

South Asian Cultural Currents: Navigating Political Shifts and Local Trends

South Asia Politics & Culture · Answer Key · 10 Questions

1. In Bhutan, what ancient school of Buddhism spread to the country from the southern Pala Empire of Bengal during the first millennium?

- A) Theravada Buddhism
- B) Mahayana Buddhism
- C) Vajrayana Buddhism**
- D) Zen Buddhism

2. Which cultural institution in Bangladesh, dedicated to promoting Bengali music and traditions since 1961, was attacked and set on fire in December 2025 amidst political unrest?

- A) Udichi Shilpigoshthi
- B) Chhayanot**
- C) Banga Sahitya Parishad
- D) Aalap

3. In India, a recent ideological shift has seen a growing nationalist sentiment questioning long-standing binaries like 'regionalism versus nationalism,' especially in which southern states?

- A) Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka**
- B) Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan
- C) West Bengal, Odisha, and Bihar
- D) Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh

4. The Taliban regime in Afghanistan severely restricted cultural activities. Which of the following was notably destroyed in 2001 by the Taliban?

- A) The National Museum of Kabul
- B) The Bamiyan Buddhas**
- C) The Arg of Kabul
- D) The Minaret of Jam

5. In Pakistan, what type of political leadership is a common feature since its creation, often described as a dynastic succession?

- A) Merit-based leadership
- B) Military dictatorship
- C) Dynastic politics**
- D) Technocratic governance

6. The Maldives experienced a shift in political landscape with the election of Mohamed Muizzu. His campaign notably included a pledge to advocate for the removal of what foreign military presence?

- A) Chinese military personnel
- B) Indian military personnel**
- C) US military personnel
- D) Russian military personnel

7. In Nepal, what was the primary catalyst for the youth-led 'Gen Z movement' that led to significant political upheaval and protests in September 2025?

- A) A rise in unemployment
- B) A nationwide social media ban**
- C) A corruption scandal involving a prominent politician
- D) Increased inflation rates

8. Sri Lanka's political landscape has seen a desire for change, with Anura Kumara Dissanayake, leading a centre-left coalition, winning the 2024 presidential election. Which party coalition does he lead?

- A) United National Party (UNP)
- B) Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP)
- C) Tamil National Alliance (TNA)
- D) National People's Power (NPP)**

9. Recent trends highlight the uncredited adoption of South Asian traditions in Western fashion and beauty. Which traditional Indian practice, often a part of family bonding, has been rebranded as part of the 'clean girl aesthetic'?

- A) Yoga
- B) Henna application
- C) Hair oiling**
- D) Wearing bindis

10. In Bhutan, the government adopted a national policy in 1988 demanding adherence to Buddhist traditions. This policy caused significant issues for which population group, primarily Hindu?

- A) The Tibetan refugees
- B) The Nepalese immigrants**
- C) The Lhotshampa people
- D) The Sharchop ethnic group