

BANGLADESH STUDIES

Paper 0449/01

History and Culture of Bangladesh

General Comments

Candidates seemed to be well prepared for the examination. This examination requires candidates to select information to answer short answer questions, to demonstrate sound and relevant factual knowledge and to construct historical narratives and historical explanations. They are asked to consider the relative importance or impact of the factors featuring in each of the narratives. Many candidates did this very well, using strong, appropriate, supported information to keep their answers relevant to the question. More wrote answers with appropriate factual knowledge and made some attempt to use it to develop answers, but could have improved their work by keeping to the point or by avoiding lengthy descriptions. Many candidates were well prepared for one or two questions and showed their ability to apply their knowledge to their answers. Some candidates found it more challenging to demonstrate depth of knowledge or keep to the focus of question. An area for development is to focus on the historical explanations which are required for the second part of each of narrative questions. There were some candidates who described the given factor, without addressing the question.

Candidates overall were found to have an appropriate depth of knowledge available and some ability to select appropriate information. However, candidates should be advised to select questions to which they are able to answer all parts, as some candidates found the second or third parts of some of the questions more challenging.

To score well on Part **(a)** and **(b)(i)** questions candidates need to demonstrate detailed knowledge of the factors that are asked for, specific to the topic or dates given. They should focus on the topic of the question, avoiding detail that does not fit into the questions.

To score well on the Part **(b)(ii)** and **(c)** questions candidates need to address their knowledge to answer the questions. These are questions asking 'Explain the reasons...' or 'Explain the impact...' or 'Explain why...' and answers should lead to these questions being answered.

There were very few rubric errors.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was the compulsory question on the paper and was attempted by all candidates. Most candidates demonstrated sound knowledge in their Part **(a)** answers. There were many very strong answers which gave detailed information about Mir Mosharraf Hossain. However, fewer candidates were able to consider the impact of his work as asked for in Part **(b)(ii)**, more often repeating elements from Part **(b)(i)**'s answer without further development. Candidates were well prepared to address the developments of the Bengali Language and Music in Part **(c)**, but needed to select from their knowledge to develop an answer that explained their importance in the cultural life of Bangladesh. Most candidates were able to give a detailed answer to at least one part of the question. Most candidates were able to detail the life and work of Mir Mosharraf Hossain and the phases in the development of both Bengali language and music. Many selected appropriate information to explain the significance of these, but then needed to develop effectively a reason for their choice of factor. Most of those who formed explanations did so by way of the development of music's place in religious festivals.

Question 2

There were many very strong answers which gave detailed information about all parts of the question. The best answers to Part **(b)(i)** focused on the shorter period of time when the Pala period saw decline and the Sena rulers were having increased involvement as rulers. Part **(b)(ii)** was the question that most enabled the majority of candidates to achieve marks for explanation, either to Lakshana Sena's support for the arts or to his ultimate loss of the kingdom. The best answers to Part **(c)** focused on the time when each of Dharmapala and Devapala were rulers. Best answers to Part **(c)(ii)** considered either the impact of the rulers on the lives of the people and wealth or importance of their kingdoms, or their longer term importance.

Question 3

The short answer questions were answered less well than in other questions. The best answers showed knowledge and understanding of the Battle of Palashi and the breakdown of relationships between Sirajudduala and the British. Part **(c)(i)** was very well answered by many candidates who were able to discuss the events of the Great Famine 1769-70 and the Permanent Settlement of 1793. Weaker answers offered general points about the relations between Bengal and the British. The best answers to Part **(c)(ii)** considered long term implications of each given factor and then discussed the relative importance of each.

Question 4

Some candidates found it difficult to correctly identify the governor appointed in 1954 or the General who ruled under martial law between 1958 and 1962. Strong answers demonstrated a depth of knowledge about the main programme of the United Front, but some spent valuable time describing how the United Front came into existence. Most who answered appropriately offered details about the language requirement and the need for regional autonomy. Many offered three additional points from the programme. Where this topic was well known, candidates were able to consider the reasons for the lack of success of the United Front, though less were able to offer two explanations, and thus access full marks. Part **(c)(i)** usually saw descriptive answers, where much background information was offered at the expense of explaining the importance of the Language Movement 1947-1953 or the Mass Uprising of 1969. Similarly, Part **(c)(ii)** saw few answers specific to the factors given.

