

BANGLADESH STUDIES

Paper 0449/01

History and Culture of Bangladesh

Key Messages

Candidates should be sure to give equal time and attention to all aspects of the course studied.

Candidates should leave enough time in the examination for the final questions to be answered thoroughly.

Candidates should keep all the parts of their answer together rather than adding parts at the end.

General Comments

There were, as has often been the case in the past, many answers which showed very good and detailed knowledge of cultural elements in **Question 1** and on the Mughal period in **Question 2**. The answers to **Questions 3** and **4** were less strong and there may be an element of time planning involved here and candidates rushing the latter part of the paper, or it may be that topics studied later in the course are sometimes less thoroughly revised. The requirement to answer questions which assess as opposed to explaining did make it easier for some to offer attempts at evaluation. Generally, though, description and explanation were better developed. As has been advised in previous reports, it would help some candidates to focus on what is required by using the wording of the question more in the answers, for example when assessing whether one element was more important than another in part **(c)**. Many candidates move onto other questions before completing all parts of the question they have begun to answer. If possible, this should be avoided, as the 'afterthoughts' added at the end often show that the candidate has lost his or her original train of thought. It is better to complete all parts of the question before moving on to the next.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Most got close to full marks for the life and works of Aloal, and seemed to enjoy telling his eventful life story. Most offered some comment on his importance.

Answers on Religious festivals and Folk Culture were full but predominantly descriptive, and the discussion of the importance of cultural aspects remains definitely an area for centres to develop. There were some attempts to consider which was more important, but a firmer judgement needs to be offered with more sense of comparison, candidates must have the confidence to make a decision in the understanding that there is not a 'right' or 'wrong' answer to this type of question.

Question 2

This was a very popular topic, with many candidates scoring well on the part **(a)**.

Part **b (i)** was generally done well, with most candidates offering a good deal of information and earning high marks.

b (ii) was done significantly less well, with many not going beyond description or offering quite general comments about things getting better, with a few Level 2 marks and a minority accessing Level 3 for knowing something concrete about how Bengal actually developed. It is important for candidates to think about the words in the question. 'Developed' means considering how Bengal was going forward and progressing, not merely changing.

Part **(c)** was generally over-reliant on description, with only the occasional insight into why the two were important to the empire. The online text book is a valuable resource, but it is important for candidates to use the knowledge it contains and think about the significance of issues, rather than merely repeating its contents. Attempts at analysis are always rewarded.

Question 3

This was a less popular question

Part **a** and **b (i)** were generally done well, with sound knowledge being displayed and some good marks gained.

b (ii) was generally done less well, which seems to have been a feature across all 3 optional questions. It is important to offer explanations, but also for knowledge to support the points that are made.

Part **(c)** again showed an overreliance on description rather than explanation and supported judgement.

Question 4

Another popular question, although many showed less knowledge on the origins of Bangladesh than they did about developments in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

Part **(a)** was generally effectively tackled, though there was some confusion about the Khans.

Part **b (i)** – Weaker answers mixed this issue up with the language dispute, and while many knew the causes and the actions immediately following the uprising, fewer could write about actions taken to defuse the situation.

b (ii), in common with the other 2 questions, was rarely done well, beyond a description of the immediate cause of the election victory, with few being able to explain why it was important.

Part **(c)** generally consisted of a list of the 6-Points and a description of the economic issues, again, with fewer attempts to explain why they were important in bringing about the electoral victory of the Awami League.

Answers show that a great deal of care is being taken to acquire factual knowledge and to learn the information in the text book. This could be the basis of some very strong explanations and judgements if they went a stage further and thought about the significance of what they know. As it is, the level of detail is often very high and candidates are rightly rewarded by knowledge, but the advice is that this should be developed and used more wherever possible to build on the strengths and hard work shown by the candidates.

BANGLADESH STUDIES

Paper 0449/02

Environment and Development Bangladesh

Key messages

- To answer succinctly using precise terminology and avoiding vague and repetitive expressions.
- In the judgement section, at the end of each question, to avoid repetition of the evidence already given and develop the reasons for supporting statements A and/or B.
- To study photographs carefully and only describe what can be seen, not what they expect to be there.
- The skills questions on maps and graphs were well done.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The areas on the map were generally well known. In C and D there was a tendency by some to name the area instead of the crop or type of power.
- (b)(i) Most candidates described the areas of contamination well, particularly those who used compass points to locate general areas.
- (ii) Most answers were well expressed with clear detail of arsenic contaminating the groundwater.
- (iii) Excellent, detailed answers.
- (c)(i-iv) There was a good use of the resource in interpreting the data. Occasionally some candidates confused temperature with rainfall.
- (v) The idea of the monsoon winds causing seasonal variations in the climate was not generally known. Full answers describing pressure systems were very limited.
- (d)(i) Unless the candidates linked the climatic conditions to the growing of crops it was not possible to credit the answers. Comments on soils and relief were not relevant to this question.
- (ii) Excellent knowledge of the problems caused by climate to farmers in Bangladesh.
- (iii) The best responses gave reasons for the candidates' choice and developed the ideas given for A and/or B. The linking of rainfall to germination, sun for ripening, dry spells for harvesting constituted good answers for A. The damage caused by drought and floods to crops and livestock were usually well expressed.

