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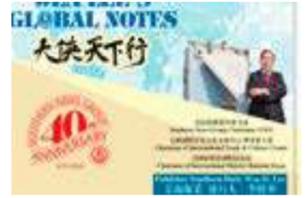
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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Ukraine says it pushes back Russian troops in battlefield city

KYIV, June 4 (Reuters) - Ukraine said on Saturday it had recaptured a swathe of the battlefield city of Sievierodonetsk, in a rare counter-offensive against Russia's main assault force that had been steadily advancing in the east.

The Ukrainian claim could not be independently verified, and Moscow said its own forces were making gains there. But it was the first time Kyiv has claimed to have launched a big counter-attack in Sievierodonetsk after days of yielding ground there.

Russia has concentrated its forces on Sievierodonetsk in recent weeks for one of the biggest ground battles of the war, with Moscow appearing to bet its campaign on capturing one of two eastern provinces it claims on behalf of separatist proxies.

Both sides have claimed to have inflicted huge casualties in the fighting for the small industrial city, a battle that military experts say could determine which side has the momentum for a prolonged war of attrition in coming months.

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Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov on Saturday said that while it was impossible to predict when the war would end, "my optimistic prognosis is that it is realistic to achieve this as early as this year," the defence ministry said.

A statement on the ministry's website said Reznikov told the GLOBSEC 2022 Bratislava Forum that "next will come Poland, the Baltic countries, Slovakia and others. That is why we must stop Russia and restrain it in the future."

In the diplomatic sphere, Kyiv rebuked French President Emmanuel Macron for saying it was important not to "humiliate" Moscow.

"We must not humiliate Russia so that the day when the fighting stops we can build an exit ramp through diplomatic means," Macron said in an interview with regional newspapers published on Saturday, adding he was "convinced that it is France's role to be a mediating power."

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted in response: "Calls to avoid humiliation of Russia can only humiliate France and every other country that would call for it."

"Because it is Russia that humiliates itself. We all better focus on how to put Russia in its place. This will bring peace and save lives." read more



Ukraine now says its aim is to push Russian forces back as far as possible on the battlefield, counting on advanced missile systems pledged in recent days by the United States and Britain to swing the war in its favour.

Asked about Macron's mediation offer on national television, Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said: "Until we receive weapons in their full amount, until we strengthen our positions, until we push them (Russia's forces) back as far as possible to the borders of Ukraine, there is no point in holding negotiations."

Moscow has said the Western weapons will pour "fuel on the fire," but will not change the course of what it calls a "special military operation" to disarm Ukraine and rid it of nationalists.

Russia's RIA news agency quoted President Vladimir Putin as saying Moscow was easily coping with U.S. weapons systems sent to Ukraine and had destroyed dozens of them. read more

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Saturday said Western sanctions would have no effect on the country's oil exports and predicted a big jump in profits from energy shipments this year, Tass news agency reported.

INTENSE FIGHTING IN SIEVIERODONETSK Serhiy Gaidai, the Ukrainian governor of Luhansk province, which includes Sievierodonetsk, said overnight that

Ukrainian forces previously in control of just 30% of the city had mounted a counter-attack, recapturing another 20% of it.

Russia's defence ministry said its troops were forcing the Ukrainians to withdraw across the Siverskiy Donetsk river to Lysychansk on the opposite bank.

Gaidai said the Russians were blowing up bridges across the river to prevent Ukraine's bringing in military reinforcements and delivering aid to civilians in Sievierodonetsk. read more

"Right now, our soldiers have pushed them back, (the Russians) are suffering huge casualties," Gaidai said in a live TV broadcast. "The Russian army, as we understand, is throwing all its efforts, all its reserves in that direction."

Tens of thousands are believed to have died, millions have been uprooted from their homes, and the global economy has been disrupted in a war that marked its 100th day on Friday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy posted footage on Saturday of an important timber Orthodox Christian monastery ablaze in eastern Ukraine. Kyiv says two monks and a nun were killed at the site on Wednesday when it was struck by Russian shells.



