BANGLADESH STUDIES

Paper 7094/01
History and Culture of Bangladesh

Key messages

Candidates should always read the questions carefully.

Candidates should choose questions where they can answer most of the sections, and not be put off by a short answer question that they cannot answer.

Where a question asks candidates to explain, candidates should use their own knowledge to answer the question.

Part (c)(ii) questions require answers that reflect on the answers provided in **part (c)(i)** answers.

General comments

Overall, candidates seemed to be well prepared for the examination. This examination requires candidates to select information to answer short-answer questions, demonstrate sound and relevant factual knowledge, and 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 featured in each narrative. Many candidates did this very well, using strong, appropriate, supported information to keep their answers relevant to the question. Very few candidates failed to keep to the point of the question or wrote lengthy descriptions that needed to be more appropriate to the question. Many candidates were well prepared for at least two questions. They showed their ability to apply their knowledge to their answers to the questions. Significantly few candidates were unable to demonstrate any depth of knowledge. Most candidates successfully constructed some historical explanations. Some candidates described the given factor in the question, not addressing the question.

Candidates should read the questions carefully. Many candidates did not respond appropriately to the question about the administrative achievements of Akbar, a question testing how he ran his empire.

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.

Most candidates, than usual, could justify a conclusion to at least one **Part (c)(ii)** in the optional questions. They found the options possible and worthy of consideration by reflecting on the balanced answer provided in **Part (c)(i)**.

There were very few rubric errors. Few candidates did not complete the examination.

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. Many very strong answers gave detailed

information about the development of the Bengali language before 1800. Some candidates were able to consider the importance of Bengali, as asked for in Part (b)(ii), often considering the significance of the fight to establish Bengali as their language. Candidates were well prepared to consider appropriate historical sites and the learning that can be taken from a visit to them to reach the highest levels of marks. Candidates were able to explain how specific festivals support cultural development in Bangladesh. Many candidates developed an answer that explained their importance to our learning.

Question 2

The short answer questions mainly were answered quite well, except for Question 2(a)(i), where most candidates answered incorrectly and 2(a)(iii), where many candidates offered incorrect suggestions. Most candidates demonstrated an understanding of Akbar's role in the dynasty. A significant number understood well how the establishment of mansabdars and changes in how tax and agriculture were linked improved the administration of the empire. Most candidates explained clearly how specific succession disputes impacted the army and outlying parts of the empire, leading to the rise of powerful nobles and opportunistic attacks by nations' leaders. Some were very well argued, using evidence that enabled a justified conclusion in Part 2(c)(ii).

Question 3

The short answer questions were fairly well answered. Most candidates knew some details of what Cripps offered. Many understood the position of Jinnah, wanting the British to leave and seeking a land for Muslims, but also the importance of the order by which these could be fought for. There was some impressive detail to be found in most answers to Question 3(c)(i), candidates showing awareness of the Cabinet Mission Plan and the June 3rd Plan. The best Part (c)(ii) answers considered how these related to the Lahore Resolution.

Question 4

Reading so many well-informed answers to a question on Bengal in the twentieth century was encouraging. The short answer questions were well answered. Most candidates clearly knew the Awami League and the United Front. Question 4(c)(i) was answered with considerable detail about the government and administration from West Pakistan and how this impacted East Pakistan. Candidates knew well how the Jute production and manufacture affected the people of East and West Pakistan. Very well-explained reflections on the impact of each as damaging relations and unity resulted in strongly supported evaluations in Question 4(c)(ii).

All three of the optional questions were found attractive by candidates.

BANGLADESH STUDIES

Key messages

- To gain maximum marks, candidates need to work through the whole examination paper, attempting all questions, being careful not to miss out those questions without lines to write on such as **2(b)(iii)**, **3(b)(i)** and **5(c)(i)**.
- To complete graphs accurately candidates should use a ruler and sharp pencil and carefully replicate the shading used on the graph.
- Candidates should practise expressing opinions, making a decision, and supporting it with arguments (AO2). The final section of each of the AO2 questions requires candidates to decide what they think about or how far they agree with a statement. There is no credit given for repeating their earlier points in **parts (i)** and **(ii)**. They need to develop their points and make additional arguments to support their decision in **part (iii)**.

