

UK report on racism draws criticism

4th April, 2021



A report on racism commissioned by the United Kingdom has drawn criticism from upholders of racial equality. The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities was established last summer in the wake of the killing of George Floyd in the

USA. That death sparked protests across the world and fuelled the Black Lives Matter movement. The commission acknowledged that racism remains a "real force" in the UK. However, it said the British system is no longer "deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities". It said people use racism as a "catch-all explanation" for not getting ahead in life. It added that geography, family, socio-economic background, culture and religion have a more significant impact on success in life than race.

Advocates of racial equality called the report, "a truly historic denial of the scale of race inequality in Britain". The day the report was released, the UK government's most senior adviser on race resigned, although he said the timing was coincidental. A leading UK politician and radio show host, David Lammy, was deeply critical of the report. He accused the government of "gaslighting" the British public. He tweeted: "For my own mental well-being I am not doing media interviews on the race commission today. Like so many in Britain's Black community, I'm tired of the endless debate about whether structural racism exists with little desire to actually address it. We are being gaslighted."

Sources: [npr.org](https://www.npr.org) / [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [thedailybeast.com](https://www.thedailybeast.com)

Writing

Racism will never end. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

report / racism / racial equality / ethnic / protests / rigged / minorities / geography / denial / inequality / adviser / resigned / politician / gaslighting / mental / community

True / False

- a) A report on UK racism was set up after a man was killed in the USA. T / F
- b) The report says racism is a real force in the UK. T / F
- c) The report says the British system is rigged against ethnic minorities. T / F
- d) The report says geography has a bigger impact on success than race. T / F
- e) Critics of the report said it denied the scale of race inequality in Britain. T / F
- f) A senior government race adviser quit the day the report was released. T / F
- g) The report said the UK needed a lot more gas lighting. T / F
- h) An MP said he was tired of the debate on whether gaslighting exists. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. commissioned | a. tackle |
| 2. established | b. continues to be |
| 3. sparked | c. quit |
| 4. remains | d. set up |
| 5. impact | e. welfare |
| 6. scale | f. prompted |
| 7. resigned | g. constant |
| 8. well-being | h. ordered |
| 9. endless | i. extent |
| 10. address | j. effect |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What is the history of racial equality in your country?
- c) What do you know about gaslighting?
- d) What damage does racism do to a country?
- e) What is structural racism?
- f) Do you think we are all racist to some degree?
- g) What advice do you have for people who suffer from racism?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the head of the commission?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. A report on racism commissioned | a. denial |
| 2. in the wake | b. ethnic minorities |
| 3. acknowledged that racism remains | c. on success in life |
| 4. deliberately rigged against | d. debate |
| 5. a more significant impact | e. was coincidental |
| 6. a truly historic | f. by the United Kingdom |
| 7. he said the timing | g. critical of the report |
| 8. deeply | h. of the killing |
| 9. I'm tired of the endless | i. address it |
| 10. little desire to actually | j. a "real force" |

Discussion – Student B

- Why are people racist?
- What is your impression of the UK and multiculturalism?
- What kinds of racism have you seen in your country?
- Have you ever experienced racism?
- What would you say to a racist?
- What would you do if you saw someone being racist?
- What can countries do to reduce racism?
- What do you think life is like being part of an ethnic minority?

Spelling

- mdsesnmoicio by the United Kingdom
- eedclagdwkno that racism remains
- no longer yardibealteel rigged
- against ethnic mioeintirs
- background, culture and giinrloe
- a more ntnifciagis impact
- tvacoaesd of racial equality
- a truly historic dneila of the scale
- he said the timing was etilaccnidon
- nlgagtiishg the British public
- many in Britain's Black imcptomnu
- whether uucsattlrr racism exists

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. d	3. f	4. b	5. j
6. i	7. c	8. e	9. g	10. a

Role Play

Role A – Racial Equality

You think racial equality is the thing to protest most about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about as much. Also, tell the others which is the least protest-worthy of these (and why): lower taxes, no war or free speech.

Role B – Lower Taxes

You think lower taxes is the thing to protest most about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about as much. Also, tell the others which is the least protest-worthy of these (and why): racial equality, no war or free speech.

Role C – No War

You think no war is the thing to protest most about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about as much. Also, tell the others which is the least protest-worthy of these (and why): lower taxes, racial equality or free speech.

Role D – Free Speech

You think free speech is the thing to protest most about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't worth protesting about as much. Also, tell the others which is the least protest-worthy of these (and why): lower taxes, no war or racial equality.

Speaking – Protests

Rank these with your partner. Put the things you would protest about most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| • Racial equality | • Global warming |
| • Lower taxes | • Food prices |
| • Corruption | • LGBTQ rights |
| • No war | • Free speech |

Answers – True False

a T	b T	c F	d T	e T	f T	g F	h F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.