

# BANGLADESH STUDIES

---

Paper 0449/01  
History and Culture of Bangladesh

## Key messages

Candidates are advised to select questions for which they are able to answer all parts, as some candidates only attempted the first part of the question and left the second or third parts incomplete. Where a question asks candidates to explain, candidates need to fully demonstrate their knowledge of the topic in order to achieve at the higher levels. Candidates are advised to manage their time evenly across all the questions, a number of candidates appeared to spend too long on earlier questions and consequently ran out of time later on.

## General comments

Candidates overall 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 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 wrote answers with appropriate factual knowledge and made some attempt to use it to develop answers, but did not keep to the point or 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 each of the essay questions answered. Some candidates described the given factor in the question, but did not really address the question.

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

## 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 Rabindranath Tagore's life and work. Some candidates were able to consider the impact of his work as asked for in part **(b)(ii)**, considering the contribution of the awards he was given to the perceived importance of Bangladesh internationally, and of his use of the Bangla language to future poets and writers, and hence to the ability of more people to access their writings. Candidates were well prepared to address the developments of music during the British period. Some focused on aspects that were new to that period of time, e.g. the introduction of the piano and violin to the range of instruments found, or the impact of music on soldiers going to war against Britain.

Candidates were able to describe journalism during the British period, selecting from their knowledge of the work of journalists. Few developed an answer that explained their importance in the history of Bangladesh, or the range of opinions on issues that were current at that time compared to the narrative that the passage of time has left us with. If journalism is taken as an example, candidates could have started a paragraph in part **(c)(i)** by arguing that Journalism was a medium through which readers could be kept in touch with key messages of the day, e.g. Kazi Nazrul Islam used Nabajug to encourage people to participate in the struggle against the British. Part **(c)(ii)** could have followed on by saying that not everyone listened to poetry and so newspapers were an important way of staying in touch. For music of the British period, some candidates

argued that the sounds heard in music from the British period showed how Western influences had begun to be appreciated in Bangladesh. Part **(c)(ii)** then followed this by saying that texts tell us of political events while music can show us how far the lives of people in Bangladesh were changed through cultural contact with the British.

### 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 Khalji's conquest of Nadia. The best answers to part **(c)(i)** considered the uniqueness of the developments in architecture or literature. Some candidates did not read the question fully and wrote about how both rulers ruled. The best answers to part **(c)(ii)** considered the impact of the changes on the lives of ordinary people.

### Question 3

This was a popular question. The short answer questions were usually answered well. Better responses showed detailed knowledge of the system of government during the period of Murshid Quli Khan. Aurangzeb's religious policy and its impact were well explained by many candidates. Part **(c)(i)** was very well answered by many candidates who were able to discuss details of the Deccan policy and its key battles, costs and duration, using these details to show their impact on the Mughal Empire. Many candidates used knowledge of the weakness of the Mughal army, its internal conflicts and its lack of effective leadership to explain how it contributed to the decline of the Mughal Empire. The best answers to part **(c)(ii)** considered the long term implications of each given factor and then discussed the relative importance of each, or the short and long term implications of one of the factors.

### Question 4

Few candidates chose to answer this question. Most who answered appropriately offered their understanding of the aims of the Muslim League in their own words. On the other hand, candidates who had been prepared for questions on legislation answered very specifically, giving the aspects of government that were to be overseen by Legislative Councils and by the Governor. Part **(c)(i)** usually saw descriptive answers, where too much background information was offered at the expense of depth of explanation of the significance of the Khilafat movement and the Round Table Conferences to Hindu-Muslim relations.

# BANGLADESH STUDIES

---

**Paper 0449/02**  
**Environment and Development of**  
**Bangladesh**

## Key messages

- To avoid generalisations and vague expressions but to support the answers with facts.
- 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

This was not a popular question and the candidates displayed more knowledge of climate and agriculture rather than the physical geography of Bangladesh.

- (a) (i) The river and deltaic plain were accurately named.
- (ii) The physical characteristics of appearance, age, soil type and drainage patterns were often missed and instead comments on land use and locations were given as an answer.
- (iii) Knowledge of the formation of a flood plain was not well expressed in this question although there were some relevant diagrams used. Some candidates gave examples of flood plains and a description of their appearance unnecessarily.
- (b) (i) There was a mixed response to this question with some candidates only seeing the months at the beginning of the year and failing to count December.
- (ii) A reasonably well answered question with many able to describe the differences in rainfall and temperature requirements for each crop. A distinction between sowing and harvesting would have improved the answer.
- (c) (i) The key to this question was 'preparing the land' which was often missed and the sowing and harvesting processes were often described. The ploughing, flooding and draining of the fields were the processes which needed to be included instead.
- (ii) A very good understanding of the Green Revolution inputs (HYV seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and mechanisation) in increasing rice production was shown in the responses to this question.
- (d) In general there was a well argued discussion on how the topography of Bangladesh has affected farmers, with both the benefits and problems being considered.
- (i) There was good knowledge of the positive effects of the topography, particularly the fertile flood plains.
- (ii) The topography of Bangladesh and the challenges it presented to farmers were well explained.
- (iii) The best responses expanded in detail, and did not repeat, the reasons for the candidates' choice for A and/or B. Candidates who considered both statements gave well balanced answers.

