



@COP29

a report by the Brahma Kumaris Youth



Vini Goyal

Brahma Kumaris
Youth rep to UNEP



Ankita Chandak

Contact Point for
Tech-Mech WG
YOUNGO

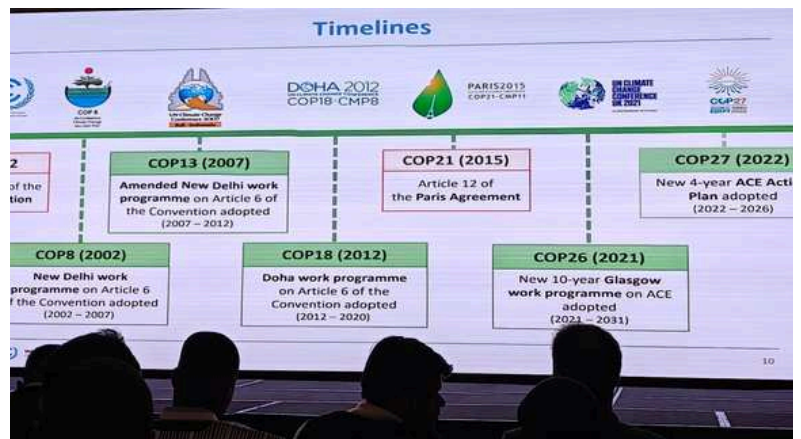
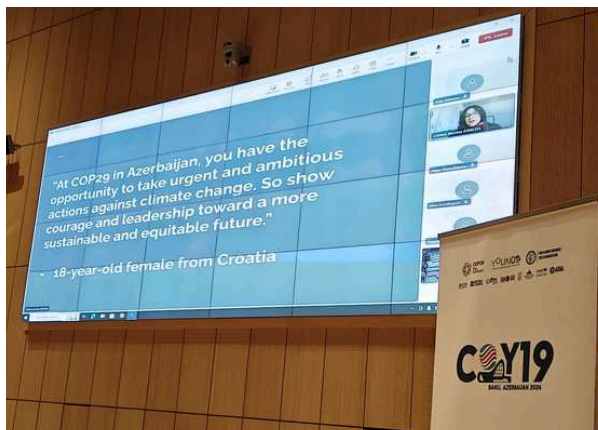


Birajith Baskaran

Brahma Kumaris
Youth rep to
YOUNGO (UNFCCC)



Biru: The 19th Conference of Youth (COY19) in Baku was an incredibly inspiring event for us, myself and Nuray. Youth from over 140 countries came together to share their stories, perspectives, and the unique climate challenges they face. Hearing these heartfelt experiences showed the urgent need for change and the importance of global unity in protecting vulnerable communities most affected by climate change. COY19 provided us with a powerful platform to amplify our voices, exchange ideas, and collaborate on solutions to pressing environmental issues. As BK youth, we actively participated in discussions about critical topics such as climate mitigation, adaptation strategies, and capacity building. Alongside attending workshops and interactive sessions, we connected with new people and gained a deeper understanding of the younger generation’s demands for a sustainable future.



We welcomed our COY connections to a vibrant reception filled with fun activities, meditation, and dinner. The reception was hosted in the villa where we stayed, and the COY participants found the meditative environment incredibly peaceful- they didn’t want to leave! We also had the privilege of spending time with Sister Maureen, who shared a powerful message with the youth: “It is not about the young versus older generation. It is about the Now Generation- we all have to work together.”



Altogether, ten young participants joined us that evening, creating a beautiful space to connect, share ideas, and find renewed inspiration to drive positive environmental action.



Vini sharing Goodwishes card with Ms Inger Anderson (ED of UNEP)



Serving with Good wishes delegates, and volunteers



Alongside attending events and seminars, we also dedicated time to manning the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative exhibition. This gave us a wonderful opportunity to interact with various organizations and members of COP, engaging in meaningful conversations with participants. These exchanges helped us understand each other's purposes while sharing our own, building heart-to-heart connections and spreading positive messages. The positive thought cards played a unique role in sparking reflective and meaningful discussions, adding depth to these interactions and inspiring participants to engage more thoughtfully.

Biru: This experience became one of my most cherished memories of COP. On one occasion, a student visited the stall and picked a card that spoke about moving on to new ways of thinking to find the right solution. She immediately teared up because it was exactly what she had been contemplating that morning. Witnessing the impact of the exhibition on participants' moods was heartwarming, and everyone left with a smile and a sense of hope.

Vini: We were blessed to share knowledge, small gifts, and moments of laughter and joy with COP attendees through the exhibition. Young volunteers were especially interested in meditation and understanding the importance of positive thinking. They came to the exhibition in large numbers. I felt time fly while serving at the exhibition and thoroughly enjoyed connecting with others.

