

# Examiners' Report Summer 2008

GCE O Level

## Bangladesh Studies (7038)

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# Bangladesh Studies 7038 Paper 1

## General comments

The standard of work presented this year by candidates was broadly comparable to that of last year. All the candidates answered the required three questions and few displayed any apparent 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.

## Comments on individual questions

### Section 1

There were several good attempts at question 2 in which most candidates were able to explain the importance of individuals or dynasties to the development of Bengal with reference to the Pala Dynasty, Iliyas Shah and Jalauddin. However most answers tended to be descriptive with little in the way of explanation of the way these factors contributed to the development of Bengal.

There were no answers to question 1.

### Section 2

Question 3 was a popular question and one that was done well. The question required candidates to give reasons why Dhaka developed as an important trading centre in the eighteenth century with specific reference to Muslin, the administration of Shah Shuja and the East India Company. Most candidates were able to score well on this question with a good level of detail shown. Answers were generally accurate.

Few candidates answered question 4 and those that did generally produced weak answers.

### Section 3

There were a few responses to questions 5 or 6 on the roles of Robert Clive, the Regulating Act and Warren Hastings (question 5) and Pitt's India Act, Lord Cornwallis and the Permanent Settlement (question 6) in the control or development of Bengal. Again most of these responses were descriptive of the factors involved rather than addressing their importance to British rule in Bengal.

#### **Section 4**

Question 7 was popular in this section on the development of the Pakistan Movement during the 1930s and 1940s. The detail of the roles of the Government of India Act, Jinnah and the Lahore Resolution were well known and attempts at the question were good.

No candidates answered question 8.

#### **Section 5**

This was a popular Section from which to select questions and one that saw a number of good answers to both questions. Question 9 on the reasons why differences between West and East Bengal/Pakistan develop saw some accurate and knowledgeable answers that addressed the requirements of the question. Question 10; also saw some responses with a good level of detail that addressed the changing relations between East and West Pakistan in the 1960s. However these answers were largely narrative and produced little to explain why the events listed were important to these changing relations.

#### **Section 6**

There were a few good responses to question 11 in this section on the reasons for the defeat of Pakistani forces in the War of Liberation. The question required candidates to give reasons for this with reference to the Mukti Bahini, Guerrilla tactics and support from India. Candidates were able to provide a good level of detail on these but were narrative rather than relating these to the reasons for the Pakistani forces defeat.

There were no responses to question 12.

#### **Section 7**

There were a few attempts at question 14 which was concerned with the importance of two named individuals in development of Bangladesh since 1975. Again some answers contained an appropriate level of detail on General Rahman, H.N.Ershad and membership of the UN that addressed the question and scored well.

There were no answers to question 13.

#### **Section 8**

Few candidates answered question 16 on the Santhal, tribal customs and Kazi Nazul Islam or Begum Sufia Kamal in relation to Bangladesh culture and those that did provided a descriptive account of their role rather than address their importance to culture.

There was little attempt at question 15.

## Bangladesh Studies 7038 Paper 2

### General comments

In making some general comments about the overall performance, I find myself largely repeating comments made 12 months previously. The paper achieved a wide differentiation and an aggregate profile very similar to the last few examinations. Good competent work tackling the questions head on at the top end of the mark range was counterbalanced at the other end by many candidates attempting questions for which they were clearly ill-prepared. Again, it was in section (c) of the optional questions where marks were often lost and mainly because answers were undernourished. The requirement here is for discussion and continuous prose. As a consequence, a simple listing will not suffice. Candidates should be encouraged to ensure that they leave themselves sufficient time to do justice to this critical part of the questions.

### Comments on individual questions

#### Section A

Q1, the compulsory question, seeks to test the candidate's more general knowledge of Bangladesh. In (a) candidates coped well with (i) and (ii), but in (iii) knowledge of levees was confined to a minority. In (b)(i) the main hill regions were known, but candidates struggled to explain their remoteness in (ii), namely their location at the very margins of Bangladesh, their steep slopes and the absence of large rivers to facilitate access. In (c)(i) most candidates demonstrated a sense of what development is about and were forthcoming with appropriate measures in (ii). In (iii), however, only a few understood what might be needed to make development in Bangladesh more sustainable.

#### Section B

Q2 was the majority choice in this section. In (a)(i) most were able to cite a greenhouse gas, but in (ii) there was some confusion between the greenhouse effect and the widening hole in the ozone layer. The human contributions to global warming were widely understood in (iii). In (b)(i) few recognised that the term refers to the seasonal reversal of wind direction over South and South-east Asia, but most candidates scored well when it came to identifying costs and benefits of this reversal. The vulnerable situation of Bangladesh in the current era of global warming was well grasped in terms of increased flooding and loss of land.

In Q3(a)(i) there was a complete lack of understanding regarding the meaning of 'parent material', but most recovered well in (ii). The run of generally competent work continued in both parts of (b). In (c) most candidates were able to indicate a range of people-induced hazards, with pollution of air and water and road accidents most commonly mentioned.

### Section C

Q4 was the more popular option in this section. Most came up with the correct answer to (a)(i), but in (ii) tended not to note features of the pyramid's shape, but rather anticipate what was required as an answer to (iii). The distinction between 'population density' and 'population distribution' was well understood in (b)(ii), but many candidates were at a loss to come up with three credible factors in (ii). Equally in (c) the distinction between the two types of migration was sound, but most answers needed more explanation and supporting examples.

In Q5 (a)(i) all candidates noted that urbanisation had increased during the period, but few made any comment on the accelerating rate. Most struggled to come up with an alternative measure in (ii), but recovered when tackling (iii) and (iv). In (b)(i) most candidates showed that they had some sense of the meaning of welfare, and there were many good responses to (ii). Similarly, there was encouraging awareness in (c) of the environmental challenges confronting Bangladesh, and many were quick to point out that the challenges were more than just water and atmospheric pollution.

### Section D

More candidates chose Q6 in preference to Q7, and it has to be said that the general standard of the work was quite good, particularly in (a) and (b). In (c) the work was highly polarised in that some candidates clearly demonstrated they understood the significance of the informal sector. Equally, there were those who demonstrated a lack of understanding of the sector as a whole.

In Q7 insecurity of knowledge was evident in (a)(i) particularly with regard to the un-named economic factor (capital) and most struggled to explain the 'physical' aspect of energy. Plenty of valid suggestions were forthcoming in (b)(i), but the explanations offered in (ii) were undernourished. An encouraging aspect of the answers to (c) was the awareness of the different ways in which Bangladesh is now 'plugged into' the global economy.



## O Level Bangladesh Studies 7038 Grade Boundaries

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award for grade	58	49	40	35	27





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