

National Annual Minority Youth Leadership Summit-2021

"Skill & Empowerment in The New Normal"



19th to 21st October, 2021

NGO Forum for Public Health, Lalmatiya, Dhaka-1207.

Organized by



Knowledge Partner's



Centre for Peace and Justice



Background of the National Minority Youth Leadership Summit

This leadership summit is a pioneering initiative of the Council of Minorities. It is the first ever minority leadership summit in Bangladesh that has been organized annually since 2011. It was first introduced by Mr. Khalid Hussain, Executive Director of the Council of Minorities & Ms. Hannah Sholder, a community development and affordable housing specialist based in the USA in 2011, after Ms. Sholder finished her Fulbright Scholarship in Bangladesh through which she studied the land rights situation and housing conditions of the camp-dwelling Urdu-speaking community. The first year the Summit was just introduced for the camp-dwelling youth in Mohammadpur neighborhood of Dhaka (which Ms. Sholder conducted her research), as a way to empower the youth to become leaders in their community's development and less dependent on foreign aid. Over the next few the Summit was extended to camp-dwelling youth from wider Dhaka, then from across the country. This year National Annual Minority Youth Leadership Summit-2021 was successfully organized by Council of Minorities (CoM). Centre for Peace and Justice(CPJ), Nagorik Uddyog (NU), Nationality for All (NFA) supported the summit as knowledge partners.

Objectives of the Summit

- To identify high potential individuals from marginalized communities and preparing them to become leaders in their community's development.
- To build a network of support between the youth to help strengthen their communities' campaigns for equity, justice and human rights.

This year, National Annual Minority Youth Leadership Summit-2021 was successfully organized by Council of Minorities (CoM). Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ), Nagorik Uddyog (NU), Nationality for All (NFA) supported the summit as knowledge partners. A total of 43 Participants from 14 different communities joined the summit this year. The participants were from- *Hijra, Bihari, Robidas, Horizon, Oraon, Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo, Santal, Bede, Tanchangya, Singh and Bengali hindu* community.

Day-1 (19-10-21)

The summit started at 9:30 am and Shahariar Sadat, Director, Academic and Legal Empowerment moderated the inauguration segment. He also talked about the recent incident of the conflict during Durga Pooja and encouraged to promote peace and justice through bringing the leadership among the minority youth community. Khalid Hussain, chief executive of CoM stated the opening remarks mentioning the history and objectives of the summit which is to combine all minority communities to empower the youth. Then Monjurul Islam from Nagorik Uddyog presented on Minority report which included the shrinking civic space and the human rights of the minorities. The report significantly showed that the Hindu communities are getting politically deprived in Bangladesh. Specially Dalits and hill track ethnic minorities are getting extremely discriminated in terms of human rights and civic space.



After his wonderful presentation Barrister Tapash Kanti, Advocate, Supreme court of Bangladesh discussed on the minority report focusing on the recent incidents and his personal experiences of dealing with these issues as an advocate. He also emphasized the vastly spreading hate speech and rumors on social media and recent unwanted attack on the Hindu community during Durga Pooja. He advised to use social media as a knowledge sharing platform and to be skillful while using social media to eliminate negativity. Barrister Tapash kanti mentioned child marriage as an

indicator of non-empowerment of women. After that a recorded statement of Dr. Fernand de Varennes, United Nations Special Rapporteur on minority issues was played. Dr. Fernand stated that in Bangladesh, India, Myanmar and also in all other parts of the world for minorities the world has become more difficult and even more hostile, angry and intolerant place. But all individuals should have the equal rights under the united nations' universal declaration of human rights. He advised to be aware of the human rights specially for the vulnerable groups such as women. So some need their protection and enforcement more than others. This is what we need to remember and this is why this summit is so important. Dr. Fernand wished all the participants, organizers and facilitators a successful summit. Subin Mulmi, Executive Director of Nationality for All discussed on the critical condition of human rights for the minority in Bangladesh. He also mentioned the increasing hate speech targeting the hindu minorities. Mr. Subin specified a tool to protect human rights which is increasing awareness. Abiding the Through awareness hate speech and discrimination can be eliminated. Hannah Solder, an urban planner from USA shared her experiences of working with the Bihari community in Bangladesh. After that Manzoor Hasan, Executive Director of CPJ inaugurated the summit with his speech. Mr. Manzoor suggested to find out the reasons of majoritarianism through research. Manzoor Hasan believes that civic space is not getting shrinked but reconfigured. He mentioned two specific elements to identify a way to reconfigure the shrinking of civic space. First one is supporting the youth initiatives and the other one is working to reduce social media negativity like fake news and hate speech. He also added that the negative side of social media is so dangerous so all should focus on certain issues and work on it.

