

Remembering the 1970s

Akikur Rahman



Mr. Rahman was a young political activist in the late 1970s. He was one of the organisers of the Black Solidarity Day in reprisal to the murder of Altab Ali - one of the biggest demonstrations in East London where 7,000 people marched from Whitechapel to 10 Downing Street. At the time of the interview Mr. Rahman was a Liberal Democrat Party's councillor for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

..... About 100 white boys attacked us, straightway, and we are to fight it out to save ourselves. On that day, the police came and just arrested me straightway.... So they arrested me and took me to the Police station. And I was there, the next day I was bailed out; and I had to go to the court, and for six months they banned me from Brick Lane; I could not go to Brick Lane, in the weekend.

..... There was an Anti-Nazi League. They were quite helpful. Each political party have their own agenda. So I think even though Tower Hamlets was running by the Labour Party, and in the beginning we couldn't get even one councillor. So obviously, forget about the Tories. Liberal existed on that time here in our area and in Tower Hamlets. So I won't say I would get help from any political party, but this one thing I have learned in 78, if we don't help ourselves nobody will help us. So it's most important that the community help themselves, political parties have their own agenda, have their own way of work.