauritius is assured.”*



To honour this excellence, the MRA will award significant prizes: Rs 25,000 for the Best Speaker, Rs 20,000 for the Most Promising Speaker, Rs 10,000 for each of the two finalists, and Rs 5,000 for all four semi-finalists.

The stage is now set for a monumental clash of ideas at the Grand Final, where John Kennedy State College and Belle Rose SSS will compete for the coveted title. This initiative, led by the TECD, aims to transform the perception of taxation from an obligation into a shared responsibility, and to shape young citizens capable of critical thinking and confident expression.