

# WHERE ARE THE BANGLADESHIS IN BRITISH SOCIETY?

**CONFERENCE 2016 – [www.bricklanecircle.org](http://www.bricklanecircle.org)**

The Annual Conference, organised by Brick Lane Circle, is designed to help improve our understanding of Bangladesh, the experiences of Bangladeshis around the world and the complexities and challenges faced by the country and its people, wherever they live.



Sixth Annual Conference on the Story of Bangladesh & Bangladeshi People, at Home and in the Diaspora, Saturday 7 May 2016, 11am-9pm, Rich Mix Centre, 35-47 Bethnal Green Rd, London E1 6LA

**11.00AM – REGISTRATION / TEA / COFFEE AND INTRODUCTION**

**11.30AM - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN - Dr Nazia Khanum and Dr David Cheesman**

*Dr Nazia Khanum*, OBE, DL (Deputy Lieutenant of Bedfordshire) is founder Director of Equality in Diversity - an independent management, research and training consultancy; and Chair of United Nations Association - Luton. She has a PhD in History (SOAS) and has published research reports and articles in a wide range of subjects. *Dr David*

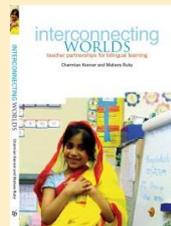
*Cheesman* has a PhD from SOAS, and has published academic articles and a book on the economic and social history of Sindh in Pakistan, as well as papers about decolonisation in Africa, Muslims in the UK, and Islam and secularism in Britain and France. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and of the Royal Statistical Society.

**Abstract:** Bangladeshis have been living in Britain since the eighteenth century, but they did not settle on a significant scale until after World War II. They are now one of the largest and most well established minority ethnic communities. Through the catering trade, they have changed British eating habits, making curry as British as fish and chips. Despite their success they remain one of the poorest and most deprived communities in terms of health, living conditions and employment. This paper investigates three areas: female engagement in the economy; over dependence on catering and education.

**12.45PM - LUNCH BREAK**

**1.15PM - FAMILY JIGSAWS: ROLE OF MOTHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS IN SHAPING CHILDREN'S LEARNER IDENTITIES IN 3 GENERATIONAL BANGLADESHI FAMILIES IN LONDON - Dr Mahera Ruby**

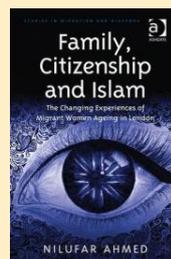
*Dr. Mahera Ruby* has been a Research Fellow and researcher at Goldsmiths, University of London, where she co-directed the ESRC-funded research project on 'Becoming literate through faith: language and literacy learning in the lives of new Londoners'. Her PhD focused on intergenerational learning taking place in three generations of families whose origins are in Bangladesh. Mahera has co-authored, 'Interconnecting Worlds: Teacher partnerships for bilingual learning', her first book, with Dr Charmain Kenner, which has received many positive reviews.



**Abstract:** Using an ethnographic approach, Mahera explores how Bangladeshi children negotiate meaning with their mothers and grandmothers as they complete jigsaw puzzles. She will demonstrate how the children consciously adapt their learning styles according to the adult they are interacting with and the context in which the learning experiences take place as they try to enter the mainstream British society. This work illustrates the contribution of the grandmothers and mothers in using their funds of knowledge in facilitating the children's education during the intergenerational interactions.

**2.25PM - OLDER WOMEN AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNITY - Dr Nilufar Ahmed**

*Dr Nilufer Ahmed* is Senior Research Officer at Swansea University, Wales. She has previously worked extensively in London with the Bangladeshi community both as an academic and community worker. She is the author of 'Family, Citizenship and Islam: The Changing Experiences of Migrant Women Ageing in London'.



**Abstract:** this paper will discuss the important but often overlooked role of first generation Bangladeshi women in the construction of a British-Bangladeshi identity in the UK. Viewed from outside the community as 'hidden' and obfuscated by cultural traditions and patriarchal regimes, older Bangladeshi women are considered to have little or no agency. This paper will discuss the many ways in which first generation women

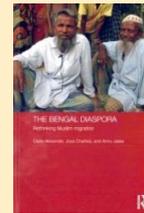
exercise autonomy and express fluid identifications, and their integral role in the formation of cohesive societies.

**3.35PM - TEA / COFFEE BREAK**

**3.45PM - BEYOND BANGLATOWN: CHANGES AND CHALLENGES TO THE BANGLADESHI RESTAURANT TRADE IN BRITAIN - Professor Claire Alexander**

*Professor Claire Alexander* is professor of sociology at the University of Manchester. She is co-author of 'The Bengal Diaspora: Rethinking Muslim Migration' (Routledge 2016).

**Abstract:** drawing on interviews conducted in 2007-2008, this paper discusses the central role of the restaurant trade in the Bengal diaspora, and explores some of the recent changes and challenges confronting Bangladeshi restaurant owners and workers.



**5.00PM - TEA / COFFEE BREAK**

**5.15PM - LEARNING FROM THE PAST AND GOING FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE – a panel discussion**  
**Chairperson: Dr Sultana Choudhry** (specialises in strategy, policy, research, teaching)

**PANEL MEMBERS:**

**Abdal Ullah** (founder of British Bangladeshi Power & Inspiration)

**Halima Khanom** (heritage professional)

**Tharik Hussain** (travel writer, journalist, broadcaster, photographer)

**Dr Halima Begum** (international development professional)

**Dr Sanawar Choudhury** (businessman)

**7.00PM – ENTERTAINMENT, MUSIC AND STANDUP COMEDY SHOW - Details TBC**

**ALL WELCOME! FREE ENTRY!**

For more details or to book a place please contact by phone 07914119282 or email [bricklanecircle@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bricklanecircle@yahoo.co.uk)

