

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE
Bangladesh Studies
History and Culture
4BN0_01

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General comments

There was an identical entry figure this year compared to 2011 and the standard of work presented this year by candidates was similar to that of last year. All the candidates answered the required three questions and few displayed any sign of problems relating to time or rubric infringement.

As with last year, most candidates tended to write about the topics/characters/events listed in the question rather than focussing on the question posed. The content suggested in the question is merely there to guide candidates rather than be prescriptive and few candidates used their other material. The most popular questions were 4, 5 and 6.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

There were few good attempts at question 1 in which candidates had to explain the contributions of two from the military campaigns of Iliyas Shah, Banalah and the reign of Jalauddin in helping Bengal to become independent. Most answers tended to be descriptive with little emphasis in the way of explanation of how these factors contributed to the development of Bengal.

Question 2

Question 2 was also a question that attracted lots of narrative. The question required candidates to explain how Bengal developed under Shaista Khan. Aspects suggested in the question included European traders, muslin and the administration of Shah Shula. Most candidates were able to describe some of these aspects but there was little or no explanation of these or other aspects of their knowledge of the period.

Question 3

There were some good responses to this question on the role of Lord Cornwallis in British rule of Bengal. The facts relating to finance, administration and trade during his administration were well known but many of the responses were descriptive of the factors involved rather than addressing the importance of the changes to British rule in Bengal.

Question 4

This was a popular question on the partition of Bengal in 1947. The detail of the role of Lord Mountbatten and the Radcliffe Commission together with communal violence were well known and attempts in relating these factors to the importance of the decision to partition Bengal were generally well done. There were some good attempts to explain their importance.

Question 5

There were some good attempts at this popular question. Many candidates attempted to explain the part of the Awami League, the Pakistan Constitution of 1956 and the Lahore Conference of 1966 relating to the demands for self government of East Pakistan. These were well known topics and there was some good evidence of very well prepared candidates who scored highly.

Question 6

There were a number of very good responses to this popular question on the reasons for Bangladesh becoming independent in 1971. This was one of the very few questions whereby candidates used other knowledge rather than rely on the factors given in the question. Again there were some high scoring answers where well prepared candidates were able to explain the reasons for Bangladesh gaining independence.

Question 7

There were a few attempts at question 7 which was concerned with popular culture, the media and women's rights in Bangladesh since 1975. Answers were inevitably descriptive and few facts were known by those candidates who chose the question. As a result there were few well answered responses.

Question 8

Few candidates answered question 8 on Hindu temples, mosques and Mughal architecture in relation to Bangladesh architecture and those that did provided a weak descriptive account of the above rather than address their influence.

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