

Biography: Ajmal Masroor is an Imam, fundraiser, broadcaster and Relationship Counsellor. In 2014 he was recognised in the Muslim 500 as one of the most influential Muslims in the world today.

He is the co-founder of the Barefoot Institute for Muslim relationships, providing marriage counselling and relationship training. He has authored numerous articles on marriage and relationships for magazine and newspapers including authored a book called "10 Things You Should Know Marriage".

He has dedicated time and skills to fundraise for local and international charities, mosques, schools and education institutions for the last 25 years. He has fundraised for emergency appeals after natural disasters and man-made conflicts at events and on live TV and Radio appeals. He has helped raised over 100million pounds in the last 25 years for humanitarian and educational causes. He is a humanitarian in words and action.

He has worked as the director of Communities in Action, which specialises in community development and cohesion work as well as capacity building programmes. He has authored several handbooks for the NHS, Department of Health, Local councils on diversity and community cohesion including "the Mark of Faith" published by the Southwark Council, "Muslims in Britain" by the Foreign and Commonwealth office and "Ramadan Health Guide" by the Department of Health. He has also worked as a cultural relations consultant for the British Council and CEJI (Jewish Muslim initiative on diversity training). He wrote several papers for their internal and external diversity training policies and manuals.

He has been teaching young Muslims from across Europe a unique programme for the last ten years called "learning to be a peacemaker". He has published a training manual called "Learning to be a Peacemaker". In his 2018 training course held in Caux, Switzerland, young Muslims from Sweden, Finland, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, United Kingdom, France, Spain and Italy attended. He has successfully trained over 500 young Muslims over the last five years to become peacemakers in Europe.

He is regularly invited to speak on issues on integration, Islam in the modern world, Muslim community, and topics that relate to social and political issues. He is actively involved with local and international charities and takes a leading role in fundraising for many of them. In the last twenty years he has raised over 30million pounds for the various humanitarian causes around the world.

He is a broadcast journalist regularly writing for the Guardian on line, the Evening Standard and Huffington Post. He has been a specialist consultant on programmes about Islam and Muslims for the Channel 4, BBC, ITV and CNN. He is often called upon by the media to give commentary and response to current affairs and social issues related to the Muslim community. He also had his own weekly TV programmes on the Islam Channel and Channel S covering socio-political issues.

He has devoted all of his working life in bringing communities together and building bridges. He has been a robust champion of peace and harmony and vehement opponent of hate crime in all its forms. He has become known as the voice of reason for Islam in Britain and actively challenges extremism.

Post the murder of drummer Lee Rigby The Economist magazine described him in the following words:

"the bonne parole came from Ajmal Masroor a telegenic imam-cum-broadcaster-cum-budding politician of Bangladeshi origin. "If you dislike Britain so much...why don't you just hand your passport over and leave? And if you dislike the policies of the government...participate in the electoral process, stand for election," he rhetorically told the soldier's attacker, in an interview with Sky TV which won big approval ratings on social media. At a time when ugly and vindictive threats were starting to hurtle through cyber-space, this was just the sort of message that many citizens wanted to hear...from a Muslim.

Who is Mr Masroor? Like many of London's Muslims, he has family roots in the Sylhet region of Bangladesh. For somebody who grew up in a roughish part of London, he is strikingly articulate and well-spoken. Now aged 42, he has a story that many second-generation Muslims can relate to; when

he was 19, his father took him to Bangladesh and tried to marry him off to a selected bride; he refused, causing a family rift. His personal experiences have made him into an articulate opponent of forced marriage. He and his (freely chosen) wife Henrietta, a Hungarian-born convert to Islam, offer their services as relationship counsellors.”

He has received two death threats from the Somali terrorist group Al-Shabab and DASESH from Syrian and Iraq for his robust stance against extremism and uncompromising views against terrorism. He says that his mission is to inform, inspire and influence people of all background towards positive change, harmonious co-existence and no threat would deter him from his work.

He comes from a religiously conservative and but a humble family. His father came to the UK as a manual worker working in the cotton mills in the 50s. He grew up in the early 70s in East End of London facing extreme racism and prejudice. However, these experiences have made him stronger person committed to equality and fairness for all people.

As an Imam he has been leading Friday prayers in various London Mosques for the last twenty five years.”