

REBUILDING LIVES

50 YEARS OF
UGANDAN ASIANS

GCSE, Lesson 1

Before the Storm: Life in Uganda



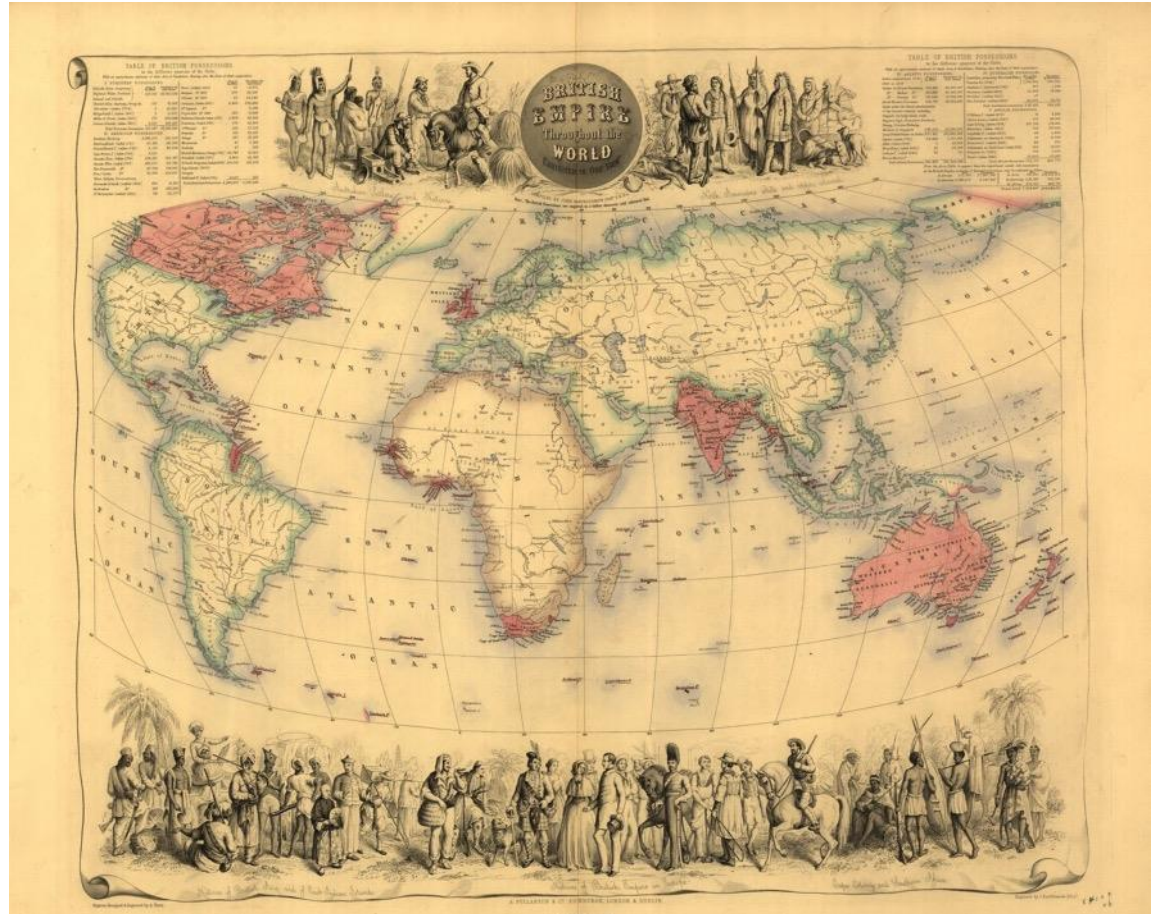
Glossary

Term	Meaning
Empire	An extensive group of states or countries ruled over by a single monarch or leader
Africanisation	To bring under the supremacy of Africans, especially black Africans
Indentured Labour	A form of labour where a person agrees to work without any salary, usually in return for housing, clothing and food
Colonized	When a people settle among and establish control over the indigenous (native) people of an area
Coup (de'etat)	A sudden, violent, and unlawful seizure of power from a government
Despot	A ruler with total power over a country, typically one who exercises it in a cruel or oppressive way
Expulsion	The action or process of forcing someone to leave a place

Why were Asians in East Africa?

