

Bengalis in London's East End

Bengali politics in London's East End

The earliest Bengali political activism in London's East End can be traced to the first Bengali settlers - the seafarers (lascars) recruited in British India to work for the East India Company. The needs of this early community were at least partially met by the earliest charitable organisations such as the Society for the Protection of Asian Sailors in 1857.

The more recent history of the Bengali community and political activism in London's East End is very much a story of the community taking matters into its own hands.

This started with localised welfare politics, and was later characterised by support for Bangladesh's national independence movement. The second generation of Bengali community activists moved into anti-racist politics, campaigning round community issues such as housing and education, political mobilisation in mainstream politics and the global politics of the anti-war movement.

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