

**Report the experiences as IPBA scholar in IPBA 29th Annual Meeting and Conference
April 25-27, 2019 Singapore**

By Ms. Khurshid Jahan

I came to know about IPBA from my colleague, Mr. Md. Imam Hossain, Head of Chamber of IDCLA, who was awarded IPBA scholarship in the year 2016. I was glad to hear that such a great organisation exists and provides golden opportunity for Lawyers from Developing Countries like Bangladesh. I was informed by Mr. Hossain that if I participate in IPBA conference I will get ample opportunity to gather knowledge from the delegates who will come across the world and will get the chance to build a network with them. Being inspired by his advice I applied for a scholarship to attend the IPBA 29th Annual Meeting and Conference which was held on April 25-27, 2019 in Singapore and I was awarded with the scholarship from the category of ‘Lawyers from Developing Countries’.

Participants at the Conference were absolutely spoilt for choice in terms of choosing which sessions they wished to attend each day, which was tightly packed with intellectually stimulating 3 (three) plenary sessions followed by 7 (seven) concurrent sessions covering a broad spectrum of interests including International Arbitration, International Trade Law and Policy, Insolvency Law, Banking, Finance & Securities, Tax Law, Technology, Media & Telecommunication, Cross Border Investment, Employment Law, Immigration Law, Anti-Corruption Law, Competition Law, Aviation Law, Insurance Law, International Trade, Maritime Law, Intellectual Property law etc.

The Conference sessions served as an invaluable way to draw together unparalleled legal knowledge across the world on a wide range of issues regarding public and professional interest, and it’s all neatly packed within 3 (three) days.

Such an occasions are rare for young lawyers across the world to gain such level of exposure on an international legal platform, and it is also true for the young lawyers in Bangladesh with interests in cross-border business and commercial law in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Conference Highlights

The first day, 24 April, the day before the conference was officially commenced, I participated in “Freshfields Breakfast Event: Meet the Arbitrators”, jointly held by the Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and Women in Arbitration. I learned about the continued struggle of women in the field of arbitration. Interesting feedback was invited from the floor, with

suggestions from modifying law firm structures, which were traditionally and predominately male based, to initiating dialogue with managing partners to facilitate easier access for women to business development opportunities and mentors. I also attended the event “Singapore Law for Cross-Border Transaction” organized by International Promotion of Singapore Law.

On April 25, 2019, I and other scholars from Germany/Belgium, Russia, India, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Mongolia were accompanied by Jay LeMoine, Shobna Chandran, and Mahesh Rai from the IPBA Scholarship Committee who picked us from Grand Pacific. Then we went to visit ‘Norton Rose Fullbright’, a renowned law firm and the firm arranged a lunch in honour of the IPBA 2019 scholars. This was a great opportunity to learn about the management system and practice of the international law firm. After visiting the ‘Norton Rose Fullbright’, we came back to hotel and met Yukiko Okazaki of the IPBA Secretariat Raffles City Convention Centre, Room: Bailey. A welcome reception was also arranged for the scholars. It was an unforgettable experience to learn about the hosting protocol and cultures of Singapore through the reception.

On the same day, I attended 2 (two) concurrent sessions. I wish I could attend all but I could not manage myself since the concurrent sessions were running simultaneously. The sessions that I participated were titled “Summary Dismissal Procedures In International Arbitration: Successfully Transplanting Common Law Litigation Concepts Into The International Sphere?” and “Arbitration and Insolvency – Reconciling Private versus Collective Interests”. I found the sessions a great opportunity to know about the approach of different countries towards transplanting common law litigation concepts into the international sphere and also the relation between arbitration and insolvency. These sessions can be a model for IPBA Conference in the future. As a practitioner of Commercial Arbitration and Litigation, I found the knowledge I obtained from the sessions is crucial for my career as a litigation lawyer, as well as an arbitrator. I also attended “Oon & Bazul IPBA After Party @ CHIJMES” at 9:00 pm on the same day.

On April 26, I attended “Arbitrating IP Disputes – Is This The Final Frontier Or Has The Journey Only Just Begun?” and “Enforcement Of Maritime Arbitration Awards, And The Difficulties That May Be Preempted By Keeping An Early Eye Out On The Possible Enforcement Challenges”. Being a developing country and also by given consent to the China’s One Belt, One Road initiative, the risk for Bangladesh of intellectual property dispute and also the admiralty dispute has become higher than ever. As a practicing commercial arbitrator and litigator I am very keen to know about the point of view of the lawyers from different

jurisdictions and current law in their jurisdiction regarding the above mentioned issues. These sessions gave me chance to gather and sharing knowledge about these issues with the delegates across the world. The last session for that day that I attended was “Transparency & Diversity In International Arbitration – Moving Ahead And Striking The Right Balance?” Transparency is the most crucial issue for arbitration process to ensure its success. If the parties have to go to the regular court after conducting arbitration sessions only because they are not sure whether the arbitration process is fair and neutral, then the whole goal and future of arbitration will be faded.

On April 27, I attended “Advantages and Pitfalls of Arb-Med Proceedings – A Mock Case” which was a Mock Arbitration. As a commercial arbitrator I enjoyed the Mock Arbitration very much. I also attended the session titled “Investor-State Arbitration In Crisis – The Arbitration Strikes Back?” which was my last session of the conference. Bangladesh always encourages foreign nationals and foreign entities to invest in Bangladesh. Furthermore, as part of the One Belt, One Road initiative, China will invest in infrastructure sectors of Bangladesh. Hence, it will not be so shocking if the number of investor-state disputes increase in the future in this region. In order to settle this type of dispute quickly and efficiently, arbitration could be the most effective forum. Therefore, the above mentioned session was a great opportunity to know more about current status and future importance of investor-state arbitration.

Finally, I am very much committed to work for IPBA in my country so that IPBA can play a role in legal development in this region and I would like to take this opportunity to thank IPBA for giving me this wonderful experience.