The British Empire!

- Britain colonized India in 1857
- Taught English language
- How to do business the “British” way
- British working practices, administrative procedures and social etiquette becomes ingrained



Why were Asians in East Africa?

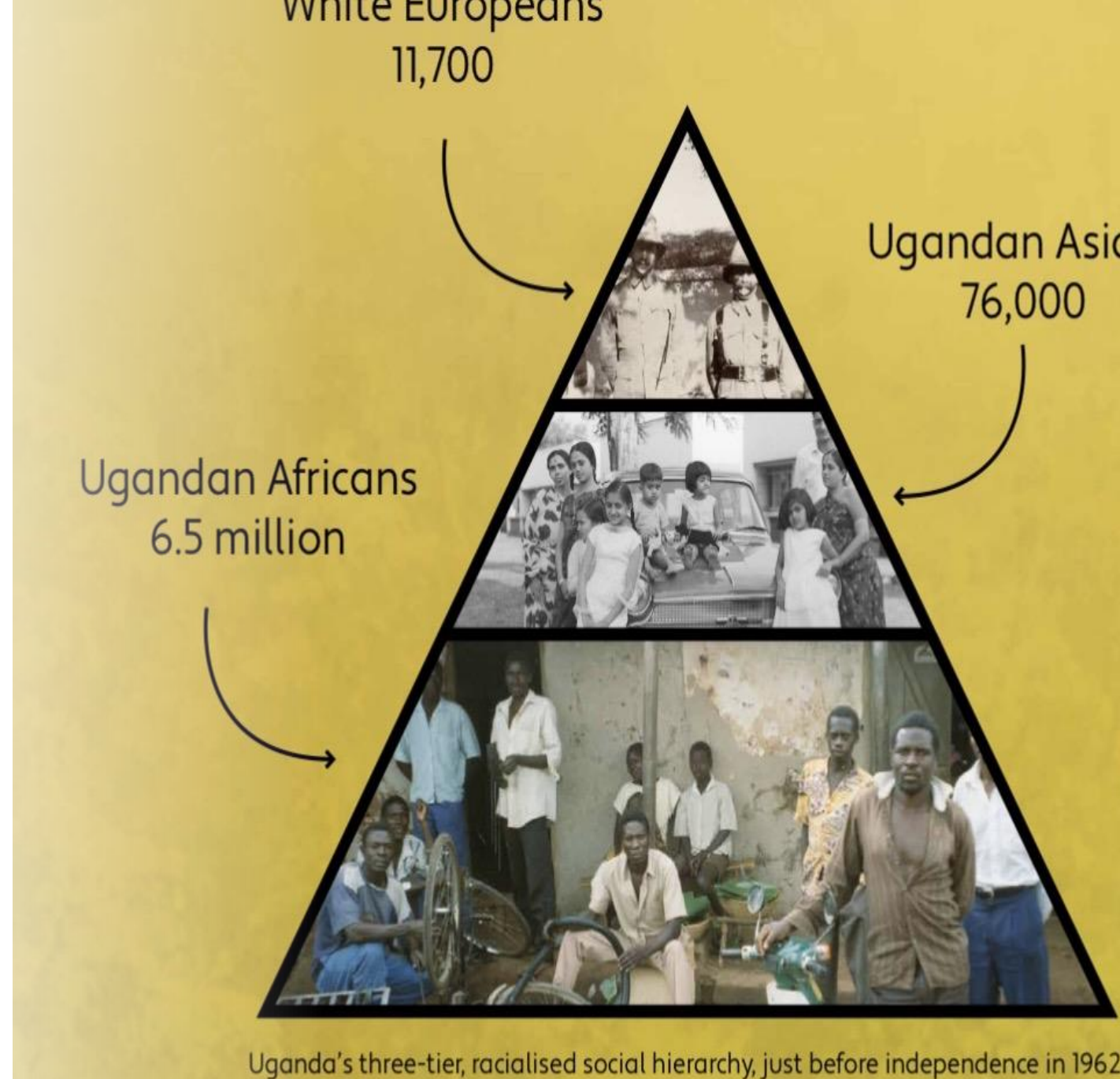
The British Empire!

