

In a Foreign Office film launched today, former Pakistani cricketer and current spin bowling coach for the England Cricket Team Mushtaq Ahmed discusses why he has enjoyed living and working in the UK.



The film is one of the FCO's 'See Britain through my eyes' series featuring individuals from at home and abroad talking about their experiences of modern Britain in the run up to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Mushtaq Ahmed's film is being released to coincide with the England cricket team's bid for glory at the Cricket World Cup taking place in South Asia.

As a Pakistani who has spent considerable time in the UK as a cricketer and now coach, Mushtaq welcomes the open-mindedness and mutual respect that exists amongst the British public. This allows him to practice his faith in the UK and he believes it shouldn't be taken for granted. He says, "Nobody is disrespecting each other's culture or religion here; the most important thing in Britain is people let you do what you want to do."

In the film Mushtaq reminisces about his admiration for English cricket and his dreams of playing at historic venues such as Lords as a young boy in Pakistan. He reflects on his time playing for Somerset and the camaraderie and respect between the players. When travelling to games his team mates insisted on working comfort breaks at motorway service stations to accommodate his prayer times. Mushtaq uses his status as a widely recognised sporting figure to engage with Muslims in both the UK and Pakistan. In the film, he travels to South London to speak to young Muslims. He gives people a firsthand account of the reality of life as a Muslim in the UK and encourages interfaith dialogue.

Mushtaq was a prolific bowler for Pakistan in the nineties, known for his hard-to-pick googly. He also enjoyed a successful county cricket career in England that included spells at Somerset, Surrey and Sussex. His services to both Pakistani and English cricket are widely respected throughout the cricket world, resulting in him being offered the role of spin bowling coach for the England cricket team in 2009. He was instrumental in Sussex's achievements between 2002-2008. He became the leading county wicket taker for four seasons in a row and won The Professional Cricketers Association player of the year award in 2003.

See Britain

The **See Britain** campaign showcases the best of modern Britain; recognising the increased international interest there is in the UK as the host country of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The FCO has produced 27 short films featuring compelling first person accounts from individuals who have a story to tell about their connection with the UK that capture the spirit of modern Britain.

The other videos feature, among others, athletes, heart surgeons, and musicians from around the world who have made the UK their home, their place of work or have forged other links with the country. The videos will be shown widely across the world, to encourage people to take a fresh look at Britain.

From a Foreign Office press release