



# TALKING CITY MATTERS & RAMADAN WITH MOHAMMED ULLAH

Ahead of today's game, we sat down with City Matters' BAME Representative, Mohammed Ullah, to talk about his role at the Club's official fan network and to find out more about the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

**Firstly, when did you start supporting Manchester City and who was your first footballing hero?**

I have always been a cricket fanatic, but my beloved uncle Tariq is a lifelong Blue. I grew up not far from Maine Road. I started getting really into football during the Keegan years. Footballing-wise I'm striker obsessed (Pep not having one causes me stress) so Goater, Quinn etc are all legends and recently I was a huge Negredo fan. But there's one man who earns my undivided love amongst them all - Sergio Kun Agueró! MY GUY. My footballing hero and a total legend.

**Moving on to City Matters. What is your role at our official fan network?**

I am the BAME (Black Asian or Mixed Heritage) representative for City Matters. I have been doing it for just over a year and I love it. In a nutshell, the role is to raise issues in meetings and highlight things to the club that affect BAME fans. However, on a wider scale, I also give input on issues that affect all fans as most issues we face are generic.

**How have you helped the Club to identify ways to be more inclusive to its diverse fanbase?**

As a Muslim fan, it is always important that I know I was getting food that is halal (halal



means lawful in Islam) or at least vegetarian. One of the issues when coming to the stadium was having clear signage for food and an accessible place to pray. Working with the Club's new Head of EDI has been a breath of fresh air as we have talked about a range of initiatives including staff training, involving more diverse communities into the world of football, looking at the hate crime incident reporting procedures and so much more.

**We understand you are once again taking part in Ramadan this year. Please can you tell us about how it is going and what this entails for our supporters who may not know much about the celebration?**

It's been a beautiful start to the month - the first day of Ramadan was Saturday, April 2 this year. It is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, a time when Muslims fast (abstain from eating or drinking) and refrain from their desires during daylight hours. It completely changes your routine for the month but we carry on

our day to day lives otherwise normally. We have a few Muslim players in this match for both sides as well and they may well be fasting.

**Why is it important for you/the Muslim community to celebrate Ramadan?**

Ramadan is a blessed/holy month in the Islamic calendar and is a month of spiritual development and introspection. Muslims will increase their prayers and recitation of the Holy Quran. We do so because God commanded us to and he tells us "O you who believe. Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may learn God-consciousness and self-restraint (taqwa)" [Q2:183]. It's a time to give up bad habits and come out a better person. We end the month with a very important festival, Eid Al Fitr, where we celebrate the end of the holy month with family and friends. I recommend all our none Muslim fans to try it one day and attend a local communal iftar.