

Increased violent attacks against Asian Americans in U.S.

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New York City mayoral candidate Andrew Yang speaking to the media after workers and residents reported hate crimes in Chinatown. (Photo: AFP)

New York, March 6 (RHC)-- A spike in violent attacks targeting Asian Americans in the United States has prompted the minority group to raise the alarm. Andrew Yang warned on Friday of the rise in violence against the Asian American community, noting that many Asian Americans feel "more at risk."

Yang, who is running as New York City mayoral candidate, said the increase in anti-Asian violence must be taken "very, very seriously."

A U.S. report on Friday cited Chinatown storeowner Kenneth Lam in Oakland, California as saying that a group of three suspects recently tried to rob his store in Renaissance Plaza, nearly killing him in the attempt. “They tried to kill me. They literally said that and used their car to try to run me over,” Lam said.

A disturbingly graphic and shocking video from Oakland's Chinatown last month showed a 91-year-old man senselessly pushed to the ground, putting the community on high alert.

Also in January, a local television station in the Anza Vista neighborhood of San Francisco showed footage of a young man sprinting toward, then violently shoving to the ground, a man identified as Vicha Ratanapakdee, 84, who had been out for a morning walk . He later died.

Ratanapakdee had moved to San Francisco from Thailand four years ago to help his daughter and son-in-law take care of their two sons.

Numerous incidents of this kind, targeting Asian Americans business owners and elderly Asians, began following former US president Donald Trump's racist rhetoric and repeated rebuke of China and other Asian countries.

The attacks quickly reinvigorated simmering outrage and fear over a wave of anti-Asian violence and harassment that community leaders say was spurred earlier in the coronavirus pandemic by the rhetoric of Trump, who insisted on calling the coronavirus “the China virus” or the “Kung Flu.”

Carl Chan, president of the Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, has tallied more than 20 assaults in past weeks in Oakland's Chinatown alone. He said many more attacks are not reported because people fear being targeted again and because it can take hours for the police to arrive at the scene of crime.

The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden appears to be pursuing the same policy against China as his predecessor, making allegations against Beijing's purported “expansionist” intentions in East and Southeast Asia and siding with China's rivals in territorial disputes.

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