Ankita: The exhibition booth acted like a lighthouse for many, particularly young attendees. I saw young people walk in with curiosity about what climate wisdom and the inner world mean, leaving in deep thought after receiving a thoughtful message and a band. The smile and satisfaction on their faces showed how motivated and touched they were at that moment. Many returned with their friends to get a band! The time spent at the booth for this seva was truly amazing, as it allowed me to share Baba's message with so many souls in such a short span of time.



Biru: On Saturday, 16th November, a special day for the youth, Voices of Young Climate Heroes: We Are the Present and the Future, I had the privilege of participating in a press conference hosted by the Brahma Kumaris and moderated by Shantanu. I represented the Brahma Kumaris, while Vini represented the Faith for Earth Youth Coalition. We were joined by Leo Cerda, an inspiring activist and defender of Indigenous rights, who shared his powerful efforts to protect his community from the harmful impacts of oil and mining activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I shared a thought close to my heart: *“Superheroes in Marvel movies don’t know they are heroes until a situation comes up; climate change is the situation for us to realize that we are superheroes and tap into our powers.”* Vini beautifully emphasized what makes the Earth Youth Council special: *“The community we have built on deep respect and acceptance of each other’s beliefs.”* Leo’s heartfelt words about mutual solidarity struck a chord with everyone: *“We are not here to say who has suffered the most, but for mutual solidarity for all suffering.”* After the press conference, many came over to meet us to share that they found it really interesting and insightful.



At the Action in Food Hub Pavilion, we had the privilege of leading reflective and meditation sessions. As part of the Brahma Kumaris team, Vini facilitated these sessions called “Inner Nutrition,” which provided a beautiful opportunity for participants to connect deeply with themselves and nature.

We began the session with reflections on nature as a teacher, exploring how its qualities and wisdom can inspire us to understand our inner world more deeply. This was followed by a relaxing body scan meditation. One of the highlights of the session was sharing the Food Care Initiative blessing cards, which participants thoroughly enjoyed. It was truly rewarding to see how engaged everyone was and how much they appreciated the experience. Find the cards at www.foodcareinitiatives.org



One of the best memories of COP was connecting with the young volunteers. The Azerbaijani volunteers were always cheerful, kind, and quick to provide any assistance needed. There were a total of 3,000 volunteers working on a shift basis. We tried our best to reach as many as possible, giving them a blessing card with a rubber band and a "10 Ways to Change" poster as a token of appreciation for their hard work. Many were initially shocked by our gesture, as it seemed to be something they hadn't experienced before.



Most of the volunteers, aged between 16 and 20, expressed their interest in meditation and shared how they needed it to cope with stress and certain challenges. This made us realize the importance of serving everyone, regardless of their profession or role, as everyone is trying to contribute in their own way.

Spending a few minutes with each young volunteer individually, we saw how happy and motivated they felt after our interactions.



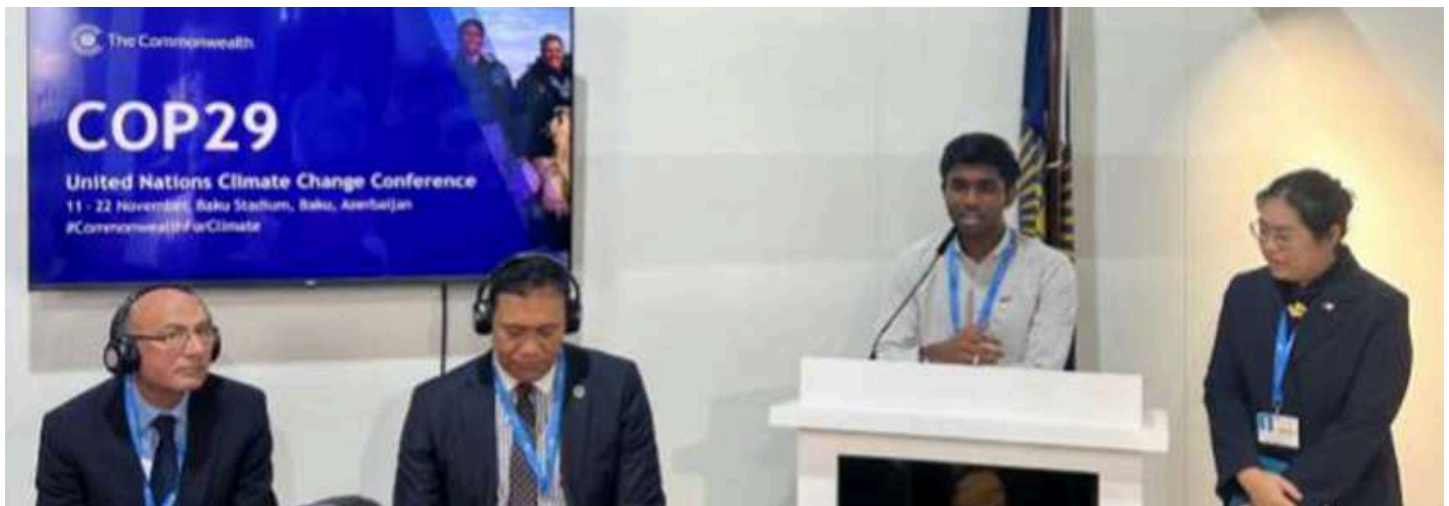
Vini, Vijay and Birajith in conversation at the International Broadcasting Centre, Blue Zone, COP29, Baku



