

Spinning Lifestyles – Mr. Noor

Can you please tell me your name?

My name is Mr Noor. I came to this country in 1967. My father brought me from India.

Your father?

Yes. So I have a good life here and I know a lot of the history of my father. I was very interested in those stories. He came to the UK in 1933 and he was settled in 1956.

Why did your father come to the UK?

He used to work on a British ship, at the time the British Empire existed. So I heard a lot of stories about my father in the UK and what happened in the past. This is very interesting for me.

I was in the UK and went for about 6 months ??? After the six months began to work for the garment trade.

What did you do in the garment trade?

I worked hard there. I used to press and steam and a lot of people worked there.

Was it hard?

It was hard. I had to work hard because I have a memory in my mind of a brother abroad and I started to look after them. I have to think about the parents and family as well as I had been brought up in Bangladeshi culture. So I work hard. So I sent my money back.

So you were sending your money back to Bangladesh?

Yes! Now I don't have to send money back as my two brothers there are getting bigger. I brought my brothers and mother here. I have three children born in this country, so I am very interested to continue to live here as I see a good life here. There are social services who can help with any problem. I worked for Bangladeshi men's groups. I enjoyed my life so much. Sometimes we can help others in the community, such as young people. I involve myself in the community and I enjoy it.

So your first job was working in the garment industry?

Yes.

And how old were you when you came to this country?

11 years.

And was your father still a seaman?

My father was settled in 1956 here as a student. And he was working in an old factory.

Which factory?

Old factory I don't remember the name, but I have the story. If people join the community they can become something.

Do you think the younger generation is very different from your generation of Bangladeshi's?

Yes I think they are becoming quite different now, because the younger generation aren't like before. Many generations are involved with drugs and they cannot think for themselves. So I love to work with those generations.

When you came over at 11 was there a big difference from the Bengali community from then till now?

Quite a lot of difference. At that time there were not many Bengali women in the country. It was a nice life. But then came the National Front.

Do you remember the National Front?

Yes I remember the National Front.

Do you remember the marches down...?

I don't like what they called us at the time..., Paki. National Front doesn't like people, many English people were like that. Now in the present there is a good life for everyone.

So was it really hard, was it one of the hardest periods during the National Front and BNP?

It was hard. When you were walking alone you had to be careful because 6, 8 or 10 boys would beat you up and you would not know why. Once the National Front was out you had to look out, watch out behind.

How long were you working in the garment factory for?

For quite a few years, about 8 years.

And what did you do after that?

After that I developed my own business. I had a market stall at Brick Lane. And then I give up. I have 3 children, 1 daughter and two boys. They have their good life here.

After your children you ran your own business?

Yes I ran it a few years my business.

What did you do?

I sold leather garments.

And where was that?

It was 175 Brick Lane and 160 Bethnal Green Road before that.

What was it like when you were running your business what was Brick Lane like because it has changed so much now?

If you did any kind of work at that time people would swear at you. Now it's finished with all that. Good has come from wrong. It was hard then.

Was it long hours?

It was a hard life. There weren't computer systems like today. I lived here, and sometimes I went abroad for a holiday for 2-3 weeks. But I live here and love to live here.

Do you go back to Bangladesh at all?

Yes I go, but I wish to remain here. My children don't like to stay there in Bangladesh. Their life is here, because they were born here.

If you don't go back for a long time it is difficult.

Thank you very much Mr. Noor, that was great.