



The embankment is gradually breaking in the tidal waters of the Pasur River. About 300 families live in fear of losing their homes. The photo was taken in the Jayamoni Thota area of Mongla, Khulna on September 10, 2022.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

# Youth-led Climate Action Takes Center Stage at COP28



**SOHANUR RAHMAN**

The Conference of the Parties (COP) annually unfolds as a critical juncture where global leaders confront the specter of climate injustice, uniting to address the escalating climate crisis. My odyssey through three COPs has been a revelation, exposing the intricate dance and deadlock of negotiations, and dramatic decisions, spotlighting community resilience, and emphasizing the transformative power of collective action.

## **BRIDGING THE GAP: From Activism to Negotiations Table**

My journey at COP28 spanned various dimensions—from side events, bilateral meetings, protests, and movements, to media engagement, and the negotiations table. In Dubai, I had the privilege of joining dinner meetings with world leaders like Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the

Netherlands and Prime Minister Gilmar Pisas of Curaçao, showcasing a commitment to inclusivity. Rutte's emphasis on involving young voices at the negotiation table resonated as a call to empower the next generation.

Children and young people, often excluded, play a crucial role in bridging gaps, especially in the aftermath of climate disasters. As a speaker, joining the “Youth & Gender Sensitive Climate Finance for Locally Led Adaptation” panel hosted by the We Are Tomorrow Partnership, I shared stories of Bangladesh building community resilience through local leadership. I also presented research findings jointly conducted in Bangladesh, Nigeria, and Guatemala by my young fellow, Population Council & Women Deliver, on the impact of Climate Change on adolescents, focusing on its special effects on health at the Children & Youth Pavilion.

## **INCLUSIVITY AND URGENCY: A Pledge for a Just Future**

The 1.5°C limit is not just a target but a survival