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

06/03/2022

How Much More Carnage Are We Willing To Accept?

President Biden issued an urgent appeal for stricter gun control including a ban on assault weapons, tougher background checks and higher minimum age of gun purchases as the nation is facing a new crisis of gun massacres.

From the White House where the grounds are lined with candles, the president is putting pressure on Congress to act after previous

shootings failed to produce any meaningful new gun laws. In his new proposal, the president is willing to accept far less than the measures he prefers—an assault weapons ban in exchange for real federal action. His main proposal includes banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines and raising the age to purchase them to 21 and the

strengthening of background checks.

Today all the corners of our community including schools, office buildings and hospitals and all the people who go to work there every day are deeply worried about their safety. It is very sad.

We want to remind all our voters and community leaders across the country that



this is the time when all of us need to wake up. Please look at your friends and family around you. They all need your help. You must remind all the politicians representing your area to come together to solve this urgent national problem.

Look at Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia—all have legislated and strengthened gun control laws after tragedies. But look how many large-scale

shootings in our country have occurred in schools, communities, churches, shops and medical centers over the last twenty years. There is no legislation that has been passed to strengthen our gun control laws.

To all the citizens of our nation, now is the time to act and change the gun laws of our country and bring safety and peace back to all our communities.



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Republic of Guiana Honorary consul at Houston Texas



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



People wait in a traffic jam as they leave the city of Kharkiv, February 24. REUTERS/Antonio Bronic



Servicemen of the Ukrainian National Guard take positions in central Kyiv as Russian forces advanced toward the capital, February 25. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich



A man sits on a domestic gas cylinder as he waits in line to buy gas on a main road, amid the country's economic crisis in Colombo, Sri Lanka. REUTERS/Dinuka Liyanawatte



People take cover as an air-raid siren sounds, near an apartment building damaged by recent shelling in Kyiv, February 26. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich



An evacuation convoy travels from Russian troop-occupied Kupiansk town, along a damaged road on the outskirts of Kharkiv, Ukraine May 30. REUTERS/Ivan Alvarado



Hindu devotees dance after applying paints on their bodies as they celebrate the Lal Kach festival in Munshiganj, Bangladesh. REUTERS/Mohammad Ponir Hossain

In Celebration Of Asian American And Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Asian American Business Leaders Launch Effort to Fight Anti-Asian Discrimination

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The initiative plans to support research to correct discriminatory practices against Asian Americans

ulation among all racial and ethnic groups in the United States, according to the Pew Research Center. The community is projected to grow even more rapidly in the coming years.

But Asian people living in the US have experienced a sharp rise in hate crimes amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has fueled racism and xenophobia.

The group Stop AAPI Hate, which tracks anti-Asian violence and harassment, received 3,795 reports of incidents between the period of March 19, 2020 to Feb. 28, 2021, and noted that this number represents only a fraction of the number of hate incidents that actually occur against members of the AAPI community.

"We created TAAF to stand up for the 23 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in this country and help bring us all together in the fight for our own prosperity," said Sonal Shah, president of TAAF. "TAAF wants to strengthen and build power for AAPIs, particularly as we face an exponential increase in hate and violence."

Asian Hate Cannot be Tolerated!



The total \$250 million pledge is the largest philanthropic effort to support the AAPI community, according to the New York Times.

So far, TAAF has distributed several grants, including \$1 million to support the efforts of Stop AAPI Hate. The foundation says these grants will provide support to the organizations monitoring anti-AAPI hate to help build systems to measure and defend against anti-Asian hate in the long term.

"AAPI communities need systemic change to ensure we are better supported, represented, and celebrated across all aspects of American life," Shah said. "TAAF plans to spark that systemic change and help fundamentally transform AAPI empowerment and support well into the future." (Courtesy globalcitizen.org)

Related: Groups Fighting for Asian Americans That You Can Support Right Now



Messages are posted in a wall of solidarity by people participating at a rally "Love Our Communities: Build Collective Power" to raise awareness of anti-Asian violence in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, March 13, 2021.

