

Bengalis in London's East End

Settlements in the 1950s

Among the settlers who arrived in the East End in the 1950s was Syed Abdul Kadir, who now lives in Poplar. He served in the Pakistan Navy from 1950 for twenty two years before retiring as a marine engineer in 1972. He came to the UK in 1953 to attend the Queen's coronation at Westminster Abbey as guard of honour of the Pakistan Naval ship, PNS Zulfiquar. During Pakistan's war with India in 1965 he was in active service. During Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971 he escaped West Pakistan to fight with Bengali freedom fighters.

Sea Captain Shiv Banerjee came to the UK in 1967, arriving at Tilbury Docks, as a cadet with the India Steamship Company. He then sailed around different parts of the world as an Officer in the Merchant Navy. In 1975 he studied at the School of Navigation which is now the London Metropolitan University site at Tower Gateway. The pictures also show his Master's Certificate and Seaman's Identity Card part of which is in Bengali. In the early days he lived at Beacon House, Dock Street – then, a seaman's hostel.

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