

Team Bangladesh brings glory from New Delhi

Saad Bin Amjad

YOUNG voices from Bangladesh demonstrated to the world what they can do for the society and for the nation. When Bangladesh is widely condemned in South Asia for their corruption records, two boys defied all those odds and among the eight South Asian countries they grabbed the runners up trophy in a debate competition that was based on the issue "Corruption".

On 24th October 2008, Team India was declared the champion whilst Team Bangladesh grabbed the runners up trophy in the SAARC round of the 11th Dr. Mahbub ul Haq Memorial Inter-School Debate, organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Contemporary Studies (RGICS) of Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. This debate was in the memory of Dr. Mahbub ul Haq, the father of the UNDP commissioned Human Development Reports and the Human Development Index on which countries are ranked based on their progress on three indicators of human development education, health and income.

Saad Bin Amjad and Anam Hossain, students of Manarat Dhaka International College proudly represented their country. In the final round they debated on the topic "All countries in the world, rich and poor, are vulnerable to corruption, so corruption is not a development issue at all." The topic drew inspiration from the latest UNDP Asia Pacific Report on the theme *"Tackling Corruption, Transforming lives"*.

Earlier in the month of September, UNDP and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation handed over the responsibility to Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS) based on their organizing capabilities to host the national rounds. National rounds were organized to select the best two debaters of the country who would be given the rare chance to represent their country in the final SAARC round. Notably national rounds of this competition were also organized in all the other SAARC countries, namely Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This time around over 1000 schools from South Asia participated in the national rounds of the debates and the winning teams from each country traveled to New Delhi for the ultimate debating session.

The debates of national round were held in British Parliament Format. Twenty-four teams of different schools of Bangladesh participated in that four-day debating championship. The teams that managed to secure the final spots were St. Joseph, European Standard School (ESS) and two teams form Manarat Dhaka International College.

On the 24th of October 2008the debaters were taken to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation's Conference Hall for the debating session.

As mentioned earlier the motion for the final round was "All countries in the world, rich and poor, are vulnerable to corruption, so corruption is not a development issue at all."