

# BANGLADESH STUDIES

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Paper 0449/01  
History and Culture of Bangladesh

## General Comments

Candidates overall seemed to be well prepared for the examination. This examination requires candidates to select information to respond to short answer questions, to demonstrate sound and relevant factual knowledge and to construct historical narratives in three essays and historical explanations in five essays. 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. Some candidates wrote answers with appropriate factual knowledge and made some attempt to use it to develop answers, but were not able to keep to the point or to avoid adding lengthy descriptions that were not appropriate to the question. Many candidates were well prepared for one or two questions and showed their ability to apply their knowledge to their answers. Few candidates successfully constructed historical explanations for the second part of each of the narrative questions. Many candidates described the given factor in the question, not really addressing the question itself.

Candidates should be advised to select questions for which they are able to answer all parts, as some candidates ignored the second or third parts of questions. 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 for an explanation of reasons or of the impact of events.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### Question 1

This was the compulsory question on the paper. Most candidates demonstrated sound knowledge in their part **(a)** answers. There were many very strong answers which gave detailed information about Lalon Shah. However, few candidates were able to consider the impact of his work as asked for in part **(b)(ii)**, more often repeating elements from their part **(b)(i)** answer without further development. Candidates might have asked how he influenced future writers, or how people from towns or other cultures within Bangladesh would learn from his works. Candidates were well prepared to address the developments of Bengali Literature and Folk Culture, but rarely selected from their knowledge to develop an answer that explained their importance in the cultural life of Bangladesh. Candidates could have argued that Folk Culture allowed illiterate rural dwellers to pass on stories from the past by gathering women together to share in the work of sewing. Similarly candidates could have argued that Literature around the era of the fight for independence from India helps in our understanding of how the people of Bangladesh responded to events.

### Question 2

This was a very popular question, attempted by almost all candidates. 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 Daud rose and was defeated. Part **(b)(ii)** was the question on which many candidates achieved well, highlighting how Sher Shah defeated Humayan. The best answers to part **(c)** considered the impact of the changes made. The best answers to part **(c)(ii)** considered either the impact of the changes on the lives of ordinary people, or their longer term importance politically or economically. Few candidates used information from part **(c)(i)** to support their answers.

### Question 3

This was a less popular question. The short answer questions were answered less well than in other questions. The best responses showed some knowledge of the Nehru Report and the 1905 Partition of Bengal. Part **(c)(i)** was very well answered by many candidates who were able to discuss the events of the KPP, but few offered an answer to the Muslim League that took into account the given date. 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

This was a popular question. Many candidates were unable to correctly identify the Chief Minister of Bengal from the passage. The best responses demonstrated a depth of knowledge about the migration and its impact. Most candidates who answered appropriately offered details about both the events around the migration, its impact on individuals, groups and Pakistan. In a similar way, many candidates detailed the Language Movement, achieving good marks. Part **(c)(i)** usually saw descriptive answers, where too much background information was offered at the expense of the depth of explanation of the significance of the economic problems and the division of assets. A few, very good, responses argued that the importance of the economy for the new Pakistan could be seen through the Jute production. Pakistan grew and harvested the Jute, but was unable to profit from it locally as the mills were located in India. Part **(c)(ii)** saw few answers specific to the factors given, many candidates asserting the need for money in a new country. Some candidates developed their answer to argue that the development of a new country required the building of industries such as Jute mills and that this could only be done by training workers/ managers and having money enough to buy machinery and build factories.

# BANGLADESH STUDIES

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Paper 0449/02  
Environment and  
Development of Bangladesh

## Key messages

- To use precise terminology and avoid vague and repetitive expressions.
- In the judgement section, at the end of each question, to develop more fully, and without repetition, the reasons for supporting statements A and/or B.
- To study photographs carefully and only use what can be seen, and not what the candidates expect to be there.
- The skills questions interpreting maps, diagrams and completing graphs were well done.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) (i) The diagram of the cyclone was well annotated by those who attempted this question but there were a number who omitted this part of **Question 1**. All candidates should be encouraged to annotate diagrams.
- (ii) A good knowledge was displayed in this question.
- (iii) A common misinterpretation of this question was that it referred to the formation of a cyclone rather than the weather experienced during a cyclone. Incidental marks were scored with heavy rainfall and strong winds.
- (b) (i) An excellent knowledge of the health problems following a cyclone were described in this question, particularly those relating to water borne diseases and malnutrition associated with crop loss.
- (ii) The emphasis of this question is on lessening the health problems caused by a cyclone. The disease and malnutrition aspects were reasonably well answered with the erection of mobile clinics and the distribution of food aid. An over emphasis on warning systems and the quality of housing restricted some candidates' answers.
- (c) (i) There were excellent answers here with a concentration on naming broad areas of drought, such as north-west and south-west, rather than listing districts.
- (ii) The problems of drought were well described, particularly crop failure and the resulting malnutrition. There was a tendency by some candidates to still be linking their answers to a previous question and concentrate on water borne diseases. Vague terminology limited some answers e.g. a lack of water was an incomplete answer and needed development, such as drinking water, water for irrigation.
- (d) In general a well-argued discussion on the effects of river floods to farmers, with both the benefits and disadvantages being considered.
- (i) Good knowledge of the positive effects of river deposition for the growing of crops was very evident.
- (ii) The disastrous effects of river floods were well known. Occasionally some candidates misread the question and wrote about the storm surges and sea water inundations rather than the river floods. Others did not see that the question specifically referred to farmers and not the population in general.

