

Bangladesh and Scotland – ties of friendship

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Few Bangladeshi know the year in which the Scots gave up their independence to England (1707) but every Bangladeshi is well aware of the fact that there exists a country called Scotland. Indeed, it is surprising how many pupils at schools in Bangladesh are still familiar with the name 'Robert the Bruce' – the champion of the Scots- because of his unique characteristic feature – perseverance.

Bangladesh is always very keen to maintain ties of friendship with Scotland. The Scots have the blood of many people coursing through their veins. Even before history was written, tribes were coming in from Indian subcontinent. In the early 60's many people from Bangladesh came to Scotland, which brought them more in close contact with the Scottish. Many Bangladeshi were heading for the jute-processing city of Dundee. Never mind, the country now feels comfortable because of its' multicultural character and racial harmony.

Since Independence in December 1971, the relationship between Bangladesh and Scotland has grown stronger. Bangladeshi community is now very active and very thriving in Scotland. In Scottish Universities, there are Bangladeshi students, researchers, scholars, and professionals. Many have already contributed to the Scottish society through intellectual stimulation and community involvement while others are writing and publishing books, research articles on various community issues in Scotland and Bangladesh. Besides, in towns and villages everywhere in Scotland, there are Bangladeshi restaurants. There are around 30,000 Scots of Bangladeshi origin in Scotland today. It is no secret how pride they feel as Bangladeshi born United Kingdom citizens when working and studying in a beautiful part of Britain which has one of the romantic settings in the world. Like Scottish, they are also proud to see that the Scots have maintained their own legal and educational systems, which are widely considered superior to those in England, and they still print their own design of bank notes. The Bangladeshi community here in Scotland regard contribution to enlighten Scotland as an important element to the multicultural society.

In celebration to the national and other days in Bangladesh, every year the Scots of Bangladeshi origin and Bangladeshi born UK citizens and residents in Scotland organise colourful ceremonies to recall the few drops of Bangladeshi blood they have lurking in their veins. They organise seminars, conferences, social events to learn lessons from Scottish experience, which is separable as the Scots themselves, have a sense of identification, of different norms and societal values, and of their own history and traditions unparalleled in Great Britain. Despite the fact that Bangladesh paid a high price for its' independence, it is still our country and we could make a big difference to the people of Bangladesh by taking lessons form Scottish society.