

BACK FROM DAVOS!

SHAMMI QUDDUS

PHOTOS: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

This year the Global Shapers Dhaka Hub had the distinct honour of having the shapers attend the Annual Meeting at Davos for the first time. Not only that, but Dhaka was the only hub, amongst almost 500, to have two Shapers selected into the Davos 50 - the group of 50 young leaders who represent the voice of the youth at annual meeting. The attendees were Saif Kamal, Founder of Toru and former curator of the Dhaka Hub, and Sohara Mehroze Shachi, who works with UNDP, a freelance journalist and runs the South Asia hub of Climate Tracker.

What was theme of this year's Davos and how did it relate to the issues you are working on in Bangladesh?

Sohara: The theme of Davos this year was Responsible and Responsive Leadership, which is extremely relevant to my work on combating climate change. The Paris Agreement was an excellent demonstration of this theme and gave the world much needed hope, as 194 nations responded to this global threat and took a responsible decision. Now it is time to translate that commitment into action at the local level for each country.

Saif: While Bangladesh has made

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phenomenal progress in UN's Millennium Development Goals, there are still many challenges such as quality education, healthcare and financial inclusion on which we are only getting started. The government and NGOs cannot do this alone. We need home grown leaders who will drive this change with their social enterprises. The Fourth Industrial Revolution will democratise technology further for it to be used to deliver such services to all and pave the path towards inclusive growth.

What do you believe was your impact at Davos?

Sohara: As youth, unattached to any organisation and unrestrained by any vested commercial interest, we - the Global Shapers - were able to put many world leaders on the spot by asking questions many other Davos participants were not able to because of how much they had at stake. For instance, I was able to ask the Chairman of Saudi Aramco about the negative impacts the fossil fuel industry is having on the planet and the dependence on the industry on government subsidies for survival, which he acknowledged was unsustainable. I also did a Facebook live interview with the head of the WWF which was viewed by over 70,000 people where we discussed some of the critical

environmental issues of today and the urgent need for the engagement of private sector leaders, who have gathered at Davos, to safeguard the planet.

Saif: We were told something along the lines of “allow serendipity to happen to you!” I was waiting for my meeting with a Professor from HEC. A gentleman next to me was waiting too and we struck up a conversation. We discussed the current political polarisation of the world, its root causes, what the future holds and the potential of technology has to bridge it. The challenges global supply chain will face and the discussion went on. At the end of it, he asked me where I am from. I told him Bangladesh. I observed his face change. He said “I am always surprised by the Global Shapers community. My ignorance would never have made me think that a youth in a developing nation can not only think and actually predict what we discuss in our board rooms, but show us the mirror of a world which we do not know and must know. I truly loved our conversation. Next time I think of Bangladesh, it will not be about its challenges and corruption but the potential it holds with youth like yourself”.

What was the highlight of your Davos experience?

Sohara: My highlight was meeting our Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Not only did I get a chance to ask her about Bangladesh's climate action on stage during one of her sessions, but I also got a chance to chat with her informally, on a one on one casual basis. It was an incredible experience speaking to our head of state casually standing next to her with no security guards in the vicinity! This is an example of the amazing platform Davos provides the youth to connect with world leaders, voice their concerns and ideas, and play a part in shaping the global agenda.

Saif: Anyone who is someone in the world is at Davos. While we are surrounded by famous leaders across public, private and civil sectors, I enjoyed meeting the Shapers from the Davos 50 the most. Each and everyone brings in voice, clarity and makes me hope for a better future. Shaping education, governments, arts, refugee voices, women empowerment, my learnings from them was and will remain the highlight.

The writer is a Global Shaper of The Dhaka Hub.

Check out https://medium.com/@Shapers_Dhaka/bangladesh-davos-reflections-c834b66acca2#.1xaj5t8kh for the full interview.

ABOUT TOWN



CHOBIMELA IX

Date and Time: February 3-16, 2017, from 4 pm to 8 pm
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 14/3 Segunbagicha, Ramna, 1000 Dhaka

For more information, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1075014795954692/>



AMAR EKUSHEY BOI MELA-2017

Date and Time: February 1-28, 2017, from 10 am to- 8pm
Venue: Bangla Academy, Dhaka 1000

For queries, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/events/290813481333959/>



“DIFFERENTIATE OR DIE”

(A PERSONAL BRANDING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE WORKSHOP)

Date and Time: February 18, 2017, from 3 pm to 8 pm
Venue: Bishwo Shahitto Kendro (BSK), Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, 1205 Dhaka
Hosted by- Sabbir The Presenter

For tickets and query, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/events/621403197984480/>