- (iii) The best responses expanded in detail, and did not repeat, the reasons for the candidates' choice for A and/or B. The idea that floods were more of a disaster than benefit presented more scope for candidates to develop their answers.

### Question 2

- (a) There were accurate interpretations from the graph of the changes in both oil consumption and production with very few candidates just giving a list of years and figures.
- (b) (i) The products made from oil were generally known although there was some confusion between crude and vegetable oil.
  - (ii) On the whole there was good knowledge of the need for new oil fields in Bangladesh.
  - (iii) The expertise of foreign consultants needed for the exploitation of oil was well expressed.
- (c) (i) The types of biomass were well known but there was sometimes a tendency to describe two similar types of solid biomass which did not allow sufficient development for the uses. The better answers chose two from solid biomass, biogas and biofuels.
  - (ii) The widespread use of biomass and its advantages were well expressed, except occasionally when biomass was confused with renewable energy like solar and wind power.
- (d) (i) The completion of the graph was generally excellent but a few candidates still do not use the whole of the 100% column and treat it like a histogram, starting each component from the 0% line.
  - (ii) There was excellent interpretation of the graph.
- (e) (i) There were good answers from candidates, particularly when referring to the informal sector and its advantages for much of the population.
  - (ii) By bringing in the other sectors of industry, as indicated in the previous graph, many candidates could point out other ways of improving the economy.
  - (iii) Responses which made points for and against the statement showed a good understanding of the discussion about the service industry and also the economy.

### Question 3

- (a) (i) There was an excellent response to this photograph in naming the crop.
  - (ii) The concept of relief as an input into agriculture was not generally understood. A common misconception was that the question referred to the conditions of growth for rice and not the topography.
  - (iii) The photograph was not always used to name the human inputs into this farming system with many candidates naming features not shown, such as fertilisers and capital.
- (b) (i) An excellent recall of pulses was evident in this question.
  - (ii) The value of pulses in a diet were generally known.
- (c) (i) An excellent use of the resource to comment on the changing sizes of farms over twenty years.
  - (ii) There was a varied response to this question on land fragmentation. The best answers described how inheritance laws caused the smaller farms and the effect these had on yields, incomes and the poor farming methods that resulted.
- (d) There was an excellent response to the effects on cities of rural migration, particularly the resulting living conditions. Occasionally some wrote about the effect in rural areas and on the declining food production.

- (e) (i) There was good knowledge of the importance of cash crops.. Once again some answers just repeated the phrasing of the question instead of mentioning the benefit to industry as a raw material or as a source of foreign exchange for export.
- (ii) There was good knowledge of the necessity to increase food production to feed the increasing population and to reduce imports.
- (iii) Good responses came from candidates who expressed well-developed viewpoints supporting both statements.

#### Question 4

- (a) (i) On the whole the causes of water pollution were well known. More specific terminology resulted in better responses and so rather than just 'waste' more detail on the type of waste, such as dyes, untreated or sewage, developed candidates' answers.
- (ii) The response to this question was good, particularly on the effect on the environment.
- (iii) The response to this question showed a comprehensive knowledge on ways to reduce water pollution ranging from the role of the government to the part farmers can play regarding fertilisers.
- (iv) Excellent responses, apart from those who mentioned global warming as a form of pollution.
- (b) (i) There were excellent responses to this resource but some candidates wrote unnecessarily on the changes to garment exports as well when this was not asked for.
- (ii) There was a mixed response to this question with some candidates using comparative figures to comment on the importance of the garment industry to exports and earnings. Others did not use the evidence from the resource but wrote generally about employment and salary within the garment industry.
- (c) The answers for this question showed a variable knowledge of investment from abroad in developing industry. Good responses included references to the garment and gas industries and the provision of capital, expertise and technology. Responses which were weaker dealt with aspects other than the development of industry and commented on the economy and state owned industry.
- (d) (i) There was good knowledge of private ownership bringing in technology and efficiency to an industry.
- (ii) There was good knowledge of advantages that state ownership could bring to an industry, particularly subsidies, licences and regulation.
- (iii) The best responses expanded in detail, and did not repeat, the reasons for the candidates' choice for A or B. Many candidates expressed well-developed viewpoints by comparing the private sector with state ownership.

#### Question 5

- (a) (i) The graph was usually completed accurately.
- (ii) Generally this question was answered well with emphasis on improved education giving access to employment, more women in employment and the availability of microfinance.
- (b) (i) This part was very well answered.
- (ii) The responses to this question depended on a comparison of the other three countries with Bangladesh which had the greatest decrease. Candidates who just calculated the rate of decrease for each country without comparing them to Bangladesh did not fulfil the requirements of the question.

- (iii) Knowledge about the achievements in decreasing the population growth rate was excellent. The better responses detailed the empowerment of women, population control strategies and later marriages.
- (c) (i) On the whole, this question was well answered with comments on quality, finances and areas covered.

(ii) A good understanding of the work of the private sector Bangladesh was evident. Candidates who used detailed wording rather than vague statements produced outstanding answers. 'Better' was used too often when 'specialist care', 'experienced teachers', 'modern equipment' and such phrases were more pertinent.
- (d) (i) The improving but low literacy rate and the economic, cultural and gender reasons for this were generally well expressed as a challenge to overcome,

(ii) The challenges facing higher education were less well known but the lack of science based institutions was often referred to in the better answers.

(iii) Both viewpoints were put in this section and candidates who saw that A and B were interlinked and dependent on each other produced good responses.