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Zimbabwe: Situation of Asians (2004 - 2006)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information about the situation of Asians in Zimbabwe was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

United States government sources of 2006 reported that Asians and mixed ethnic groups represent one per cent of the country's population (US 10 Jan. 2006; *ibid.* Jan. 2006). According to the country's most recent census, conducted in 2002 and released in 2005, there were 11,492 Asians living in Zimbabwe, who along with the white populace made up one-half per cent of the entire population (All Africa 22 Aug. 2005). The language information Website *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* noted that Zimbabwe has 19,000 speakers of Gujarati (2005), a language from India (University of Pennsylvania n.d.).

Country Reports 2004 noted that "[d]uring a cash shortage in 2003, the government controlled newspapers often accused Asians of hoarding millions of dollars to the detriment of the economy" (28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 5).

In March and April 2004, several news stories reported that Asians suspected of being involved in drug and human trafficking had been targeted for detention and deportation by immigration authorities (*The Star* 25 Mar. 2004; *The Herald* 25 Mar. 2004; *ibid.* 16 Apr. 2004).

According to a March 2005 *Cape Times* news article, some members of various ethnic communities, such as those with Indian backgrounds, have been affected by the "Citizenship Amendment Act of 2001, which denies citizenship to anyone whose parents were born outside Zimbabwe unless he/she renounces a claim to a second citizenship" (31 Mar. 2005). This piece of legislation has reportedly affected some Indians negatively by imposing restrictions on their legal and civil status within the country (*Cape Times* 31 Mar. 2005).

With regard to religion, the *Europa World Year Book 2005* stated that the "Asian minority comprises both Muslims and Hindus" (2005, 4834), and the *International Religious Freedom Report 2005* mentioned that the Muslim community in Zimbabwe is composed mainly of immigrants from India and Pakistan (8 Nov. 2005). The *International Religious Freedom Report 2005* also noted that although Muslims reportedly had religious freedom as provided by the Constitution, there were some complaints of discrimination related to the practice of their religion and limitations to its public dissemination (8 Nov. 2005).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

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Additional Sources Consulted

Two oral sources contacted at the International Crisis Group (ICG) and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights) could not provide the requested information within time constraints.

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International, BBC, *The Economist*, European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI), Factiva, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, Kubatana.net, Minorities at Risk, United Kingdom Immigration and Nationality Directorate, United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), World News Connection, Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum.

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