General comments

- The overall standard this year was very good, with some areas of knowledge (AO1) very good, especially: the impact of drought; the formation of meanders and thunderstorms; measures to counter air pollution; the informal sector; and micro credit.
- On the whole, the skills questions (AO3) were completed well. Candidates were able to present information accurately onto different types of graphs (pie, horizontal bar and compound bar) as well as draw clearly labelled diagrams of ox-bow lake formation and thunderstorm development.
- Candidates were generally competent at interpreting and extracting relevant information from a variety of sources (satellite image, line graphs, choropleth map, bar chart, pie chart, horizontal bar).

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was the least popular and was also the one candidates found the most difficult.

(a)   The satellite image was interpreted very well by many candidates who were able to name features A to E.

(b)   There were many excellent diagrams to show the formation of an ox-bow lake. The best ones were also well annotated so easily gained the four marks available.

(c)   Candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of location factors for HEP. Fast flowing water, and hilly topography were frequently mentioned, whilst heavy rainfall and away from settlements were less commonly given.

(d)   Many candidates could define the term aquaculture in **(i)** but struggled to apply their knowledge of aquaculture to the satellite image in **(ii)**. The line graph of aquaculture production in Bangladesh in **(iii)** was clearly described by a majority of candidates, some of whom included accurate data in their response to ensure full marks for this AO3 skills task.

(e)   Aquaculture was one area of the syllabus where there was a noticeable lack of specific knowledge. Only the best candidates showed detailed knowledge of jobs related to aquaculture and the benefits these jobs created, or the importance of fish as a source of protein and food security. Weaker candidates merely stated jobs and food. Equally there was a lack of detailed knowledge of the problems aquaculture can create for the environment. Specifics about deforestation and increasing salinity in the Sundarbans or Cox's Bazaar were only included infrequently.

Question 2

This question was not popular but was well answered by the candidates who attempted it.

(a)   The tick box responses required for **(i)** meant that the choropleth map was easily to analyse, so the vast majority of candidates scored all three marks available for this AO3 skills question. In **part (ii)** a wide variety of different problems that drought causes for the people of Rajshahi were clearly described by candidates.

(b)   This question on thunderstorms produced a mix of responses. The months in which Bangladesh receives most rainfall from thunderstorms was seldom known but the diagrams of thunderstorm formation for 4 marks were often detailed and accurate. Despite this, few candidates were able to state three types of weather that occur in thunderstorms.

(c)   The line graph of oil consumption in Bangladesh posed few problems for candidates who were able to extract the correct information in the AO3 skills questions **(i)** and **(ii)**. For **part (iii)** most candidates correctly answered that the main uses of oil are for transport and electricity generation. General answers such as oil for energy or industry required more detail to gain credit.

(d)   These questions required candidates to present clear arguments why the government should develop new oil fields or increase oil imports to meet the increasing demand for oil in Bangladesh. The best responses briefly explained one advantage of each approach in **(i)** and **(ii)** and then in **(iii)** expanded, in detail, the reasons for their choice of either new oil fields or increased oil imports. Some candidates made a good case for the need for both. Candidates who merely repeated the points made in support of new oil fields or increased oil imports struggled to gain any additional marks in **(iii)**.

Question 3

This question was popular however parts of it proved to be problematic for candidates who attempted it.

(a)   Many candidates were able to state different development indicators for health, education and wealth in **(i)**. The AO3 skills questions relating to the grouped bar graph Fig. 3.1 posed few problems for the candidates who were able to identify the overall trend in **(ii)**, name the country with the greatest progress in **(iii)**, and compare the HDI of Bangladesh with Pakistan in **(iv)**. Making comparisons is a high-level skill which many candidates did well. Better candidates used the data from the graph to score full marks for this question.

(b) (i)   Completion of the compound bar graph in Fig. 3.2 was a demanding AO3 skill but was well done by most candidates that attempted it. Unfortunately, there was high omit rate for this question. This might be because there were no lines for candidates to write on. It is essential that candidates work through the examination paper carefully and attempt all the questions.

(ii)   Explanation of the term dependency ratio and how it is calculated was not known by the majority of candidates.