BANGLADESH STUDIES

Paper 0449/02

Environment and Development of Bangladesh

Key messages

- The skills questions using maps and completing graphs were well done.
- Some excellent knowledge and understanding was shown.
- Candidates could improve their answers by being succinct and should avoid repeating the wording of the question.
- Answers could be developed by the use of precise terminology.
- In the judgement section, at the end of each question, answers should develop fully the reasons for supporting statements A and/or B.
- Candidates should study photographs carefully and describe what can be seen, rather than what is expected to be there.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The formation processes of ox-bow lakes were well understood and accompanied by excellent annotated diagrams.
- (b)(i) – (iii) The graph interpretation was well done.
- (c) The responses to this question were varied. Good answers reflected the cheapness of travel, the wide network of rivers and their advantages in times of flood. Weaker responses concentrated on other uses of rivers and trade capabilities which were not required.
- (d)(i) This question elicited an excellent understanding of rainfall distribution. Candidates who used compass points in their descriptions answered very well.
- (ii) Candidates who used comparative phrases (more, less, higher) described the differences and similarities well. Weaker answers often listed how many millimetres of rain fell in each, or certain months and this did not always bring about adequate comparisons.
- (iii) The explanation of thunderstorm activity was very well known. The occasional candidate confused thunderstorms with cyclones.
- (e)(i) The topic of hydro-electric power was the key to this question. Some missed this point and wrote about electricity generally. The green credentials of hydro-electric power were well known.
- (ii) The physical and economic limitations to developing hydro-electric power in Bangladesh were well expressed in this part of the question, particularly the expense involved and the lack of highland areas with fast flowing rivers.
- (iii) The best responses expanded in detail the reasons for the candidates' choice for A and/or B. Choice B seemed to present more scope for expanding answers relating to hydro-electric power, particularly if the reliability of electricity generally was opted for in A.

Question 2

- (a) Some candidates appeared unfamiliar with pie charts as this part of the question was often omitted.

- (b) (i)** The differences between marine and inland fishing were generally well expressed. Occasionally candidates based their answers on the pie chart of the previous question and quoted figures which did not answer the question.
- (ii)** On the whole there was good knowledge of inland fishing methods and there were some detailed descriptions of the methods used. To improve, candidates could have mentioned the practice of aquaculture or polyculture, which were just as valid as the traditional methods.
- (iii)** Marine fishing was not always distinguished from fishing in general. The lack of investment and knowledge were the most common answers. More comments on overexploitation of fish and the short fishing season would have added more detail to the answers.
- (c)** The distribution of the forest types was generally well known. Weaker answers described their appearance or conditions of growth and did not use the resource before them.
- (d) (i)** The pneumatophorous roots were widely known. The photograph could have been used to more advantage by candidates in their answers by giving a description of the roots, lianas, trees, canopy and water body, rather than the growing conditions of mangrove trees.
- (ii)** The importance of conserving mangrove forests was understood, especially their ecological significance.
- (e) (i)** There were good answers from candidates, particularly the deforestation of land for housing, industry and agriculture.
- (ii)** The effect of deforestation on climate change and its consequences was universally known.
- (iii)** Good judgements that were expressed well and the points made for A and/or B were fully developed. The best responses took a balanced look at both statements to decide how both A and B were necessary.

Question 3

- (a) (i)** An excellent skills response to this graph with a very high degree of accuracy being achieved.
- (ii)** The interpretation of the graph was good and the best responses made links between the employment sectors and the GDP of each country. The highest level candidates also compared the countries with their GDP and varying percentages in each employment sector. The candidates who just repeated the data without the necessary link to the GDP did not fulfil the criteria of the question.
- (b) (i)** Most candidates were well able to elicit the relevant information from the article relating to Bangladesh's increased economy.
- (ii)** Although this question referred to small scale industry as a whole, the majority related it just to the garment industry. An overall knowledge of the industry was shown by the majority of candidates with many concentrating on cheap labour and cheap clothing. More emphasis could have been placed on government encouragement relating to imports, exports and quotas.
- (iii)** There was a reasonable response to this question on the uses of electricity in industry with mention of the effects to production when the electricity supply was stopped.
- (c) (i)** An excellent knowledge of the most popular countries the migrants went to was displayed in the answers.
- (ii)** There was an excellent response to the reasons for migration. The better answers developed the reasons rather than just giving a list. Examples of levels of education, the career opportunities on offer or the standard of housing available gave a more detailed answer.
- (d) (i)** The value of the manufacturing industry to the economy was well expressed, apart from those who reiterated the statement by saying it improved the economy or increased the GDP.