Dr. Motahar Akhand Chairperson, Rights Center was one of the learned facilitators of this three-day long summit. On the very first day, two of his interactive sessions were on 'Leadership' and 'Law & Rights' respectively. On the first session, Mr. Motahar tried to enlighten the participants with the vast knowledge about the basic skills of a leader and the habits as well as the salient features of a leader, and the attributes that ultimately characterizes him or her from the others. Using his very synergistic methodology that included the extensive use of different technical and visual tools like video and film shows, group works, placard writing etc. Mr. Motahar made the entrants perceive how there always lies a range of potentially dormant leadership qualities within each and every person. In the session on 'Law & Rights', the trainer followed the same method with the help of storytelling and group discussions this time and engaged the whole bunch in the mutual understanding of the philosophy of law. As the session progressed and the participants started sharing the stories of their personal hardships relating to the rights they could exercise in real life and the overall law enforcement situation. Mr. Motahar made them conceptualize the requirements of the law for the recognition, protection and fulfillment of rights as well. The first day of the summit thus ended fruitfully with this pivotal learning on the rights and laws for the minorities leaving the participants more aware of their own rights, amenities and provisions than they were even a day before.

Day-2 (20-10-21)

First session of the day started with the power point presentation of Hannah Solder who is working as an urban planner at USA. Hannah joined the session through zoom. CPJ intern Mesbahul Islam Sakif translated the session into Bangla for better understanding of the participants. She discussed on Land rights and community-led development. She critically discussed the theme of community-led development by providing the example of Orangi Pilot Project of Pakistan. Then she focused on the role of community land trusts to build a community by providing the example of Cano Martin Pina of USA. A community land trust (CLT) is a not-for-profit organization that is made up of community members. CLTs are a way for communities to build, bring back into life or protect buildings and services that are important to them. Projects that CLTs have taken on include building and renovating houses; taking over the running of local pubs and shops; creating play areas and nature walks; and building workspaces. But for this website, the focus is on how CLTs can build and renovate housing. Then she shared her own experience of working at Geneva camp and Adamjee camp in Bangladesh. She talked about the poor condition of the Bihari community of these camps. Some of the participants from different communities shared their own experiences of vulnerability and miserable livelihood. Hannah indicated the gap between government policies and the reality of the economic condition of the camp dwellers. Lastly she encouraged the minority youths to be skilled enough to secure their lands and human rights.



Parveen S. Huda, Consultant, Human Resources Development started her session through opening the floor for the participants to ask anything about her. This method worked as a magical approach to make their curious mind awakened. Parveen S. Huda discussed on Developing personal excellence to create opportunities for higher level life goals during the whole session. She shared her thoughts on personal development through her personal experiences and fights. She talked about the common features of an ideal personal development plan mentioning seven habits of highly effective people. Parveen Huda suggested the participants to gain self-control through different approaches to build proper leadership qualities among them. She ended the session by wishing good luck to the participants for their prosperous future.



Dr. Motahar Akhand facilitated the whole after-lunch session on the second day of the summit. This one was incorporated with some interesting learning methods like meditation with storytelling, discussion, study circle, quiz etc. Rights and human rights were defined, explained and re explained to the participants with the reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948 that enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings. Mr. Motahar informed the entrants about all the 30 articles of this declaration and analyzed them one by one using different metaphors and examples. He enlisted the characteristics and principles of human rights and helped the participants learn these issues better by relating UDHR with the fundamental rights and justice. The study circle and quizzing particularly succored in bringing out the maximum output out of this session and aided the learners to grasp almost every basic thing regarding rights and human rights. Lastly, Mr. Motahar ended the session taking feedbacks on the day's learning from the participants.



Day-3 (21-10-21)

The session started with the discussion of Zahid Hossain, Human Rights Officer, UNRCO Dhaka. Mr. Zahid joined the meeting through zoom. He discussed on different organs of UN and its mechanism. Protection of human rights according to UDHR was also his topic of discussion. At the end of his discussion he thanked CoM for organizing the summit and he expressed his strong desire to join the summit physically in future.

The third day's activities focused more on the gender related issues. However, trainer Dr. Motahar Akhand had been particularly emphasizing on this crucial matter from the very first day of the summit and designed the contents of all his sessions accordingly so that the learners could already have the initial understanding of all gender-based narratives and concepts and duly take in the learning of the latter sessions. Mr. Motahar commenced the day's first session engaging each of the participants in a card clustering activity that ultimately led them identify the basic difference between sex and gender as these two often gets interchanged while using by many. Mr. Motahar then stressed on educating them the gendered division of labor and spotted it out as the main tool of a patriarchal society to exert control over the women. This particular portion was analyzed with the help of a special learning method named 'Power walk exercise' and the findings were discussed by the participants later on.



This particular section created a mixed reaction within the learners as none of them had ever encountered something like this and they, themselves, had never thought of this division of labor and the inequalities faced by the womenfolk in this way. This was thoroughly reflected in the feedback session as many of the participants got sentimental while sharing their remarks; the males were seen feeling guilty of their long-done share of the injustices to the females that was systematically structured in the society and the females were found self-re assessing their own sufferings. They could finally discover and realize that it was in fact, the gender biased division of labor serving as the root cause of gender discrimination in our society. This session was surely ‘a food for thought’ element for all the people present there in that room that day.

