

Malaysian students at WCDRR Children and Youth Conference

BY TASNIM LOKMAN - 19 MARCH 2015 @ 2:09 PM

[Tweet](#) 1 [Recommend](#) [Share](#) 153

SENDAI (Japan) : Four Malaysian youth, who participated in the third United Nations World Conference Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) Management representing Malaysia at the Children and Youth Forum, believes Malaysia still has a long way to go in term awareness in disaster risk reduction management as many, if not all, were still in the dark when it comes to natural disasters.

Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia undergraduate student slam Sayuthi Aslam said their expectations before and after they came to the conference was very different after meeting and learning what disaster risk reduction was all about from international experts including from Turkey, the Netherlands, United States, Indonesia and New Zealand.

"After listening to their talks, we realised that disaster risk reduction exposure in Malaysia is very low although every year we suffer from flooding, landslide continuously and sometimes even drought.

"Various sciences were discussed allowing us to think within a wider scope. People needs to prepare themselves on how to minimize the risk of disaster as much as possible to avoid suffering economically post-disaster," he said.

Sayuthi, who came with two other Usim students Iqlima Balqis Adham, Nurfatini Radzlin and another from Universiti Kuala Lumpur, said it was a fruitful programme to have participated in as they were able to meet new people and share knowledge with one another.

Over 200 young participants gathered at Sendai for five days from March 14 to 18 to represent global youths to engage in the conference.

The forum's priority was clear, stating that children and youth may be a vulnerable group when disaster strikes but youth are capable actors of change who can pull their weight in the mechanisms of disaster prevention and risk reduction.

The Children and Youth Forum was preceded by three days of training and workshops for all participants and stretched across four full days with a loaded agenda of panel sessions with high-level speakers and Member States, workshops, cultural activities and WCDRR participation.

The entire forum was youth-led and had been organised by a large group of dedicated youth volunteers from all regions of the world.

UN said thanks to the continuous lobbying efforts, the official framework draft of WCDRR highlights that "Children and youth are agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction".

Its Secretary-General supported the demand stating it in his speech during the visit to the forum by stating that the message was loud and clear, adding that the youth were not the leaders of tomorrow but leaders of today.



Malaysian students representing the country at WCDRR this week. From right Muhammad Aslam, Muhammad Sayuti, 22, Muhammad Safivan Mohamad Sayuti, 20, Nurfathilhin Radzlin, 22, Iqlima Balqis Adham, 22. Pix by Tasnim Lokman