



Foreword from President

April 9, 2011



Dear Friends,

I write today to share with you some exciting updates from BYLC. After working from a small room in an apartment for nearly three years, we are now finally preparing to move to a new office with our own training facility. This will help us reach out to more young people and equip them with leadership skills to address some of our country's most urgent developmental challenges.

On the programmatic side, we successfully completed our fifth BBLT and second BBLT Junior programs in March. March also saw BYLC host the biggest leadership event in the country - the Youth Leadership Summit 2011. 200 young leaders from Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi, and 50 nationally and internationally renowned speakers convened in Dhaka for three days of networking and knowledge sharing. Working closely with The World Bank, BYLC will be bringing out a comprehensive report on the Summit findings by the end of July. Meanwhile, in this issue, we would like to share some of the highlights of the Summit.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. We are deeply grateful to all our friends, supporters and sponsors for being with us in our journey to change the quality of leadership in Bangladesh.

I wish you all good health and happiness in the new season. And to our Bangladeshi readers, Shubho Nobo Borsho!

Sincerely,

Ejaj Ahmad
Founder and President, BYLC

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BYLC BUZZ

Rosi Ranan, a BBLT 5 graduate, attends Just Peace Summit in New York as one of the global team leaders of Ovijatree, a student-led volunteer network that works with children

Ziyad Ansari, a BBLT 2 graduate, works with the South Asian Youth Society (SAYS) to coordinate the "State Alumni Leadership Development Camp 2011", sponsored by the US Embassy

Md. Salahuddin Galib, a BBLT 3 graduate, represents Bangladesh at the Tomorrow's Leaders Summit, held in Kuching Sarawak, Malaysia

SUMMIT REFLECTIONS

"I found the discussions very stimulating and was energized by seeing the levels of motivation of all the young people in the room." – Sara Hossain, Member, Governing Board of BYLC & Partner, Dr. Kamal Hossain and Associates

YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2011

Summit draws a diverse group of delegates



200 delegates are selected from over 65 academic institutions in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Khulna and Rajshahi

Students from outside the BYLC network (54%) interact with BBLT graduates (46%) and explore the role of courage in leadership



Mijarul Quayes, Member, International Advisory Board of BYLC & Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh, speaks at the Opening Ceremony.

Start of an inspirational weekend

The Summit provided youth in Bangladesh a rare opportunity to interact with distinguished leaders from diverse fields and hear their thoughts on the role of courage in leadership. In the Opening Ceremony, a witty speech by Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed, winner of the Ramon Magsaysay Award and founder of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, prompted rounds of applause and a spontaneous standing ovation. Quazi Ahmed conducted the ice-breaking activity, where his entertaining presentation as well as engaging group exercises helped develop a spirit of unity among the delegates. The

program switched gears in the session on Global Citizenship. Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, Australian High Commissioner Justin Lee, Barrister Nihad Kabir and Sanjay Kathuria of The World Bank shared their views on national identity and globalization with relation to Bangladesh.

A day of learning and networking

The next day, in a session on leadership, Ejaj Ahmad spoke about developing the capacity to confront uncertainty and to step out of the comfort zone. The session also provided a glimpse into the regular BBLT curriculum. In the next plenary on entrepreneurship, Niaz Rahim of Rahimafrooz spoke about the importance of business ethics, and Geetara Choudhury of Adcomm encouraged women's participation in entrepreneurship. Three concurrent panels on media and journalism, climate change and human rights followed. The variety of topics served to broaden the delegates' knowledge on Bangladesh's contemporary challenges.

Summit ends on an optimistic note

On the final day, BYLC arranged a plenary on education and career to provide delegates guidance on career planning. The panel included the vice chancellor of North South University, a consultant from the Boston Consulting Group, and the CEO of BDJobs.com, the largest online job portal in Bangladesh. A second round of concurrent panels covered pressing issues in health, politics, and innovation and critical thinking. To imbue in young leaders a strong sense of patriotism, war heroes shared their stories in a session on the liberation war. The Summit concluded with a Gala Dinner at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center where Advisor to Prime Minister Gowher Rizvi, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and US Ambassador James F. Moriarty delivered special remarks.

Learn more about our speakers by viewing the 2011 Youth Leadership Summit Brochure [here](#).

