



PERSPECTIVE: Immigrants attend a British citizenship ceremony in London

A question of Britishness...

EE EXAMINES VALUE OF THE CITIZENSHIP TEST

Life in the UK:

Q1. What dish is made from suet, dried fruit and spices?

Yorkshire Pudding
Dumplings
Christmas Pudding

St George's Day
St Andrew's Day

Q2. When did the Gunpowder Plot take place?

5th November 1505
5th November 1605
5th November 1705
5th November 1805

Q4. Choose two out of four answers: Which TWO patron saints' days fall in March?

St David's Day
St Patrick's Day
St George's Day
St Andrew's Day

Note: Since Q4 asks for two answers, participants get two marks if they manage to get both answers right

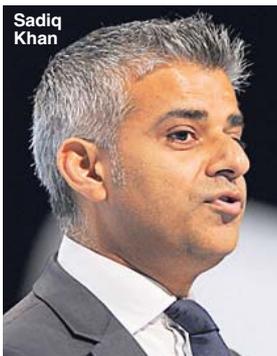
Q3. Choose one out of four answers: Which patron saint's day is a public holiday in its country?

St David's Day
St Patrick's Day

Answers: Q1 Christmas Pudding, Q2 5th November 1605, Q3 St Patrick's Day, Q4 St David's Day and St Patrick's Day



Shazna Choudhury



Sadiq Khan

BRITAIN'S controversial citizenship test has been slammed by campaigners after an *Eastern Eye* survey found that migrants know more about the UK than natives.

EE asked Britons from all backgrounds, in addition to migrants who have taken the citizenship test, four questions from it (see box above).

From the 16 Britons and 16 migrants who took part:

- A third of migrants knew St David's Day and St Patrick's Day are in March compared with a quarter of Britons.
- All 16 migrants knew St Patrick's Day is a public holiday, while two Britons got the answer wrong.
- Just 10 people out of the 32 knew that Guy Fawkes' gunpowder plot took place in 1605.

In total, the Britons got 50 points out of a possible 80, while the migrants achieved 54 points.

Campaign groups say it shows the citizenship test, which was introduced by the Labour government in 2005, does not prove who is more British and needs to be overhauled.

Shadow justice minister Sadiq Khan said last month it "frustrated" him to see newcomers obliged to sit citizenship tests when many people "know b****r all" about British history.

Reacting to *EE*'s survey Khan, the Labour MP for Tooting in London, said this week: "It is certainly a good thing that new citizens are asked to learn about citizenship and that children also learn about it in schools.

"However, there are still improvements that need to be made. We all

by NADEEM BADSHAH and IMRAN CHOUDHURY

need to have a much better knowledge on issues surrounding citizenship."

To acquire British citizenship or for leave to remain in the UK, immigrants must show they can speak English and also be successful in the Life in the UK test. Last October, the test was changed to include questions on the European Union, British history and culture.

However, there are mixed feelings about the value of the test from lobby groups and politicians.

Lord Navnit Dholakia, deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords, said: "I am not surprised that migrants got more correct answers about citizenship tests than Britons.

"I have always argued that sooner or later, the debate about immigration has to move forward from conflicting notions about multiculturalism to citizenship. Migrants have demonstrated that they not only put more efforts in learning about life in Britain but also about the rights and responsibilities that go with it."

Amit Kapadia, executive director of the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme Forum, added: "Most of these tests are only meant to make it difficult for some immigrants to obtain settlement or British citizenship.

"If someone has lived in the UK for five or more years, then that person already knows life in the UK and does not need further hurdles to prove his or her knowledge of the same.

"The *Eastern Eye* survey result is a good indication of how irrelevant these

tests are, and I am certain even some of the ministers would not be able to pass Life in the UK test," Kapadia said.

And opinion was also split among the Britons and migrants who took part in our survey.

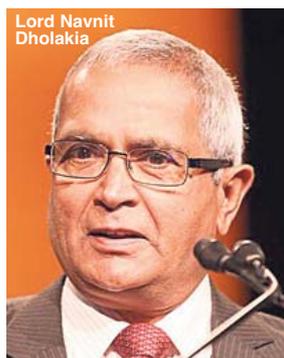
One Briton, who got three answers out of five right, said: "They should have a bit more on history. People who have lived here all their lives won't know the answers. It doesn't make you any more British for knowing it."

Mudassir Shahid, a shop worker in Croydon in London, said: "I think it is good for knowledge to know where you work and live. I like the test."

Shazna Choudhury from Luton, who got four answers right out of five in *EE*'s survey, said: "I don't think it's a good test to see how British someone is, especially in this day and age when Britain is so diverse in culture and tradition. So to have questions in there like Christmas pudding for a start – not everybody in Britain eats Christmas pudding or celebrates Christmas.

"I think I've got quite a good memory, that's why I remembered most of the answers, but I think the average person won't remember."

Alok Sharma, Conservative MP for Reading West, said: "I certainly believe more should be done in our schools to ensure that everyone in our country can share a knowledge and understanding of British history and culture. That's why I am pleased the government is committed to putting British history at the heart of the school curriculum."



Lord Navnit Dholakia



Alok Sharma