- (ii) The value of the service sector to the economy was less well understood. When mentioning low skills and low pay, reference to the informal sector was needed for clarification.
- (iii) The case for increasing the manufacturing sector (Statement B) was well answered, especially regarding value added goods and the advantages from increased exports. Again for the service sector, the value of the informal sector, such as a rickshaw driver, was not distinguished from that of the formal sector of banking and education, for example. Candidates who supported both A and B statements gave a balanced answer to improving Bangladesh's economy.

Question 4

- (a) (i) On the whole the distribution of the crops using compass points or physical features, such as rivers and hilly areas, was well done. The occasional candidate wrote about the climatic conditions in each area which was not required.
- (ii) The responses to this question were excellent, particularly on their value to Bangladesh as export crops.
- (b) (i) There were excellent responses to this resource.
- (ii) There was a mixed response to this question with some candidates mistakenly dwelling on the climatic problems for growing these crops. The ideas of low demand, low profitability and the pressure on land were the most common answers.
- (iii) The uses of jute were well known.
- (c)(i)-(iii) The facts from the article were used well to answer these questions.
- (d) This question showed a thorough knowledge of the state's involvement in encouraging industry, particularly in improving various aspects of the infrastructure, providing training at all levels and resolving financial problems.
- (e) (i) There was good knowledge of how aspects of modern technology increased food production. Weaker answers repeated the phrasing of the question instead of mentioning the benefit of HYV seeds or fertilisers or other technological improvements.
- (ii) There was good knowledge of the problems caused by the use of modern technology. The problem stated was sometimes not linked to a specific technique. The best responses referred to eutrophication and chemicals.
- (iii) The candidates who developed their choice of A or B by linking the problem or benefit to a specific technique produced good answers. Examples are using HYV seeds that mature faster and can produce two harvests a year, hence increasing food production, or the use of machinery which furthers the problem of rural unemployment. Many candidates expressed well-developed viewpoints in supporting both statements.

Question 5

- (a) (i) The completion of the graph was usually done accurately.
- (ii) The interpretation of the graph was good and the best responses compared the progress made in Bangladesh and its position with the other two countries individually. The candidates who repeated the data from the graph without the necessary comparison with Bangladesh did not fulfil the criteria of the question. It was necessary to calculate the changes in birth rate.
- (b) (i) This part was very well answered.
- (ii) As with (a)(ii) the responses to this question depended on a comparison with Bangladesh, not only the figures relating to the decrease in infant mortality but also the rate of change and the position of Bangladesh from highest to lowest. The best responses picked up the various changes and could quote calculated figures to support their answers.

- (iii) Knowledge illustrating the improvements in the health care system was expressed well. The better responses used precise examples relating to the health of babies and infants only, such as immunisations, oral rehydration and maternal care. It was insufficient just to say that the health care system had improved.
- (c) (i) On the whole, this question was well answered but weaker responses commented on the fact that it was not run by the government, which was too close to the phrasing of the question to be credit worthy. It was not necessary to comment on the type of work done as this was covered in the next question.

 - (ii) An excellent understanding of the work of NGOs in Bangladesh was exhibited in the written responses. Candidates who covered a wide range of projects for the poor and rural communities covering health, education and finance produced outstanding answers.
- (d) (i) A link between health care, the poor and their quality of life was important for a good answer. The candidates who linked good health to the ability to work and earn money to improve their lives, produced good arguments for statement A.

 - (ii) Again a link between nutrition, the poor and their quality of life was important for a good answer. The candidates who linked good and sufficient nutrition to good health and not falling victim to deficiency diseases, produced good arguments for statement B.
 - (iii) Both view points were well expressed in this section and candidates who saw that both A and B were interlinked to improving the quality of life, produced good arguments in their responses.