

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Bangladesh Studies (4BN0)

Paper 1: The History and Culture of
Bangladesh

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General comments

The standard of work presented this year by candidates was comparable to that of last year. All the candidates answered the required three questions and few if any displayed signs 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 5 and 6.

Question 1

There were few good attempts at Q1 in which candidates could explain the impact of Iliyas Shah in bringing about change in Bengal. Most answers tended to be descriptive with little emphasis in the way of explanation of how military conquests, administration and relations with Delhi contributed to the development of Bengal.

Question 2

Q2 was also a question that attracted few and mainly narrative responses. The question required candidates to explain why the Mughal Empire lost control of Bengal. Aspects suggested in the question included the rule of Murshid Quli Khan, European merchants and the rule of the Nawabs. 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 few responses to this question on the reasons why Bangla developed into a written language during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The facts relating to William Carey, the Serampore Press and Raja Ram Mohan Roy were well known but most responses were descriptive of the factors involved rather than addressing the importance of the reasons for the language's development.

Question 4

This was a rarely answered question on the reasons why opposition to British rule grew in Bengal after the First World War. Although the detail of the role of the Government of India Act, Jinnah's 14 Points and the Round Table Conferences were well known, attempts in relating these factors to the reasons for/to opposition growing to British rule were less good.

Question 5

There were some good attempts at this popular question. Many candidates attempted to explain the factors that included the increased powers for the provincial governments, separate taxation and finance for East Pakistan and free trade in goods between East and West Pakistan relating to the reasons for the

effect of the Six-Point Programme affecting relations between East and West Pakistan. These were well known topics and there was some good evidence of very well prepared candidates who tended to score highly.

Question 6

There were a number of very good responses to this popular question on the reasons why Pakistani armed forces were defeated in the 1971 War of Liberation. 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 much in evidence.

Question 7

There were very few attempts at Q7, which was concerned with the development of the reasons why the number of political parties in Bangladesh grew since 1975. Answers were often generalised, vague and didn't relate to the question posed. As a result few good answers were seen.

Question 8

A few candidates answered Q8 on why the Language Movement became so important in the 1950s and 1960s. Answers tended to concentrate exclusively on Ekushey February and without many exceptions answers were merely descriptive and didn't focus on the reasons why the Movement became so important.

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