



## MODEL QUESTION 17

### Unite: 9, Lesson: 2

British-Bangladeshis, also known as British-Bengalis, are an important part of the Bangladeshi diaspora or those of Bangladeshi origin who are living abroad. Almost half of all British-Bangladeshis live in London, especially in the East London boroughs, of which Tower Hamlets has the highest concentration. Today a tourist who is new to London may well decide to make her way over to the East End of the city, to visit *ÔBanglatownÕ*. After exiting the Tube Station there she might follow the signs that point to Brick Lane, a street that has gained certain notoriety from Monica Ali's best-selling novel of the same name, which was also made into a movie. She may decide to try out one of the many Bangladeshi restaurants she sees there for lunch. Sitting at one of the tables with a window onto the street, she might notice that the street signs are not just in English but also in Bengali. And the lamp-posts are in green and red - the colors of the Bangladeshi flag. In fact everywhere she looks she finds visual cues of the Bangladeshi, and even more specifically, the Sylheti presence in the area. Storefronts advertise flights from London to Sylhet, some on Bangladesh Biman (the national airline of Bangladesh) and others on Air Sylhet, a private airline company formed by British Bangladeshis. There is a sign for Sonali Bank - the major state-owned commercial bank of Bangladesh. There is a food store advertising frozen fish from Sylhet's Surma River. She watches two elderly men with long, grey beards enter the store; they are dressed in long white tunics, baggy pants and white head caps. She sees a group of teenage girls walking down the street in animated conversation. One is dressed in a black burkah and the others are in jeans and long shirts, along with bright sequined hijabs on their heads. Looking through her London guidebook, she reads about how this neighborhood is in *ÔBanglatownÕ*. In 2001 British Bangladeshi leaders, including many of the second-generation activists, led a successful bid via the Tower Hamlets council to gain the official designation of *ÔBanglatownÕ* for Brick Lane and its surrounding neighbourhoods. With the help of street signs and an advertising campaign, the hope was to give the area a distinct cultural identity that would be attractive to tourists and thus beneficial for Bangladeshi businesses located there. In fact the area has a number of visible

Bangladeshi landmarks, such as Altab Ali Park, the Kobi Nazrul Cultural Centre and the Shohid Minar Monument. Along with the official designation of Banglatown, these landmarks are matters of considerable pride for many British Bangladeshis, symbols of their hard-won presence and political voice in Britain.

1. Choose the right word which is the closest meaning in the context that has been used in the text.

a) The word **animated** refers to text \_\_\_\_\_

- i) lively                      ii) fiery                      iii) passionate                      iv) vital

b) The word **baggy** refers to text \_\_\_\_\_

- i) bag                      ii) fat                      iii) flabby                      iv) thin

c) The word **borough** refers to text \_\_\_\_\_

- i) a town having its own local government                      ii) a megacity with a mayor





# English Language Zone

JSC, SSC & HSC English

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- i) the people of British origin, living in Bangladesh
- (ii) the people of Britain and Bangladesh living in other countries
- (iii) the people of Bangladeshi origin, living in Britain
- (iv) the people of Britain and Bangladesh

**m) How are the lamp-posts in the East London?**

- (i) The lamp-posts have the Bangladeshi flag
- (ii) The lamp-posts are in red colors
- (iii) The lamp-posts are in green colors
- (iv) The lamp-posts have the symbols of the Bangladeshi flag

**n) The word 'concentration' stands for \_\_\_\_\_**

- (i) attentiveness
- (ii) a close gathering of people
- (iii) a common place
- (iv) close attention

**o) Where does a tourist find the Sylheti presence according to the passage?**

- (i) In the East city.
- (ii) In Sylhet
- (iii) In 'Banglatown'
- (iv) In the heart of London

**p) A tourist can find the Sylheti presence in \_\_\_\_\_**

- (i) Banglatown
- (ii) the heart of London
- (iii) the East city
- (iv) Sylhet

**q) "Sitting at one the tables with a window onto the street, she might notice that the str signs are not just in English but also in Bengali." What does it imply?**

- (i) The increasing Bangladeshi people in London
- (ii) The increasing use of Bengali in London
- (iii) The natural beauty of London
- (iv) The increasing use of English in London

**2. Write the answer of the following question.**

- a.** Where do most British-Bangladeshis live?
- b.** How and why did Brick Lane gain ÔnotorietyÕ?
- c.** What is the name of Monica AliÕs novel and the film made based on it?
- d.** What are some signs and symbols of Bangladesh to be found in the Brick Lane area?
- e.** How did the area come to be known as ÔBanglatownÕ?

Last month, a 20-year dream came true: we visited Italy. While it was an amazing lesson in history, I was also taken by surprise at the Bangladeshis in Italy. I heard estimates of between 200,000 and 600,000

Bangladeshis in Italy. I saw them in Rome, Florence and Venice (but not in Siena.) The ones I saw all had small to medium-size businesses. In Rome, they were selling handbags, sunglasses and tourist material on the streets. In Florence, we walked into a store selling Indian-looking things - a monohori doka - only to find the owner was a Bangladeshi who had a chain of these stores in the city. In Venice, they were selling trinkets-like little puppets made from balloons - on the Accademia Bridge and in San Marco Square. One seller told me these would not sell in Rome, but in Venice the tourists buy them. They were incredibly kind and polite to us. The person in Florence-much to our protestations-treated us with cokes and ice cream, and sold things to us at large discounts. When it came to prices, they said "Pay us what you want-we are so happy to see a Bangladeshi tourist here." It was a kind of haggling in reverse. One street vendor in Rome, after selling a sunglass at 18 Euro to a European person, turned around and sold me a similar sunglass at 4.5 Euro. I wanted to pay him more, but, incredible as it seems, he would not take it. I think this barely covered his cost. At a mini-flea-market of Bangladeshi stalls at the Tiburtina station in Rome, I fell into a discussion of the business. It costs them 1000-2000 Euros a month to rent each stall. The work is very hard, and they live frugally. So they are able to save some money which they send home. One seller in Venice said he can save up to Euro 1000 a month, but only if a lot of conditions are met (e.g. he has to sell an average of 50 euros worth daily; his food expenses cannot exceed Euro 80/month, etc.) I was inspired by their entrepreneurship and touched by their generosity and hope their Diaspora comes true soon. Here is a stall at the mini-flea market outside Tiburtina:

3. Based on your reading of the passage, make short notes in each of the boxes of the flow chart showing the life style of the Bangladeshis in Italy (No. 1 has been done for you)



The term "diaspora" is used to refer to people who have left their homelands and settled in other parts of the world, either because they were forced to do so or because they wanted to leave on their own. The word is increasingly used for such people as a collective group and/or a community. The world has seen many diasporas but scholars have been studying the phenomenon with great interest only in recent decades. Among the great diasporas of history is that of the Jewish people, who were forced to leave their lands in ancient times. The movement of Aryans from Central Europe to the Indian sub-continent thousands of years ago is also a noteworthy diaspora, although the causes of this diaspora are unclear. In twentieth century history, the Palestinian diaspora has attracted a lot of attention and been a cause of concern for world leaders because of the plight of Palestinians. There have been massive diasporas in Africa, too, over the centuries, either because of war or because of the ravages of nature. But the chief reason why the phenomenon of diaspora is attracting so much attention now is globalization.

4. Make a summary of the text (not more than 100 words)