

MR ABDUL MOOBIN.

1. When did you first come to Britain? (What was the reason, why choose Britain?)

I came in 1963 , After my graduation exam, before getting the result my friend encouraged me to go. During that time I was looking for a job. As they were talking about this country I was inspired , I thought it could be better for me to move UK.

2. Where did you settle and why? (If not Westminster where was it? What made you come to Westminster?)

First I came to Gloucester Terrace, 21 Star Street. The reason I came to there as my friends were residing in a house, they received me from the Airport.

3. Did you come on your own? (If not who were you accompanied by anybody? With relative? With your children?)

I came alone.

4. Did you come to join other members of your village/neighbourhood/ family who had previously migrated to the UK?

There was no family member during that time

UK

1. When coming to the UK what were you thinking? Were you excited (about?) or fearful (of coming to a new country-environment?)

I was excited in a sense that I have been going to a new place, developed country with a high living standard.

2. What were your first impressions of the UK?

My first impression was that I am joining a high society but to see the living standard of our community I was little bit surprised. 20/25 peoples were residing cramped houses or a flat with very limited facilities. Most of the people were illiterate, they working in restaurants. It was hard to continue to talk to them as their speaking language was not very descent.

3. What did you find different (to Bangladesh-people/accommodation/weather/transport/built environment?)- (Any familiarities with Bangladesh?)

Environment was completely different, law and order was very strict, even transport was more regulated. People were on time and people would be lined up to get in, honesty was predominant amongst the people.

4. Did you bring anything from Bangladesh to remind you of back home? (For your children? What items?)

I had some gramophone music records but it is gone. I realized during that time that I have been going to a different country so I will miss this therefore I brought them with me to listen here.

5. What were your expectations of the UK if any? (Expectations from relatives/people who had been to the UK/images/media/films etc)

Expectation was to go for further study, stay here maximum 5 years and finish my study and go back. I never intended to stay here for ever. All of my family members were in Bangladesh, no close family member were here, only friends. I admitted to a college to do the charter accountancy but my visa was not a student visa, it was a voucher so that I can work here as well. That time I thought if I obtain student visa I may be restricted to work thus why I obtained a voucher.

Westminster

1. How did you find Westminster at the time? What was it like?

It was very nice, everything was clean and tidy

2. Were there other Bengalis settled? Asians, Blacks, other non-Bengalis (their numbers, single men, women, children, families?)

There were some in Gower street, Drumon street etc.

3. Did you know English? (Level-fluent, to get by, none?)

English was not a problem, only thing was fluency of spoken English or local dialogues. Only trouble was that my own country people were very poor in language and about the system of this country so I could not get any help from them so I have to do by myself.

Language barriers, cultural differences and religious obligations

1. Were your neighbours helpful? (Who else?)

English neighbours kept their distance and this not because of racial biasness or for any other things but for cultural and language difference. But my Bengali community and people always came to me with their letters and other things to get help. I always read their letters for them and wrote replies to their family members as they were not able to read or write Bengali.

- 2. What clothes did you wear (for women was sari a problem-how was it viewed by English people?) How did you cope in cold weather coming from a hot country?**

I always wore suits and over coats. just as like as the western way of life

- 3. Did you face any difficulties (What were they? How did you overcome?)**

Only difficulties I faced was on advice on where to go and seek for a job.

If Muslim

- 4. Was halal food easily available? No – What did you eat?**

There was a Halal shop in Drumond street. I used to get halal chicken or meat.

- 5. Did you find any difficulty in practicing your religion? Did you have to make compromises? How do you feel about that?**

I used to practice in Bangladesh but it was difficult to do here even in own accommodation was so congested. There no Bathroom either.

- 6. What was Eid day like when you first came here, and has it changed now?**

First Eid I did in Regents park mosque. I can't remember if I did any Eid before that.

