On the other hand, average earning for Pakistani and Bangladeshi men is £150 per week, which is less than that of white men as well as other ethnic minorities, and unemployment is almost three times greater. The figures for women are equally discouraging. Just 11% of Pakistani women are in full-time employment, far higher than the 4% of Bangladeshi women who work. Encouragingly, the figure among Muslim women from an Indian background is far higher at 24%, implying that ethnic barriers may be more profound than religious ones. The Bangladeshi-British experience high levels of social isolation, and are reluctant to promote interaction with other communities for long.





If looked at broadly, the Indian profile appears as white-collar, suburbanized, semi-detached and owner-occupier, the Pakistani profile as blue-collar, inner-city and owner-occupier in terraced housing, and the Bangladeshi profile is blue-collar and council-housed in inner-city terraces and flats.

In Britain, no ethnic minority occupies anything like this under-caste position. The Bangladeshis come closest. They are mostly very poor, and they live in tight-knit neighbourhoods, such as Spitalfields in East London. But they are very few in number, and some, at least, of their exclusion appears to be self-chosen.

The first, and even the second, generation of the community is still stuck with Bangladeshi politics rather than mainstream British politics, as many pro-independence personalities settled in UK during the 60s as well as through political asylum in the mid-seventies. As a result of this, as well as due to lack of highly-qualified personalities or a lack of their interest in British politics, they did not find time to find their place in British politics and parliament, unlike the British-Indian and British-Pakistani community.

Nowadays in Britain, the new generations of migrant families are beginning to take control of their own destinies. As Britain's once-migrant families move on into the second, third and, soon, fourth generation, it becomes more and more clear that they are not just at the receiving end. Through their own actions -- drawing on their own social networks, economic enterprise and family backgrounds -- they have taken charge of their lives.

Though the economic backbone of the Bangladeshi community is still restaurant or catering business, some of the Bangladeshi-British have gone up to the extent of being nationally honoured in Britain. Currently, the second and third generations are graduating and going into white-collar jobs, and are also taking interest in asserting their position in British administration, politics and business institutions. Though their numbers are still very limited, the trend is upward and encouraging. In 2006, a large number of Bangladeshi students achieved tremendous success in O level and A level examinations and most of them were admitted into renowned universities in UK.

Bangladeshis coming out from curry business

It is apparent that Bangladeshis living in the United Kingdom are slowly breaking the cycle of their ancestral restaurant business and getting into the country's mainstream professions, and even politics. Beginning from the posts of judges, the British-Bangladeshis, especially the third and fourth generation ones, are now becoming barristers, doctors, engineers, information technologists, management specialists and businessmen.

Let's take the example of young Barrister Akhlaq Chowdhury, son of Azizur Rahman, who migrated to London in 1961 from Karimganj in Sylhet. Sitting in his chamber in London, Chowdhury said that it was very easy for the British-Bangladeshis to enter the restaurant business, but they are now slowly coming out of the cycle and becoming experts on engineering, medicine, law and many more higher professions. He confessed that there are obstacles from within the community, and that the Bangladeshi community gives no direction to the younger generation to go for higher education

They are also holding the posts of economists. One of them, Citigroup's