- Britain colonized Uganda in 1894
- It was quicker and more economical to move thousands of Indians who already know how to live and work with (for?) the British to get new colony profitable than to start from scratch with the indigenous African population
- As well as manual indentured labour work building the railways, many Indians given important civil service jobs and encouraged to build new businesses across the country
- Black Ugandans become 3rd class citizens



Before the storm

- Under British rule native, black Ugandans were kept in low-paid, mostly manual jobs. Men could join the army or police force, women could become domestic servants (mostly in Asian households)
- With British favouritism, Asians ran over 90% of all the businesses in Uganda
- This wealth meant that Ugandan Asians had access to the best education, health care, recreation facilities, luxury goods, holidays – it was a very good lifestyle
- This lifestyle was a source of resentment for many Ugandans Africans.



Home Movie Footage

(no sound)

BEFORE THE STORM

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Uganda Memories

- Follow this link to hear Ugandan Asians recall their memories of life in Uganda* (4:50 mins):
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1BIJDjKUuM&list=PL-L5AoNC1rk50t5S5LLVy3crVchK3J9Mk>

*includes transcripts

Africanisation

- Uganda gained independence from Britain on the 9th October 1962
- Milton Obote (right) was elected as Uganda's first Prime Minister, and then President.
- He introduced 'Africanisation' policies, including trade restrictions, to prioritise and favour Ugandan Africans at the expense of Ugandan Asians
- Life became increasingly difficult for Ugandan Asians



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Activity: The Great Debate

Were the Africanisation Policies of President Obote fair? Why?

The Approaching Storm

- President Obote comes under increasing pressure from army General Idi Amin for Africanisation policies not going far enough
- January 1971, General Amin seizes power in a military coup and declares himself the new President of Uganda
- In addition to harsher economic restrictions, Ugandan Asians soon found themselves the victims of violent attacks from Amin's soldiers and police force
- 4th August 1972, Amin announces all Indians to leave the country within 90 days



Uganda Argus
Kampala, August, 1972

5 August 7 August

THE FUTURE OF ASIANS IN UGANDA
It will be Britain's responsibility

PRESIDENT AMIN will ask the British Government to take over responsibility of all Asians in Uganda who are holding British passports because they are sabotaging the economy of the country.

10 August
Three months to quit - except those in essential jobs
Some will stay, some will go

16 August
African traders to show support to Gen Amin

THE UGANDA African Traders Association will hold a public procession in Kampala tomorrow in support of President Amin's move to expel British Asians and to declare the 'economic war'.

18 August
'We shall suffer for sometime, but it does not matter'
EXEMPTION CLAUSE DELETED

PROFESSIONAL BRITISH Asians who were previously exempted from the expulsion orders will also be asked to leave Uganda 'because they cannot serve the country with good spirit after the departure of other Asians'. And refugees now in Uganda will soon be returned to their respective countries.

Asians milked the cow: They did not feed it
- Gen. Amin

PRESIDENT AMIN has disclosed that he would summon the British High Commissioner to Uganda to make arrangements and remove the 80,000 Asian British passport holders within three months.

