



B A N G L A D E S H
Youth Leadership Center

Foreword from President



Dear Friends,

As we embrace the new season, I hope this message finds you in good spirit and health. I am pleased to present the first issue of the quarterly BYLC newsletter to keep you informed about new developments and programs at BYLC.

Today, January 5, is also a special day for all of us at BYLC. On this day two years ago, our organization was founded with the vision of creating a more tolerant, inclusive and just society by training the next generation of home-grown leaders. Our signature program, Building Bridges through Leadership Training (BBLT), unites youth from diverse educational and socio-economic backgrounds, equips them with leadership skills, and engages them in community service and active citizenship.

So far, we have implemented five BBLT programs, reached out to more than 250 institutions, and recruited more than 180 bright and energetic program participants. In 2011, we hope to expand our reach with the support of our partners. On behalf of our team, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being a part of our movement for change. We are grateful to you for your continued support and commitment towards creating a new generation of competent and compassionate leaders.

May 2011 be a fulfilling year for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely,

Ejaj Ahmad
Founder and President, BYLC

In this issue

[BBLT Junior 1](#)
[Roundtable Discussion](#)
[BBLT 4](#)
[BBLT 5](#)
[Interview with](#)
[Ovick Alam](#)

BYLC YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

sponsored by

THE WORLD BANK



March 3-5, 2011

Spectra Convention Center
|| Bangabandhu
International Conference
Center

To learn more, email us at
summit@bylc.org

BBLT Junior launched for secondary school students; currently admissions open for BBLT Junior 2

Building Bridges through Leadership Training Junior (BBLT-J) 1 was a new initiative to enable students in classes 7-10 to experience the training of the regular BBLT program. Fifteen eager individuals took part in the pilot program, which ran from June 26 to July 22, 2010 at the St. Joseph Higher Secondary School. The classroom lectures on leadership were coupled with fun outdoor activities to develop self awareness, teamwork and patriotism. The participants spent the last week of their month-long training program volunteering in an evening school for underprivileged children. [Read more...](#)

Roundtable discussion brings together young leaders of Bangladesh

To commemorate International Youth Day, BYLC and Star Campus jointly organized a roundtable discussion on 'New Directions for Youth Leadership Development' at The Daily Star office on August 12, 2010. Several BYLC graduates, members of Star Campus and representatives from other youth organizations participated in the discussion. The speakers urged the youth to play an active role in organizing service-oriented projects to address the developmental challenges of Bangladesh. [Read more...](#)

BYLC BUZZ

Monoshita Ayruani, BBLT-J 1 graduate, co-founds Torun, a youth initiative, to help underprivileged women start a sustainable business selling table lamps made out of waste materials.

Md. Sadekur Rahman, BBLT 3 graduate of Madrasa background, wins full scholarship to study at the esteemed Al-Azhar University in Cairo.

Tanzina Nitol, BBLT 2 graduate, secures 112th place out of 54,700 candidates in the University of Dhaka D-unit Entrance Exam.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 5
Second Anniversary of
BYLC

Program expanded to four months in BBLT 4

For the fourth season of Building Bridges through Leadership Training (BBLT), BYLC went back to Chittagong, where it all began. Forty-two participants were selected for the four-month long program, which consisted of a month of classroom lectures, followed by an additional three-month long community service component, to provide students a better opportunity to implement their classroom training in a real-world setting. The projects were implemented in an impoverished neighborhood in Motijharna, Chittagong. The participants, divided into groups, addressed basic hygiene and health concerns, as well as adult literacy and skill development. [Read more...](#)

BBLT 5 now in session

BYLC launched Building Bridges through Leadership Training (BBLT) 5 in a ceremony in Dhaka on November 4, 2010 with the Honorable James F. Moriarty, U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, as chief guest and Ms. Ellen Goldstein, World Bank Country Director for Bangladesh, as special guest. Forty-two participants were competitively selected from over 800 applications for this four-month long program. After completing intensive training on leadership for a month, the participants are now undertaking their community projects for the next three months. [Read more...](#)

Spotlight: Ovick Alam, BBLT 3 graduate; BBLT 5 facilitator

Ovick Alam, a BBLT 3 graduate of English medium background, is now studying in the Marketing Department of Faculty of Business Studies at Dhaka University. In 2009, he founded a service program called BridgeWee, which prepares English medium students for the C-unit BBA entrance exam for Dhaka University.

What incident or moment inspired you to start BridgeWee?

When I completed A' levels, I wanted to get into one of the top business schools in Bangladesh; either Institute of Business Administration (IBA) or Faculty of Business Studies (FBS) at Dhaka University. However, I did not have Mathematics in A' levels, which put me at a disadvantage for IBA entrance exam. So I decided to try my luck at FBS, but I found that there was no concrete program or guideline for English medium students' preparation for FBS. I was quite lost and had to struggle for my place in FBS without study materials. At that moment, I told myself that if I get in, I will make sure other English medium students don't face similar problems.

Why do English medium students have difficulty entering Dhaka University?

The curriculum taught at English medium and mainstream Bengali medium schools are different. Questions in the entrance exam are set according to the national (Bengali medium) curriculum. However, FBS provides a separate set of questions for English medium students in Economics and Advanced English. Since the question papers are not publicly available, no one can prepare by seeing what past questions look like.

What are your future plans for BridgeWee?

I have modest plans for BridgeWee for the time being. Currently, I run the program from my home - I don't want to rush. I plan to employ teaching staff in 2011. In 2010 I prepared 12 students and my target for 2011 is 30 students. BridgeWee's goal is to create awareness about FBS and BridgeWee among all English medium students who want to pursue higher studies in business in Bangladesh.

How do you measure your program's success?

In 2010 BridgeWee prepared 12 students and 7 of them made it to FBS with an acceptance rate of 58.33%. The overall acceptance rate for FBS was 2.88% (930 seats available for 32,868 candidates).

What has the BridgeWee experience taught you about leadership?

BridgeWee taught me that to be a true leader you have to be passionate about the change you want to bring in society. It has also taught me the importance of caring for society, because it is the society that gives us so many things. Leadership is not about achievements. It's really about making your life meaningful.

February 1

BBLT Junior 2 Opening Ceremony

February 1

BBLT 6 Admissions Open

February 21

Young Scholars Program 2

March 3-5

BYLC Youth Leadership Summit

March 26

Independence of Thought - an inter-school creativity competition

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

BYLC wins 2010 Innovation Grant of \$120,000 from US State Department - The award will be used to run six youth leadership programs in Dhaka and Chittagong. [Read more...](#)

Ejaj Ahmad honored as a 2010 Global Fellow of the International Youth Foundation - Ejaj Ahmad, president of BYLC, was among 20 outstanding young social entrepreneurs recognized by the International Youth Foundation for the 2010 YouthActionNet@Fellowship. [Read More...](#)

US Assistant Secretary Robert Blake mentions BYLC along with Grameen and BRAC at San Diego World Affairs Council - He discussed US policy in South Asia and highlighted a few lesser-known success stories in the region. [Read more...](#)

BYLC IN THE MEDIA

Listen to Ejaj Ahmad speak on Radio Foorti [here](#).

Read press clippings on BYLC [here](#).

FOLLOW US ON



11F Jahanara Apartments 42-43 Siddeshwari Circular Road Dhaka 1217 Bangladesh
Phone: (02) 833 3854 Fax: +880 (2) 833 3853 Email: info@bylc.org www.bylc.org