Question 2

- (a)(i) The candidates who used the resource and spotted meanders, braiding, islands, distributaries and other such features wrote very good answers. Those who wrote generally about deltas without looking at Photograph A were very limited in their answers. Likewise those who explained how a delta was formed failed to answer the question correctly.
- (ii) The responses to this question showed an excellent knowledge of the formation of deltas.
- (b)(i) Again a good use of the resource and areas well described. No credit was given for the statement that coastal floods were found along the coast – a more precise location was needed.

- (ii) On the whole there was good knowledge on the causes of coastal floods. The candidates who only wrote about floods tended to describe rivers in flood or the effects of global warming, neither of which were relevant to the question.
 - (iii) A broad spectrum of detailed answers ranging from warning systems and shelters to medical help.
- (c) (i) Good answers from candidates who were not side-tracked into describing the causes of climate change but concentrated on the patterns of rainfall.
- (ii) The evidence for this section was usually concentrated on increasing drought in some regions and its effect on farming.
 - (iii) Good judgements were expressed well and developed the points made for A and/or B. The best responses took a balanced look at both statements to decide how they posed a threat to Bangladesh.

Question 3

- (a) (i) The definition of aquaculture was very well answered on the whole, but weaker candidates described farming in wet conditions.
- (ii) Good use of the graph with candidates able to distinguish the main trends by using descriptions of the increases and decreases such as steady, static, constant, rapid. The use of such phrases was preferable to giving long lists of figures showing the tonnes produced at various stages.
 - (iii) Again excellent knowledge of the importance of aquaculture was demonstrated by a variety of points such as income, providing protein, rotation with rice.
- (b) (i) Most candidates were well able to express a definition of sustainable development with many expanding on the careful use of resources without damaging the environment.
- (ii) The sustainability of forests, as the example, was well known. More developed answers referred to fishing and the use of renewable energy.
- (c) (i) There was very good interpretation of the graph with candidates being able to distinguish the main trends by using descriptions of the increases and decrease such as slow, constant, rapid. The use of such phrases was preferable to giving a list of figures showing the amount produced at various stages.
- (ii) Candidates who gave more specific uses of coal instead of wood scored well. As well as saying coal was used in industry an example could be used, such as in brickworks or cement plants.
- (d) (i) To score a mark, candidates needed to expand on the quote from the farmer. It was insufficient just to say that they would lose their home and land. An answer that explained they would lose for example their income, source of food, traditional way of life was needed.
- (ii) The evidence for the opening of a coal mine was developed sufficiently by most candidates, particularly when referring to the uses of coal in industry and scarcity of coal in Bangladesh. Some candidates were more concerned about the environmental impact, such as reducing deforestation, rather than the economic value of coal.
 - (iii) A good understanding of the problems faced by farmers and the financial benefits to the country was evident in the answers. A balanced approach which commented on both statements gave the best responses.

Question 4

- (a) (i) A very good response to the resource with excellent comments on the differences and similarities of wheat and pulse production. Again descriptive phrases produced better answers than just a list of figures.
- (ii) The responses to this question showed knowledge of the technological advances in agriculture. The better answers were those that explained how these advances produced higher yields.

Weaker answers were characterised by general comments that failed to link the advances of the green revolution to increased yields, for example the mention of HYV seeds were disease resistant and so loss was reduced, or that pesticides protected crops from insect attacks.

- (b) There were excellent responses to the use of this resource.
- (c) The details of both types of industry were well known.
- (d)(i) There was excellent knowledge of how cottage industries could reduce unemployment, especially relating to the capital outlay, employment of women and the illiterate workforce.
 - (ii) There was excellent knowledge of the advantages of investing in large scale industries to further development in Bangladesh, particularly to improve export earnings.
 - (iii) Both options were well presented with many candidates expressing well-developed viewpoints in favour of both statements.

Question 5

- (a)(i) The completion of the graph was usually done accurately but it was disappointing that some candidates did not attempt this part of the question.
 - (ii) This skills question was usually answered correctly but some candidates misinterpreted it and gave reason(s) for the changes in rural and urban areas.
 - (iii) A good response to the changes in rural and urban areas with many candidates concentrating on the effects of increasing populations of urban areas. One mark was reserved for each area so both needed to be described to gain full marks.
- (b)(i) This part was very well answered.
 - (ii) The responses to this question often missed the point about improvements in the health sector for under 14 year olds such as immunisation, disease control programmes, maternal services.
 - (iii) This part was very well answered.
- (c)(i) On the whole, this question was reasonably well answered but many candidates just commented on the changes for each country without comparing them to Bangladesh's progress.
 - (ii) An excellent understanding of the problems involved about the percentage of candidates who access secondary education was evident in the answers.
 - (iii) The candidates obviously understood the importance of access to secondary education both for the candidate (higher earnings, higher levels of literacy) and the development of the country.
- (d) The majority of answers were about the value of university degrees for status, wealth and leadership. The importance of occupational skills, accessible by much of the population and equally important, tended to be ignored by many. A balanced answer giving the benefits of both types of skills to the development of Bangladesh was the best approach.