Messages from the Heart: Interview with Vijay Karia about Digital technology and the AI left us thinking. Technology has brought convenience and efficiency. However, they come with hidden environmental costs. In our recent conversation with Vijay Karia, CEO of OptiCloud and winner of the UN's ITU; AI for Good Award at COP29, we explored these challenges alongside the opportunities to align technology with sustainability. This discussion revolved around the environmental impact of our digital habits. Vijay shared powerful insights into the growing carbon footprint of digital waste, highlighting that the number of gadgets we own collectively is now twenty-five times the human population. As youth, we reflected on how spirituality can serve as a compass in the ever-expanding world of technology and social media. Together, we examined ways to encourage mindful consumption and responsible digital behavior. One of the best moments was Vijay's reminder of the lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic: *"COVID has taught us that nature does not need us; it will heal itself."* The conversation served as a call to action, urging us all to reconsider our relationship with technology and to embrace sustainability as a shared responsibility.



Ankita: Being part of YOUNGO, we were able to organise events emphasising the importance of technology for climate action. I spoke on the importance of youth inclusion in technology-related policy negotiations and how the latest technology, especially Artificial Intelligence, can be helpful in our journey toward climate action. Representing the Technology Mechanism working group of the youth constituency, I interacted with experts working on climate finance supporting AI-based ventures in the sustainable development domain during a panel discussion at an event titled Leveraging AI for Accelerating Climate Action. Insights were shared on how sincere work is being done through AI in various domains in remote localities, though on a smaller scale now, and how this needs to be scaled up through increased awareness.



Biru: At the Commonwealth Pavilion, in a side event titled Empowering Faith Communities for Collective Climate Action, I had the honor of being the youth representative facilitating the group discussion. The program featured powerful insights from Iyad Abumoghli, Director of Faith for Earth UNEP, and Ismail Weliang, a COP29 Youth Delegate, both of them highlighted the crucial role of youth in climate action, representing 25% of the global population. Iyad emphasized *the need for a united strategy to address multiple climate crises, advocating a shift from military spending to fostering peace with nature and humanity*. Ismail, on the other hand, highlighted *the unique power of youth as digital natives to amplify voices, share ideas, and bring fresh perspectives, with faith serving as a unifying force*.

During the group discussion, I summarized the key takeaways, that *meaningful engagement requires curiosity, open-mindedness, and a strong connection to self and spirituality*. I shared how these qualities create work rooted in peace and compassion, inspiring collaborative action for a better future. It was an empowering experience to be part of such an impactful session.

One of the highlights was when the Lutheran World Federation invited Vini to participate in an Instagram Live interview.

During the session, Vini shared insights on interfaith youth leadership, climate justice, and the experience of being at COP29. She also spoke about some of the impactful projects led by the Brahma Kumaris, such as yogic farming, which beautifully integrates science and spirituality. Vini highlighted the valuable presence of the Faith Pavilion at COP29, and its role in spreading messages of peace and love. It was inspiring to see how these initiatives resonated with others in the interfaith and climate action community.

Vini: Being part of the UNEP Faith for Earth Youth Coalition has been a wonderful opportunity for the Brahma Kumaris to collaborate with young religious leaders from diverse faith backgrounds and build meaningful friendships in the interfaith space.

“When souls come together for a collective aim, in one place, there is so much power in that”~ Vini.





Vini: I was recently invited by the World Azerbaijani Youth Council, a vibrant and passionate group of young individuals, to share my experiences from COP. The invitation itself was exciting, and the 30-minute podcast session turned into an enriching exchange of thoughts and ideas.

What made this experience truly memorable, were the interactions that followed afterwards. After the podcast, we spent nearly an hour in a heartfelt conversation with the youth. We discussed the power of positive thinking and the role of spirituality in the workplace, concepts they found inspiring and were eager to implement within their team. They felt these ideas could improve their dynamics, relationships, and overall connection as a group.

During our time together, Vini guided them through a meditation commentary. Everyone participated wholeheartedly, and the atmosphere was incredibly peaceful. One of the youth shared afterward that meditating as a team brought a profound sense of trust and unity. She expressed how this practice made her feel genuinely happy and hoped to continue meditating together with her colleagues in the future. Hearing this feedback was deeply touching and **reminded us of the importance of giving time and attention to those we meet.** Initially, our plan was to simply participate in the podcast, but staying longer and engaging in meaningful conversations opened the door to unexpected joy and connection. *This experience reinforced a valuable lesson: staying open to the present moment and embracing spontaneous opportunities can lead to incredible outcomes. Sometimes, the most meaningful connections happen when we least expect them*





Find more reports of COP29

[Here](#) 

Contact us

environment@brahmakumaris.org 

