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### **Flat Island: A History of Quarantine in Mauritius**

In 1856, a group of 600 immigrants, coming from India, were quarantined at Flat Island, an islet located 12 km away from the north coast of Mauritius. Two hundred and eighty four of them died during their stay at the quarantine station, making it the highest number of deaths ever recorded in the history of quarantine, during the period of indenture in Mauritius. This tragedy marked a turning point in the history of indenture migration in Mauritius (1820s-1920s).

This publication documents the history of Flat Island as a former quarantine station for indentured labourers established by the British Colonial authorities and its significance as part of the indentured system. It provides an account on the conditions and treatment of indentured immigrants before their disembarkation on the Mauritian soil; when most were affected by poor health condition and exposed to a harsh environment during quarantine.

It also explores the context leading to the formal establishment of two quarantine stations, with the adequate infrastructures on Flat Island and Ilot Gabriel, whilst also enforcing the laws on quarantine. Today, the site of the former quarantine station at Flat Island contains the remains of one of the most important quarantine stations in the Indian Ocean set up in 1857 specifically to prevent the spreading of cholera on the mainland.

The research was carried out in the broader perspective of archaeological documentation conducted by the team of Dr Seetah from Stanford University (USA).