

# The Uganda South Asian Expulsion, 1972- Uganda

The Uganda Collection at Carleton University shares the experiences of the Asians living through the expulsion in Uganda and the Canadians who worked on resettling them. This timeline centres on how the expulsion unfolded in Uganda. It demonstrates the historic circumstances the expulsion evolved from and how it developed and changed over time. The timeline also reveals how President Idi Amin's sudden changes to who the expulsion applied to negatively impacted Asian citizens and how quickly they had to flee. The varying responses of countries like Britain, India, the United States and Canada reveals a great deal about the political climate at the time.

Date	Title	Event	Media
October 9, 1962	Ugandan Independence	Uganda attains independence. The second President, Milton Obote, comes to power in 1966.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIDMrkHrWcg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIDMrkHrWcg</a> From British Pathe "Uganda Wins Independence."
January 25, 1971	Milton Obote Overthrown	General Idi Amin, the commander of Uganda's Armed Forces, stages a coup d'état while Obote is attending the Commonwealth Conference in Singapore.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OLisR6YUpY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OLisR6YUpY</a> From Uganda Today Idi Amin takes control.
February 2, 1971	Idi Amin Takes Over	Amin declares himself President of Uganda. In the coming year, he broadcasts his anti-Asian sentiments and eventually cancels the citizenship applications of 12 000 Asians.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwHJK5zyoK0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwHJK5zyoK0</a> From the Associated Press Idi Amin discusses his presidential plans.
August 4, 1972	The Expulsion is Announced	Amin orders the expulsion of Ugandan Asians who are British citizens. He claims they have committed "economic sabotage" and that the order came to him in a dream. They face a 90-day departure deadline.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efHU6WtPX4s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efHU6WtPX4s</a> From the Associated Press Idi Amin explains his decision to expel Asians from Uganda.

August 5, 1972	Britain Tries to Intervene	In an effort to change Amin's mind about the expulsion, the British government sends Minister Geoffrey Rippon to have talks with the Ugandan President. Amin makes it clear that the expulsion will not be stopped or delayed.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2Ux0L3SAhY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2Ux0L3SAhY</a> From the Associated Press Geoffrey Rippon acquaints himself with Ugandans.
August 7, 1972	India Announces Their Response	The Indian government maintains the position that Asians in Uganda who are British citizens are Britain's responsibility. They will only accept British passport holders of Indian origin in limited numbers on humanitarian grounds if Britain acknowledges that they are their responsibility.	
August 9, 1972	The Expulsion Expands	Amin expands his expulsion to include Ugandan Asians who are citizens of Bangladesh, Pakistan and India.	
August 11, 1972	The Stateless Asians	Amin declares that all Asian Ugandan citizens must report to immigration authorities to have their claims approved, otherwise their citizenship will be revoked. When they report to the immigration department, many are told that their citizenship papers are faulty, and their citizenships are	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Q5t4Q9nRZI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Q5t4Q9nRZI</a> From the Associated Press "The Tragedy of the Stateless Ugandan Asians."

		<p>revoked as a result. Around 10 000 Ugandan Asians become stateless in this way. Whether or not they will be forced to leave Uganda in the expulsion is uncertain.</p>	
<p>August 11, 1972</p>	<p>Britain Accepts Responsibility</p>	<p>Britain declares that it will accept ultimate responsibility for the British citizens facing expulsion in Uganda. The British government sets up a standing committee to monitor the situation in Uganda and continue to try and persuade Amin to delay the deadline.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwj-XwKfMs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwj-XwKfMs</a>  From the Associated Press  Demonstrators in favour of allowing Ugandan Asians into Britain gather outside of the British Parliament.</p>
<p>August 18, 1972</p>	<p>Resettling in India</p>	<p>It is estimated that approximately 15 000 British Asians in Uganda will resettle in India because of the expulsion. The Indian high commission will issue entry certificates to them, provided they are willing to renounce their British citizenship and become Indian citizens.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_lzLHpSIvU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_lzLHpSIvU</a>  From the Associated Press  Ugandan Asians travel to India.</p>
<p>August 19, 1972</p>	<p>Amin Threatens More Will Be Expelled</p>	<p>On August 19, Amin threatens to evict all Asians from Uganda, including the remaining Asian Ugandan citizens. However, he retracts his threat on August 22 after backlash from other African countries. However, British, Bangladeshi, Pakistani</p>	<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2OAdq2h8eU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2OAdq2h8eU</a>  From the Associated Press  "Ugandan President, Idi Amin, Makes Clear His Decision to Expel Asians."</p>

