



The Voice of the Oppressed People of Fiji
Restoring Democracy, Rule of Law & Human Rights in Fiji

RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION AND REPRESSION

BY RATU TEVITA MARA, 12 August 2011

The acts of repression and suppression by the ruling military junta in Fiji never cease but daily increase.

Its latest act is the requirement of a permit for Hindus to gather and to observe and celebrate their religious festivals.

The requirement is a flagrant breach of the fundamental right and freedom of every citizen to the religion of their choice and to religious worship.

It is also discriminatory in that while permits are required for Hindus, they are not required for Christians attending Church on Saturdays and Sundays and for Muslims attending Mosque on Fridays.

The requirement is also an insult to the Hindu religion and a sacrilege of the highest order.

It now seems that the tyranny, repression and oppression of the military junta and illegal regime knows no bounds.

I call on Bainimarama to allow the peaceful Hindus to gather and participate in their religious festivals without let or hindrance.

I call on the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, the US State Department, Forum Governments, the United Nations and the European Union to intervene in this matter so that the Hindus in Fiji can enjoy their fundamental freedom and right to religious worship.

The 1997 Constitution of Fiji, Chapter 4 (The Bill of Rights), Section 35, guarantees the Fundamental Right and Freedom of Religion and Belief. The Appeal Court ruled in 2009 that the coup was illegal, the regime is illegal, all acts by it are illegal and that the Constitution is immutable...it cannot be abrogated.