(iii)   Whilst many candidates were able to explain how falling birth rates accounted for the decreasing number of young people in Bangladesh, quite a few tried to explain this in terms of increasing death rates which did not gain them any marks.

(iv)   Some candidates were able to explain how fewer young people could improve the quality of life and be an opportunity for Bangladesh because there would be less pressure on education and healthcare, family size would be smaller, poverty could decline, along with less overcrowding in homes; diet, education and health would all improve and so on. However many candidates argued that Bangladesh would become depopulated, the population would be ageing, and the economy would be in freefall.

(c) There were excellent attempts by candidates to express opinions, make a decision and support their decision with arguments. The majority of candidates presented a clear argument in **(i)** why older people need government help and made a good argument why it is important to provide jobs for people of working age. The better candidates expressed a clear decision in **(iii)** which they supported by developing their earlier points and presenting additional arguments, whilst weaker candidates merely repeated their earlier points.

Question 4

The most popular question which produced many excellent answers.

(a) (i) Completion of the pie chart was reasonably well done by the better candidates but for some candidates it was a struggle despite the help given with markings on the circle. It is important that candidates use a sharp pencil and ruler for these AO3 graph completion questions and that the shading on the graph replicates that shown in the key. An eraser is also very helpful to correct mistakes.

(ii) The vast majority of candidates were able to identify the biggest source of pollution from the pie chart.

(iii) The effects of air pollution on people were well understood by many candidates. Some candidates also included information on the effects of air pollution on the environment which did not get credited as it did not answer the question set.

(iv) This question on reducing air pollution demonstrated that many candidates had an excellent knowledge of government initiatives in Bangladesh with a variety of responses relating mostly to transport, industry, and renewable energy.

(b) (i) The map of industrial growth posed problems for some candidates who gave the three countries the same growth figure by stating the range for each country as 3.9 per cent rather than different figures for each country.

(ii) There were many detailed responses to this question on the obstacles to be overcome for Bangladesh's industry to continue to grow, thus enabling a good proportion of candidates to gain full marks. The number of lines is an indication to candidates of how much they should write to obtain the marks available. Bullet points are now seldom seen and instead the best candidates are developing each point to make sure they score maximum marks.

(c) The majority of candidates have a good knowledge and understanding of the role of small-scale and cottage industries and also large-scale industries for Bangladesh's continued economic growth. Logical, clear arguments were made in **(i)** and **(ii)** but too much repetition of points already made in **parts (i)** and **(ii)** meant candidates did not always gain the three marks available in **(iii)** by developing their earlier points and giving additional arguments.

Question 5

A popular, well-answered question in which candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the informal sector, microcredit and international migration.

(a) These AO1 questions on the informal sector demonstrated that many candidates had a sound knowledge and understanding of this topic. They could define the term informal workers and give examples in **(i)**, give reasons to explain why this sector is so important in Bangladesh in **(ii)** and describe some of the disadvantages for workers in the informal sector in **(iii)**.

(b) (i) This bar graph was well interpreted by the majority of candidates; they were able to identify the main changes and quote data accurately from the graph to support their answer, demonstrating once again the strength of their AO3 skills.

(ii) The excellent responses to this question showed that candidates were able to explain in detail how micro-credit helps people escape poverty in Bangladesh. The best responses included examples in their answers and focused on the question set.

(c) (i) Quite a few candidates did not attempt to complete this divided horizontal bar, but those who did mostly made a good job of it. It was clear that some candidates were unfamiliar with the construction of this type of graph because they attempted to plot the data from the left-hand side on top of the segment that had already been plotted.

(ii) The difference between push and pull factors was not always clearly stated.

(iii) The most important pull factor was correctly identified from the graph by the majority of candidates.

(c) These AO2 questions at the end of each section are designed to allow candidates to express opinions, make a decision and support their decision with arguments. Those who agreed with the government strategy of supporting international migration as a development strategy found it easier to support their decision with sound arguments than candidates who saw migration as having disastrous effects in all areas leading to depopulation, not just the loss of skilled people. Most candidates were able to make present a strong argument in favour of and against international strategy as a development strategy in **(i)** and **(ii)**. However, as mentioned before, in **(iii)** candidates need to elaborate and give additional arguments to support their decision if they are to gain all three marks available for this part of the question.