At the ending section of this day’s workshop, Mr. Motahar instructed the participants about projects and their designs and urged them to share one project start-up idea to be materialized in each of their own communities within the next one year’s tenure. A while after taking part in the brain storming and group work, the participants came up with some excellent and innovative ideas focusing their own community-based needs and addressing the ways to solve them out.

Sumaiya Islam, Senior Program Manager, OSJI joined through zoom and enjoyed the ending of the summit. She also committed to support the summit in future as well. Her colleague Coline Schupfer stated that she enjoyed the active participation and diverse cultural program. She is looking forward to taking part in these kinds of community engagement and leadership program in near future.

Sanjeeb Drong, General Secretary at Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples forum shared his personal experience of being a representative of indigenous community. He said that 30 years back he used to participate in different indigenous leadership and empowerment programs and these programs helped him a lot to increase his skills. Minority youths have to come forward to join these kind of summit to ensure their human rights.

Zakir Hossain, Chief Executive, Nagorik Uddyog expressed his satisfaction to see the growth of Council of Minorities (CoM). He thanked CoM team for being able to organize the summit even in this situation of pandemic. Nagorik Uddyog has been supporting CoM from the beginning and will support in future as well.

The closing ceremony came to its end by certificates among the participants and colorful cultural program led by the participants themselves.

National Annual Minority Youth Leadership Summit-2021

Participants List

19th to 21st October,2021
Venue :NGO Forum for Public Health

Serial No.	First name	Last Name	Religion	Age	Community
1	Mohammad	Sajid	Muslim	34	Bihari-Urdu Speaking
2	Md.Maraj Ahmead	Joy	Muslim	19	Bihari-Urdu Speaking
3	Shamim	Ansari Juwel	Muslim	29	Bihari-Urdu Speaking
4	Md.	Apu	Muslim	22	Bihari-Urdu Speaking
5	Muskan	Akter	Muslim	18	Bihari-Urdu Speaking
6	FOYEJ	AHMED	Muslim	27	Bihari
7	MD. RUHUL	AMIN	Muslim	26	Muslim

8	Anuradha	Baraik	Dalit	23	Tea Garden Community
9	Tamanna Singh	Baraik	Dalit	30	Tea Garden Community
10	CHANDAN	ROBIDAS	Dalit	26	Tea Garden Community
11	TONIMA	DAS	Hindu	25	Orao
12	SREEKANTO KUMAR	ORAO	Hindu	27	Orai
13	Ashik Basfore	Krishna	Dalit	19	Dalit
14	Sumit	Sukhdan	Dalit	26	Dalit
15	Ranjita Rani	Das	Dalit	24	Dalit
16	Sarshathi	Das	Dalit	23	Dalit
17	Kornel	Mardi	Santal	28	Santal

18	Christopher	Soren	Santal	21	Santal
19	Bijayan	Tanchangya	Tanchangya	21	Tanchangya
20	Samiul Alim	Sammi	Muslim	30	Transgender
21	Kaly	Chowdhury	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	25	Chakma
22	Mst. Nadia	Afrin	Bihari-Urdu Speaking	20	Bihari-Urdu Speaking
23	Kraching	Marma	Buddhist	22	Marma
24	Umayching	Marma	Buddhist	19	Marma
25	Mily Prue	Marma	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	21	Marma
26	Sachingmong	Marma	Buddhist	22	Marma
27	Monisha	Khatun	Bihari-Urdu Speaking	22	Bihari-Urdu Speaking

28	Shathi	shing	Shing(Sadri	18	Shing(Sadri
29	Purnima Rani	Shing	Shing(Sadri)	17	Shing(Sadri)
30	Martina	Chakma	Indigenous	21	Chakma
31	Athwee	Marma	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	21	Marma
41	Dawkiprue	Marma	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	23	Marma
33	Machen hla	Rakhine	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	20	Rakhine
34	Khumbar	Tripura Bela	Tripura	21	Tripura
35	Parboti	Tanchangya	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	21	Tanchangya
36	Liza	sangma	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	24	Garo
37	Swe Ning	Rong	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	19	Marma

38	Hritu	Roy	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	20 years+	Chakma
39	Ekhyme	Chowdhury	Indigenous (Chakma/marma/other tribes)	19	Marma
40	Fungpre	Mro	Mro	21	Mro
41	Rohan Kumar	Das	Dalit	20	Dalit
42	Saddam	Hossain	Muslim	25	Bede
43	Mohammad	Moksed	Muslim	30	Bede
44	Samina	Siddique	Muslim	25	Urdu-speaking
45	Chow	Mong	Marma	25	Marma

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1/7, Block-F, Aziz Moholla, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207

Contact: +880 1911 479073 Email: khalid.aygusc@gmail.com <https://www.com-bd.org/>