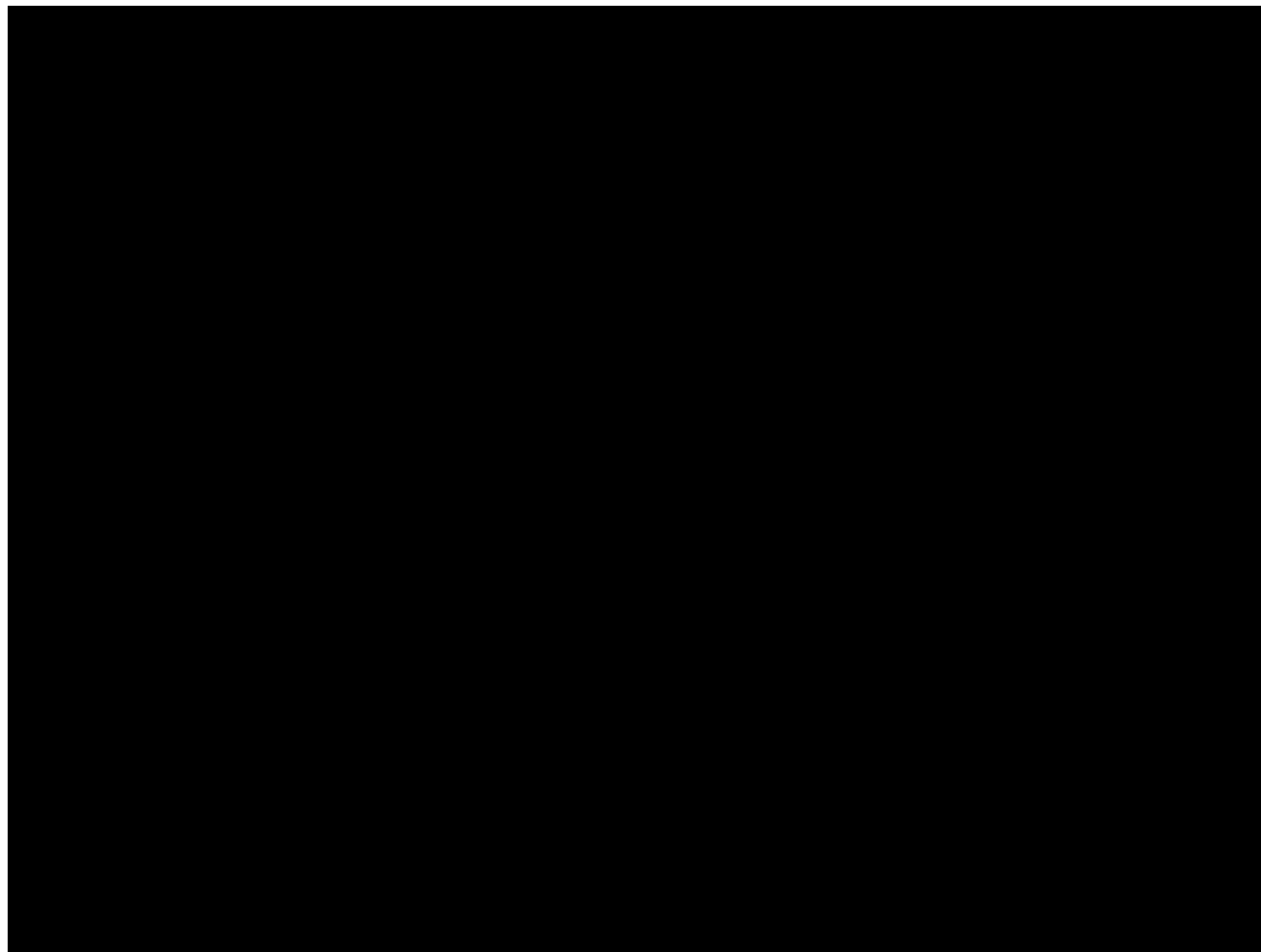
9 August
Ugandans hail move on Asians
IT WAS OVERDUE, SAY AFRICANS: 'GOOD LUCK' SAY THE ASIANS

CABINET BACKS PRESIDENT'S DECISION

21 August
ALL ASIANS MUST GO
President's new phase in the 'economic war'

PRESIDENT IDI Amin said at the weekend that all the 23,000 Asians who hold Uganda citizenship will also have to leave the country, in addition to the 60,000 who have already been ordered to quit.

Expulsion!



Global Response

- Over 60,000 Ugandan Asians had 3 months to leave the country and find new homes
- India and Pakistan initially closed their borders to Ugandan passport holders
- Britain eventually agreed to accept approximately 27,000 British Passport holders
- The United Nations declared it would support approximately 20,000 stateless Ugandan Asians
- By the 90-day deadline, there were only up to 4,000 (some sources state ‘a few hundred’) Asians left in Uganda



Country	No. of Refugees	Country	No. of Refugees
Britain	27,000	Sweden	1,000
Canada	6,500	USA	1,000
India	4,500	Australia	800
Uganda	4000	Mauritius	250
Kenya	2,500	Netherlands	250
Germany	1,000	New Zealand	200
Malawi	1,000	Belgium	175
Pakistan	1,000	Norway	114