- 7. Do you observe Ramadan? Does your daily life change or do you do things differently during the month? – Pray more or abstain from anything you do usually?**

No during that time I did not fast. After arrival of my wife in this country I start to observe Ramadan.

Experiences of service providers in integrating the Bengali community

- 1. Were you able to go to any agency for help? (From Whom? - CAB, Council, GP, library etc.)**

I only had a problem with accommodation so I went to the housing association.

- 2. What kind of support did you receive from the mainstream society and local service providers and your own community? (ask to be specific with examples)**

Normally I did not have many problems but whenever I asked for something they kindly provided me with help.

- 3. How did you spend your spare time? (TV, radio, films, newspapers, hobby, visiting friends-who, relatives-where, park, museum, places of interest?)**

Mostly reading newspaper and watching television.

- 4. Did you go to cultural or faith events? (Where & Name the events)**

That time I was not very much pious but I attended in Bangladesh conference or concert whenever I heard of them.

Children

**1. If you didn't come with children when & where did you have your first child?
(Home, hospital? What was it like in hospital? Nurses? Doctors?)**

First child born in St Mary Hospital, my wife mostly dealt with doctors and nurses as I have to go to work. But Doctors and nurses were fine. When she gave birth I was not beside her, I saw my child in the evening but doctor and nurses were very helpful.

2. What was their first crèche/school like? For yourself, your child? How were the teachers? i

I can't recall but probably I did. Teachers and staff were very helpful. There were no Bengali children in the school so I never met any Bengali parents.

3. Did you get any support provided from the local community, schools, health centres, and community organisations? (If yes what kind of support did you receive?)

I never seek any support from anyone.

4. Who did your child play with? Who were his/her friends? Other Bengali kids or mixed?

They mixed with their classmate and mixed children. I never advised them what type of children they should play as long as they behave well should be fine.

5. What were your greatest fears (if any) in allowing your children to be integrated within the mainstream society? (your thoughts/feelings) What factors predicted their successful integration? (What would have made you proud?)

Safety was the main concern. They can go to school carefully and can return safely. I never faced any racial problem.

6. Would you allow your children to marry outside your culture?

I never realised that my child would marry someone outside of my culture. I was a little worried that what would be happen to them but we never discourage them for anything. We tried to teach them about our religion and try educated them about our Muslim culture.

7. Would you allow your children to marry outside your faith?

It is natural, though we thought them about our faith instead of that they have been mixing with people of the other faiths, so how I can stop them. But we tried to prevent them.

- 1. What struggles and obstacles did you face in adapting your life in raising your new British, born child/children?**

It was a big concern; you don't know what would be happen, it was a worry.

- 2. What role did you play to educate and raise your child/children between two cultures (British & Bengali)?**

Educate them, kept them away from British way of life

- 3. Did you do anything specific (i.e. take them to Bengali/religious class/school/cultural events/Christmas parties/street parties/birthday parties/White friend parties)**

We did not make any compulsion, we leave it open for them. We educated them about our faith and culture and it is up to them what to do.

- 4. How has your child/children turned out to be? (as expected/not expected)**

Yes, they fulfill my expectation and I am very happy.

Future

- 1. What is Westminster like today compared to when you first came in ...? (biggest changes you have seen, how has it changed)?**

Not all of life I was in Westminster, but I see that there are lots of changes in terms of housing, transport and many other things has been developed.

- 2. How British are they? (How integrated are they? How British do they feel? Do they have many White friends?)**

They are living like British people; they have been working with British society.

- 3. How Bengali are they? (how much are they in touch with the Bengali community/Bangladesh/Bengali language?)**

I think 40% Bengali and 60% British

- 4. How religious are they? (devout/practicing/political/non practicing but culturally Muslim/secular/humanist/non-believing)**

This is their choice; I never discourage or encourage them.

- 5. How do you see their future? Would you be happy or disappointed?,**

I am quite happy the way they have been going on. Yes 99% they have been fulfilled