## Question 2

- (a) (i) There were accurate interpretations of the map where most commented on the two main areas of rainfall for the two marks. A long list of place names was unnecessary as compass directions in the question indicated.
- (ii) The key word for this question was 'general' so a list of place names was inappropriate here. The comments on the floods along the rivers and in the north-east were adequate.
- (iii) The question asked about the time delay between the rains and the floods, the lag time. The ideas that the ground was saturated and that embankments had collapsed were sometimes mentioned. As 'heavy rain' was in the question, it could not be credited as a correct answer.
- (b) A very well answered question with good knowledge of how floods affect people in particular. The effect on the economy was a case of vague expressions being used. That the economy was reduced was not an adequate explanation; a link needed to be made with the loss of export crops, the closure of industry or the lack of transportation for goods.
- (c) (i) The pie chart was mostly completed accurately.
- (ii) Generally the graph was interpreted correctly in working out the percentage.
- (iii) The use of vehicles as a major air pollutant was well known.
- (d) An excellent knowledge of air pollution policies was well expressed in answer to this question, particularly on car engines, catalytic converters and unleaded petrol.
- (e) (i) There were good answers from candidates on the problems of controlling flooding from rivers, particularly when referring to the monsoon rains and the magnitude of the task because of the many rivers and high cost.
- (ii) The hard engineering methods of flood control were well known, but little was mentioned about agreements with Nepal or India and the sources of the rivers.
- (iii) Both sides of the discussion were put by most candidates who generally concluded that it was necessary to try and control river floods despite the problems of cost.

## Question 3

- (a) Good use was made of the map particularly when describing the gas fields, but more could have been said about the extension westwards of the pipelines.
- (b) The graph was generally completed accurately.
- (c) (i) The ideas that the fertiliser factories were near the raw materials or widely distributed were expressed well by many candidates. Some, however, misinterpreted the question and described the use of fertilisers.
- (ii) The higher yields and use of HYV seeds were well known, but again the effect on the economy was often vaguely expressed. Improved the economy was too general a statement and needed to be developed by adding that the use of fertilisers reduced imports or increased export earnings.
- (d) (i) A good knowledge of greenhouse gases was evident in the answers.
- (ii) The causes of global warming were well expressed.
- (iii) This question required a link between the effects of global warming, which were well known, and agriculture. Generalisations, such as more rain affected crops, did not provide the necessary link or expand on how the crops were affected.

- (e) (i) There was good knowledge of the fact that, compared to other countries, Bangladesh had few industries that emitted greenhouse gases.
- (ii) There was greater understanding of how Bangladesh is vulnerable to the effects of global warming, particularly the rising sea level and more frequent cyclones.
- (iii) Candidates attempted this part of the question quite well considering that it was a slight change to the usual format. Rather than putting forward an argument between two differing points there was a need to link the two statements and decide on what help might be necessary from other nations.

#### Question 4

- (a) (i) The annotation to the sketch was either attempted satisfactorily or omitted altogether. Candidates who realised that it was a matter of knowing the characteristics of a cottage industry and putting them onto Fig. 8 rather than in sentences scored quite well.
- (ii) This question asked for a comparison between the two different scales of the textile industry, which was generally well done. Some, however, only wrote about one of the photographs and had no comparison. Some commented on wages or exports which could not be seen in the photographs.
- (b) (i) There were some excellent answers from candidates about infant industries, tariffs and quotas. There was a tendency from some to confuse the policies for new industries with overcoming obstacles to industrialisation that was asked for in the next question.
- (ii) There was a good response to this question covering a wide range of methods to overcome the obstacles to industrialisation. The variety of answers covered several types of infrastructure, legal frameworks and international involvement.
- (c) (i) The importance of the financial sector was soundly understood.
- (ii) The definition of micro-credit was accurate in the majority of cases.
- (iii) The success of micro-credit was reasonably known, although some did try to relate the success to the type of businesses set up.
- (d) (i) There was good knowledge of the importance of small scale industries to Bangladesh, particularly regarding the employment of the people.
- (ii) There was good knowledge of advantages that large scale industries could bring to Bangladesh, particularly through export and foreign earnings.
- (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 advantages of small scale industries with the potential for large scale industries.

#### Question 5

- (a) (i) The comparison of the two population pyramids was attempted quite well. Some tried to compare the male and female aspects rather than the age groups. The differences of the 0 to 4 year olds and over 60s were observed well. The increase in the working/independent sectors was not so well expressed.
- (ii) Generally this question was answered well covering all aspects of family planning, improved health care and nutrition. Education by itself was not a reason for the lower birth and death rates, but needed to be linked to such factors as later marriages or healthier lifestyle.
- (iii) While many mentioned migration correctly, others thought that the male death rate was very high for 20–40 year-old males.
- (b) (i) Many candidates coped well with this graph. Some omitted this part of the question.

- (ii) The responses to this question were generally well done with descriptions of the tribal people of Bangladesh and where they were found.
- (c) (i) On the whole, this question was well answered using the graph by noting the increasing trend of literacy in Bangladesh and how close it was to the South Asia average by 2012. Some made the description more difficult by comparing year on year differences.
- (ii) A good understanding of the link between literacy and development was usually expressed well. Again this was an area where vague terms were used without any qualifying statements. It was necessary to know how improved skills or wages contributed to development.
  - (iii) The educational challenges were well known, although some referred to challenges in the health sector instead.
- (d) (i) The improving health care and its role in slowing population growth regarding family planning was well noted. Some, though, commented on the decreasing death rate without linking it to fewer births.
- (ii) In statement B, the role of education, particularly that of females, was well known as a factor in decreasing the population growth rate.
  - (iii) Both viewpoints were put in this section but the role of education was commented on most often with good results.