

# SHARED ROOTS IN FAITH

Interview by Hannah Utting

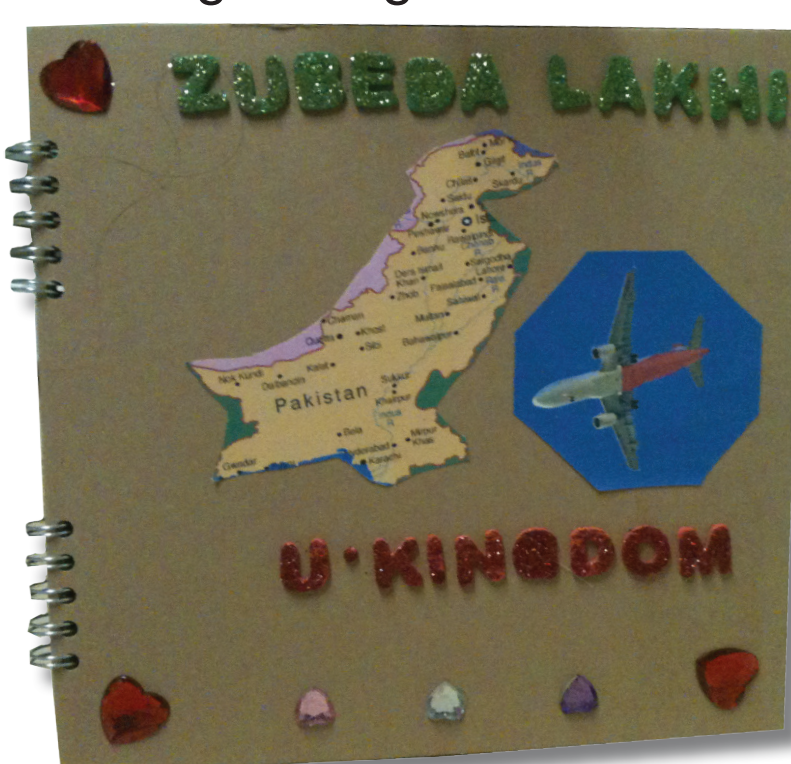
## Zubeda, born in Pakistan, living in East London

**Zubeda moved from living with her family in Karachi, Pakistan to live with her new Husband in Hackney, East London in 1997. She married an Indian man**

**who had moved to Britain in the 1960's, so spent most of his life in Britain. Many Pakistani women living in the UK also immigrated for marriage; the largest wave came in the 1960's and 1970's.**

### Arriving in the UK

By the time Zubeda arrived in the UK there had already been nearly four decades of significant and growing Asian community in Britain. The East London mosque had opened the doors of their new building in 1985, and this provided Zubeda and other Muslim women in the locality with a place to worship. The existing South Asian diaspora had not only established a faith centre, but also set up businesses such as restaurants and food shops which allowed them to consume culturally familiar food as well as utilise their cultural heritage for business. As well as this, organisations such as the Asian Women's Centre had been established to facilitate language learning in the UK. Whilst there are ongoing developments of faith and cultural organisations, Zubeda, when she arrived in the 1990's joined a community that had established their roots in East London.



Scrapbook made by Zubeda about her arrival in the UK, from Pakistan.



Zubeda is an excellent hostess.

their children left them and they had nothing so when they came [to the centre] we used to fill out forms for them to sort out their housing benefits and all sorts of things. There was an exercise class that we used to go to and there was an English class going on. But then the founder, Zura Zubedi, she became ill and she just retired. After that a lady came but she couldn't get the funding and it shut three years ago and people are very sad about it. ... I would love if the government would encourage and open any centre in hackney, for women to go there."

"Twenty-five years ago a women called Zura Zuberi founded the Asian women's centre and she really helped people, the women were very very happy to go there. It was multicultural association only no any particular Asians but Bengali, any woman could go there and they used to. I when I went there, I really felt sorry that I found women, who had been living in England for forty years and they could not speak English when they went out. When their husbands passed away they went nowhere,



Zubeda cooking tastes from Pakistan.

"My community have contributed to East London in building the mosque. My own brother-in-law he was a very active worker in the mosque, he passed away just few months ago. He used to register marriages and others volunteer a lot to run the mosque. Besides this, many Asian ladies like I said they opened up and worked hard to build the Asian Women's Centre. Also many women like myself they try to teach women who are not educated."



Zubeda at home in East London.

Hackney  
Central