



## **Mauritius: Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 6 July 2010**

### **Current information on treatment of Creoles**

Please find attached information relating to your query on Mauritius.

*Freedom House* state:

"Various ethnic cultures and traditions flourish in peace, and constitutional prohibitions against discrimination are generally respected. However, Mauritian Creoles, descendants of African slaves who comprise about a third of the population, live in poverty and complain of unfair treatment. Tensions between the Hindu majority and Muslim minority persist, constituting one of the country's few potential ethnic flashpoints. In addition, although they have not been the victims of formal discrimination, resettled Chagos Islanders have not been integrated into society and suffer from high levels of unemployment." (Freedom House (3 May 2010) *Freedom in the World 2010 – Mauritius*)

The *US Department of State* reports:

"Due to the predominance of Hindu citizens in the upper echelons of the civil service, some minorities, usually Creoles and Muslims, alleged that they were prevented from reaching positions in the higher levels of government." (US Department of State (14 September 2007) *2007 Report on International Religious Freedom – Mauritius*)

The *US Department of State* reports:

"Due to the predominance of citizens with a Hindu background in the upper echelons of the civil service, some minorities, usually Creoles and Muslims, allege that a glass ceiling exists that prevents them from reaching the highest levels in the civil service. Despite this sentiment, before the end of the year, a member of the Franco-Mauritian minority, Paul Raymond Berenger, will become Prime Minister of Mauritius through a pre-arranged agreement between the parties of the governing coalition. Mr. Berenger will be the first Christian Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius; he is currently the Deputy Prime Minister.

While some Creole political groups allege that Christian Creoles receive unjust treatment from the police, there was no evidence that this was based on religious differences in particular. Observers believe that such incidents likely are a result largely of the Creoles' position as the country's underclass, as well as ethnic differences, since the police force predominantly is Indo-Mauritian. Tensions between Creoles and police were ongoing at the end of the period covered by this report." (US Department of State (18 December 2003) *U.S. Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 2003 – Mauritius*)

*BBC News reports:*

"Various cultures and traditions flourish in peace, though Mauritian Creoles, descendants of African slaves who make up a third of the population, live in poverty and complain of discrimination." (BBC News (6 May 2010) *Mauritius country profile*)

*Minority Rights Group International state:*

"Black Creoles especially have been subject to discrimination. Many neighbourhoods are ethnically segregated, with low-status Creoles invariably in the poorest housing." (Minority Rights Group International (Undated) *Mauritius: Creoles*)

## **References**

BBC News (6 May 2010) *Mauritius country profile*

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/1063172.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1063172.stm)

(Accessed 6 July 2010)

Freedom House (3 May 2010) *Freedom in the World 2010 – Mauritius*

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2010&country=7875>

(Accessed 6 July 2010)

Minority Rights Group International (Undated) *Mauritius: Creoles*

<http://www.minorityrights.org/5820/mauritius/creoles.html>

(Accessed 6 July 2010)

US Department of State (14 September 2007) *2007 Report on International Religious Freedom – Mauritius*

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2007/90110.htm>

(Accessed 6 July 2010)

US Department of State (18 December 2003) *U.S. Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 2003 – Mauritius*

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2003/23741.htm>

(Accessed 6 July 2010)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

**Sources Consulted:**

Amnesty International

BBC News

European Country of Origin Information Network

Freedom House

Google

Human Rights Watch

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Lexis Nexis

Minority Rights Group International

Refugee Documentation Centre Library

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

UNHCR Refworld

United Kingdom Home Office

United States Department of State

Yahoo