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Participants connect with the elderly in second BBLT-Junior

BYLC completed its second Building Bridges through Leadership Training Junior (BBLT-J) program. Thirty-nine students from classes 6-10 participated in the program, which ran from February 2 to February 28, 2011, at the BIAM Foundation. The training consisted of similar content as the regular BBLT program, but modified to sharpen the communication and critical thinking skills of school children. In a partnership with AgeWell Foundation, BBLT-J 2 participants interacted with senior citizens at the Bangladesh Association for the Aged and Institute of Geriatric Medicine (BAAIGM) to bridge the growing inter-generational gap in society. They organized six projects, devoting ten hours of community service each.

BBLT 5 participants conclude four months with BYLC

On March 5, 2011, BYLC completed its fifth Building Brides through Leadership Training (BBLT) program. The program began on November 5, 2010 at the BIAM Foundation and comprised of 42 participants selected from over 800 applicants. This four-month long program consisted of intensive classes on leadership ideas, group-based case analysis, team-building activities, public speaking sessions and community service projects. Participants executed six different projects in the Korail community in Mohakhali, each dedicating 120 hours of community service. They also organized a large Art Competition at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on January 14, 2011 to gather funds for their community service projects for the next three months. The projects included, among others, environmental awareness and personal hygiene campaigns as well as providing IT training to underprivileged youth.

Spotlight:

Imam Hossain, BBLT 1 graduate, BBLT 4 facilitator & Delegate at the Youth Leadership Summit 2011



Imam Hossain is a graduate of BBLT 1, the pilot program that brought BYLC to life. Since his graduation from BBLT 1, Imam has been an integral member of the BYLC family. He now shares his thoughts on the evolution of BYLC, his experience as a Summit delegate and as a social entrepreneur in a BYLC venture.

What change has BYLC brought in you?



A. K. Azad, President, The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), speaks in the Entrepreneurship Panel.



BBLT-J 2 graduates sing the national anthem in the Closing Ceremony.



Dr. Dipu Moni, the Honorable Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, delivers the keynote address at the Summit Closing.

BBLT 6 PROGRAM



Applicants take the written entrance exam for the BBLT 6 program.

I have become more organized, composed and conscious of the views of others. Since I studied at a Madrassa, I never really interacted with students from other educational backgrounds. After BBLT 1, my preconceived notions of a typical English or Bangla medium student have changed significantly. At a more personal level, training from BYLC also helped me to communicate with my father about the benefits of an undergraduate degree from a public university. He had initially opposed my decision to leave the madrassa system for Chittagong University. However, following my Alim exams, I was able to enroll at Chittagong University to study public administration, and this degree will hopefully help me become a more effective public servant for my country in the future.

What changes do you see in BYLC?

Initially, facilitators of leadership came from outside of BYLC. Now, mainly BBLT graduates are serving as facilitators. Not only are they passing down knowledge from their own BBLT experience, but also they are reinforcing their own understanding of leadership. This way, participants are benefitting more. The community projects are better organized as well; so much so that graduates continue their projects even after the program ends. This reflects their deep understanding of service and active citizenship.

How was your experience at the BYLC Youth Leadership Summit 2011?

My favorite sessions at the Summit were the panels on entrepreneurship and leadership. Mr. A.K. Azad, president of FBCCI, told us how he achieved success in business through focus, determination and persistence. I could relate to his story because he began his career with limited capital after graduating from university and slowly built his business conglomerate. I admire Mrs. Geeteara, the chairman of Adcomm, for her struggles as a female pioneer in the advertisement industry. The panel on the liberation war was also quite inspiring. Listening to stories of our liberation war directly from veteran soldiers who made great personal sacrifices so that we could have a better life is truly a humbling experience.

Items produced by Karushilpo were presented at the closing ceremony. Since you have been deeply involved with Karushilpo, please tell us a little about it.

Karushilpo is a social business project to empower underprivileged women by employing them in bamboo craftsmanship. A few of us developed the concept as BBLT 1 participants in 2008. We trained 10 women, some of whom were acid victims, to make handicrafts. We presented their products at the Dhaka Foreign Office Wives' Association Fair in 2009 and received great feedback from the buyers. Since then we have renewed our efforts to advance this social business with BBLT 4 graduates. Currently, eight women are working as artisans for Karushilpo. We are in the process of compiling a catalogue to showcase the products and take Karushilpo to the next level.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10
BBLT 6 Opening Ceremony

April 30
Second Annual General Meeting

EARTHQUAKE CAMPAIGN



BBLT Junior participants celebrated Bangladesh's 40th Independence Day by organizing an earthquake awareness campaign throughout Dhaka.

BYLC IN THE MEDIA

Read the Star Campus cover on the Youth Leadership Summit 2011 [here](#).

View a short documentary on BBLT 5 [here](#).

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

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