

The Daily Star

October 5, 2018

BYLC hosts Youth Leadership Summit 2018



Photo: Courtesy

Al Haq

With this year's theme 'Desh Amar Dayitto Amar' (My Nation, My Responsibility), Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC), launched the fifth instalment of its Youth Leadership Summit (YLS) on September 27, at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center. After a competitive selection, around 400 university students and young professionals from across Bangladesh congregated for a three-day programme of inter-generational dialogue, leadership training and networking. "A democratic society should serve as a container capable of holding diverse, and often opposing, viewpoints and ideologies," said Ejaj Ahmad, president and founder of BYLC. "We organised the summit to create opportunities for the youth to listen to and engage in dialogue with peers and experts from different backgrounds and affiliations, and exercise agency by co-creating a youth manifesto and advocating on its behalf." The delegates worked together to co-create a youth manifesto—a declaration of priorities and aspirations that will be used as an advocacy tool to drive youth development on a national level. Based on the findings of a survey conducted by BYLC with more than 3,200 university students prior to the summit, the main themes of the manifesto were education, social justice, unemployment, and social inclusion. The panel discussions that followed, featuring leading activists, industry experts, youth changemakers, policy makers and politicians of Bangladesh, prioritised the steps required to make progress on each of the challenges. It also focused on the processes and skills required for youth to participate in politics in Bangladesh. Mahfuz Anam, Editor, The Daily Star, delivered the closing keynote speech. He urged the youth to use their idealism and energy

The Daily Star

October 5, 2018

to serve the country. "You all are at a stage in life where you are not obligated by responsibilities. Use this precious time to develop yourselves and the society," he said. The summit concluded with the delegates making a commitment to take responsibility for the issues that affect their communities. Over the next few months, a Youth Advisory Council will be formed to work on the manifesto recommendations by engaging with different government bodies and policy makers. The Daily Star was a strategic partner of the programme.