Global Impact through Local Action

Fariha Ishrat Khandaker

WHEN a non-government organisation with members from over 100 nations come together for the purpose of active citizenship, we find the creation of Junior Chamber International (JCI). Its mission is to provide development opportunities that empower young people to create positive change. The age limit: any youthful soul who in the real time frame is between 18 to 40 years of age who believes that they can create positive change through collective action that will bring about betterment in the world. Thus, they will be engaging in activities that range from sustainable development to international projects. One of the main objectives is to create young leaders who are responsible and are willing to take social responsibility and the initiative to take the action to benefit society.

This week, JCI held its Future Leader's Summit'09. This was the first time that JCI organised such a summit in our country. With about 5,000 local organisations, JCI's international network connects nearly 200,000 active citizens in more than 100 countries. Its main goal for this year is the alarming issue of climate change, which is likely to severely effect many nations in the near future, if not already.

Earlier in the day, JCI, IUCN and Star Campus met for a roundtable session to discuss this sensitive issue of climate change. Among those present was Mahfuz Anam, Editor of The Daily Star, Shahnoor Wahid, Editor of Star Campus, Prof. Ainun Nishat, Country Representative of IUCN, Aftab Khurshid, National President of JCI'09, and Sup Shin, International President of JCI. At the conference, Prof. Nishat discussed about the importance of the climate change. He said that if there is even a 4°C rise in the global temperature then it would be catastrophic for the entire planet. He also mentioned that the security and livelihood of countries such as ours would be particularly worse hit. He also, talked about the Tipaimukh Dam issue, with the conclusion that only by working together with India, Bangladesh can find a solution that would be conducive for both nations.

In both the roundtable and the summit, Shin introduced everyone to JCI, its goals and motivations, its basic structure and the kind of work that the organisation is involved in. He emphasized on the fact that this 100 year old organisation was founded by Henry Giessenbier Jr., with the same objective and core principals in mind as it is still has today. This year, the main focus for JCI is working with their global sponsors such as the United Nations and others on helping the youth to find a solution to save the world from the adverse impact of climate change.

At the summit, there were prominent political and corporate figures present including Waliur Bhuiyan, MD, BOC Bangladesh, Geetiyara Chowdhury, Former Advisor to GOB and Chairman, ADCOMM Ltd, Hossain Khaled, Former President DCCI and Md. Anwar Group, Md. Faruk Khan, Minister of Commerce, and of course the national and international JCI presidents. They gave speeches with the common theme of how encouraging it is to see young people being aware of their environment and stepping up to find solutions to create a positive global impact. This was followed by a question and answer session and later, a cultural programme and dinner.

Moreover, the Junior Chamber International is an organisation that is keen on the task of giving opportunities to do-gooders who will eventually become influential leaders in the global economy responsible for having created a positive change.





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