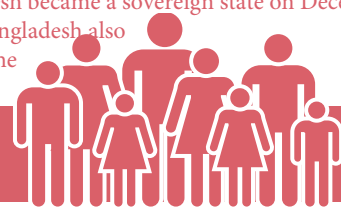




Bangladesh

Located in the South-East region of Asia, Bangladesh is bordered by India on the west, north, and east. The Bay of Bengal marks Bangladesh's southern border, and from archaeological discoveries, human habitation in the Bay of Bengal began 20,000 years ago, and remnants of the Copper Age settlements date back 4,000 years. After various invasions by empires, Bangladesh became a sovereign state on December 16, 1971, when it achieved its independence from Pakistan. Bangladesh also non-violently and successfully protested against Pakistan for the right to speak in their native language, Bangla, in 1952.



Family Life

In Bangladesh, most households consist of parents or a parent, and their children. Rarely do grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins live in the same house even if they live in the same town. However, there are some joint families; and sometimes grandparents move in with

the family as they age, but this custom is changing and is becoming less common. Families typically eat together, but it is not unusual to eat apart as schedules demand. Students are accustomed to making small and simple meals for themselves, however most are not accustomed to making full meals for themselves. Many mothers remain at home and fathers are the only earning member; in some families, both parents work and share responsibilities at home as well. Both parents may expect to be seen as equal authority figures in all household decisions, however the father as the head of the family and has a great influence in all decisions. It is considered respectful to allow family members regular, individual time by themselves, to pursue their own activities, socialize with friends, or to simply relax, but minors are expected to ask permission from elders or parents before socializing outside of the house.

Teen Life: In Bangladesh, children ask for permission before they borrow anything. However, sharing, especially cosmetics, food, and means of transportation, is typical. Many things are considered common though, like food, and can be taken/used without asking.

Responsibilities: Generally, house help is employed at home for cleaning rooms and bathrooms, doing laundry, and various chores. Bangladeshi teenagers are generally not given important responsibilities beyond academic performance. It is very rare for a teenager in Bangladesh to think about his or her own 'pocket money.' Students do not take on employment of any kind and are dependent on their parents for financial support. The financial responsibilities of Bangladeshi teenagers vary depending on the family's income; Therefore, only some Bangladeshi teenagers have budgeting experience, specifically in making decisions about commuting or buying food, but most teenagers do not.

Parental Involvement: Bangladeshi parents often monitor what their children do online in the interest of their children's safety. Parents may limit what sites a child visits online, or how much time the child spends on the internet. Many Bangladeshi parents are in direct contact with their children's school and are kept aware of their academic progress. If teenagers break rules, parents usually scold them and punish them by taking away their entertainment mediums; such as television, gaming console, mobile and computer usage.

Pets: Few families have pets at home, and any household pets will typically be kept outside.



Personal Interactions

Mixed Gender Socializing: Boys and girls may socialize together, but group socializing is preferred. Teenagers in Bangladesh are generally not encouraged to have friends of opposite sex. There are several ways to greet people in Bangladesh. For Muslims, it is usually "Assalamualaikum". For Hindus, it is usually "Namaskar". In addition to these, asking "how are you" and asking about family are also common expressions.

Friendships: Parents do not encourage teenagers to share money with friends or peers. Teenagers in Bangladesh have friends but always maintain a certain distance between each other. Parents are conscious about their child's friends. Usually one seeks someone reliable and trustworthy for a friend. It is important to know your friend's personal likes and dislikes, and to be committed to being available when a friend is in need of emotional support or help.

Communication Styles: Parents prefer to have a direct style of communication with their children. Bangladeshis are reserved and feel shy when it comes to displaying negative emotions towards or among their peers and family.

Eye Contact: Bangladeshi youth do not tend to make eye contact when speaking with elders as it is considered rude

Dhaka

Population
168,957,745

Square Miles
56,977

Currency
Bangladeshi Taka

Literacy rate
58.5%

Literacy rate
64.6%

Bengali 98%
Other 2%
(includes tribal
groups and non-
Bengali Muslims)

Muslim 89.1%
Hindu 10%
Other 0.9%

School



Classes: In Bangladesh, students remain in the same classroom and teachers rotate to the different rooms. There are both co-ed and same gender schools in Bangladesh. In co-ed schools, boys and girls may sit next to each other in the same class. Yes, students can choose their own classes, except for basic subjects such as Language (Bangla and English) and Mathematics. In the national curriculum, after grade 8 students choose their own subjects, which are categorized into three groups: Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, higher Mathematics), Commerce (Accounting, Economics, Business Studies, Commerce) and Arts (Social Science, Home Economics, Global Culture and History, Agriculture, Religion). Students remain within these subject categories until they finish high school. For schools using the British Curriculum, students can select subjects with a mixture of Science, Commerce and Arts based on their preference. Students are evaluated based on exams, which are the majority of their grades. Assignments and quizzes make up the rest of the evaluation.

School Relationships: Students have a formal relationship with their teachers and address them by "Sir" or "Miss."

Extracurricular Activities: Students join clubs and other extracurricular activities through school in Bangladesh. Parents do try to give of their time to support their child's extracurricular activity.

School Rules and Attire: Cell phones are only to be used in an emergency and with the permission of the school authority. All students wear a uniform to school. Students receive punishments ranging from suspension to expulsion depending upon the severity of their behavior.

Returning from Exchange: Bangladeshi students lose an academic year while they are abroad in the U.S.

Food and Culture



Religion: Religious practice is both an individual and family event, but generally not a community event. Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr in Bangladesh is festive and celebratory.

Holidays: There are many major festivals and Bangladeshis celebrate a variety of national holidays, including Eid, Puja, Christmas, Pahela Baishak (1st day of Bengali New year), and Maghi Purnima. Holidays are celebrated with great festivity amidst family members and friends. Eid-ul-Azha and Eid-ul-Fitr are two of the biggest Muslim holidays. Durga Pooja and Diwali are two major Hindu holidays. While on program, students usually miss the feasts (similar to Thanksgiving) and family activities. Students are advised to incorporate the celebration into the U.S. host family and celebrate it with them, instead of missing home.

Food and Culture

Guest Culture: In Bangladesh, almost all the time, guests are offered food and drink. It is considered rude if the guest does not consume the food offered, even if it is tea. Offering Tea is a common practice. Guests are not expected to partake in any household activities/chores and receive exclusive treatment.

Lunch and Diets: There are no specific dietary restrictions unless someone is vegetarian. For Muslims, pork is restricted, and for Hindus, beef is restricted. The main differences from common American habits are that meals in Bangladesh usually include rice as a main ingredient, and the food is spicy. In Bangladesh, portions are also large, and having leftovers is a common practice. When a student usually takes lunch to school, someone from the household typically prepares it for them. Most students however, prefer lunch money from home to buy lunch from the school cafeteria. Students are accustomed to either arrangement.

Personal Hygiene



Generally, a Bangladeshi teenager will take one 10-15 minute shower once a day. In Bangladesh, each person usually has one towel for their individual use. In urban areas of Bangladesh, it is generally thought to be unclean to wear the same clothes two days in a row. However, in more rural areas, it is more dependent on the person's ability to purchase clothes and he or she may rely on cologne and wash their clothes with less frequency.