		and Indian Asian citizens still face the November 8 expulsion deadline.	
August 24, 1972	Canada's Response	Trudeau announces Canada's decision to "offer an honourable place in Canadian life" for Asians being expelled from Uganda. He authorizes Immigration minister Bryce Mackasey to set up an emergency admission program and Mackasey estimates approximately 5 000 Ugandan Asians will take Canada up on its offer.	 <p>Department of National Defence. Library and Archives Canada, e011052358 The reception centre at CFB Longue-Pointe, set up to take in the arriving Ugandan Asians.</p>
August 27, 1972	Special Invitations from Amin	Amin announces that "non-citizen Asians whom the government will specially invite to stay will be welcome." This means that Asians who are professional people and technicians may be asked to stay in Uganda for up to 12 months.	
August 29, 1972	Britain Freezes Loan	Britain freezes a 25 million dollar economic and development aid loan to Uganda as economic reprisal for the expulsion.	
August 29, 1972	The United States' Response	The United States announces that they will speed up the visa application process, but they are not planning an emergency program to admit large numbers	

		of refugees.	
August 31, 1972	Currency Export Ban	Ugandan Asians leaving the country were told they could take 100 Ugandan shillings (\$5 CAD) per passport, but a new ruling puts a complete ban on currency exports.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8EqSpHrLBI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8EqSpHrLBI</a> From the Associated Press An interview with an Asian Ugandan regarding taking money out of the country.
September 9, 1972	The Deadline is Announced	For the first time, the Ugandan government specifies the date that Asians must depart: November 8 <sup>th</sup> . Amin also announces that any British Asians who remain in Uganda past the November 8 deadline will be “rounded up by military forces and put in military camps.” This announcement comes after Amin praised Hitler’s actions earlier in the week.	
September 18, 1972	The First Flight	The first flight of Ugandan Asians arrives in England. The next flight is scheduled for the next day and there will be 16 flights a week from there on out.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DO5OcS1bHco">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DO5OcS1bHco</a> From the Associated Press The first flight of Ugandan asians arrives at Stanstead Airport in London.
September 24, 1972	The 48-Hour Panic	Amin announces that all British Asians being expelled must leave the country within 48 hours of receiving exit clearance from authorities, causing confusion and panic. This affects approximately 8-11 000	

		people and Britain claims this will be impossible, as it would require a flight to leave every thirty-five minutes in those two days.	
October 3, 1972	The United States Expands Their Acceptance	The United States announces that they will accept 1000 Asians on a parole basis, particularly those without valid citizenship with “professional capabilities.”	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uhf2vCjID8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uhf2vCjID8</a> From the Associated Press "Expelled Asians Settle in USA."
October 5, 1972	President Mobutu Tries to Intervene	After meeting with President Mobutu of Zaire, reports from different sources conflict regarding Amin extending the expulsion deadline. Amin is, however, quoted saying, “It is not my intention or that of the government to maltreat or otherwise oppress and non-citizen Asians who might have failed to meet the deadline.” He also claims that all outgoing Asians are allowed to take personal effects with them and an average of \$125 cash.	
October 18, 1972	Transferring Property Disallowed	Amin announces that Asians who fail to register their businesses with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry before leaving Uganda will lose them and may face imprisonment and heavy fines. No private transfers	

		of property are allowed.	
October 20, 1972	The Expulsion Expands to Include More	Amin orders the expulsion of Asians in Uganda who are from Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia.	
October 24, 1972	The UN Steps in	The Ugandan government allows the United Nations to organize travel documents for the stateless Asians. A UN mission flies to Kampala and negotiates an emergency evacuation. The Inter-governmental Committee for European Migration arranges transportation to countries like Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy, Malta and Spain.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MH8i7em1Yk8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MH8i7em1Yk8</a> From the Associated Press Clips from a refugee camp in Vienna, one of the many places the stateless Ugandan Asians were sent.
November 8, 1972	The Deadline Arrives	By the end of the day on November 8, all but about 200 Asian families had left Uganda. With the majority of Uganda's Asian community gone, the positions that they once held remained vacant, causing widespread unemployment, school closures, food and supply shortages, and had a dire effect on the economy.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmxDwGet5YA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmxDwGet5YA</a> From the Associated Press Clips showing the aftermath of the Asian population leaving Uganda.