Over the past year, at least 3,800 hate incidents against Asian Americans have been reported amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which activists say were stoked by misinformation and rising anti-Asian rhetoric from political figures and media pundits.

The shootings in Atlanta, Georgia, on Tuesday that killed eight people, including six Asian women, took place amid this violence and further highlighted discussions about years-long harassment and discrimination against people of Asian descent in the US and around the world.

"That the Asian women murdered yesterday were working highly vulnerable and low-wage jobs during an ongoing pandemic speaks directly to the compounding impacts of misogyny, structural violence, and white supremacy," said Phi Nguyen, litigation director at Asian American Advancing Justice in Atlanta, in a statement.

Anti-Asian hatred in the US isn't happening in a vacuum, shaped only by COVID-19 misinformation. It's taking place against the backdrop of history. Between imperial wars of aggression, domestic policies of exclusion, and offensive media depictions, bigotry against Asians is deeply embedded in US society.

The fight for racial justice requires that everyone learn this history and understand how it continues to shape reality today. It also requires everyone to show solidarity with Asian Americans and take concrete steps to stop hatred and violence, including learning how to engage in bystander intervention.

A demonstrator participates at a rally "Love Our Communities: Build Collective Power" to raise awareness of anti-Asian violence in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, March 13, 2021.



A demonstrator participates at a rally "Love Our Communities: Build Collective Power" to raise awareness of anti-Asian violence in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, March 13, 2021.

Here are nine nonprofits and mutual aid groups focusing on Asian American rights that Global Citizens can support.

These groups are organizing for equity and justice 1. Asian Americans Advancing Justice — Atlanta AAJ is dedicated to protecting and advancing "the civil rights of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) in Georgia and the Southeast."

2. Red Canary Song Red Canary Song focuses on decriminalizing sex work, uplifting migrant workers, and advancing labor rights. The organization is advocating for a world in which all workers, especially Asian and migrant workers, have dignity and full legal rights.

3. Asian American Feminist Collective AAFCC is an "ever-evolving" organization that engages in community building, offers political education events in public spaces, and provides resources to communities.

4. Stop AAPI Hate The CPA primarily helps low-income Chinese migrants organize for better living conditions by, among other services, advocating for tenant's rights and providing material support to students.

5. Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) The CPA primarily helps low-income Chinese migrants organize for better living conditions by, among other services, advocating for tenant's rights and providing material support to students.

6. The Center for Asian Pacific American Women (CAPAW) This group seeks to help Asian American women gain access to positions of power in both the private and public spheres.

7. The National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) NAPAWF uses a "reproductive justice framework" to elevate and fight for issues affecting girls and women.

8. The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families This organization campaigns to improve the opportunities available to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) children by providing leadership development training and advocating for improved resource access.

9. Asian Mental Health Collective This group is working to break down stigmas around mental health within the AAPI community, while expanding access to mental health services.

Related: "It's Time To Act Now." President Biden Makes Racial Justice A Top Priority With Four Executive Orders



President Joe Biden delivers remarks on racial equity, in the State Dining Room of the White House, Jan. 26, 2021, in Washington, DC. | President Joe Biden delivers remarks on racial equity, in the State Dining Room of the White House, Jan. 26, 2021, in Washington, DC. (Photo/Evan Vucci/AP)

President Joe Biden signed four executive orders on Wednesday that address racial inequalities and injustice. The first executive order strengthens anti-discrimination housing policies that were weakened by the Trump administration.

The second order forbids the federal government from signing new contracts with private companies to house federal prisoners. The third order aims to increase the power of tribal nations when engaging with federal agencies, and the final order formally condemns the rising racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Biden said that these executive orders, which join a growing list of racial justice actions by his administration, are meant to redress historical wrongs and level the playing field for all Americans.

"We have never fully lived up to the founding principles of this nation, to state the obvious, that all people are created equal and have a right to be treated equally throughout their lives," Biden said in a press briefing. "And it's time to act now, not only because it's the right thing to do, but because if we do, we'll be better off for it."



The formal condemnation of racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islander was heralded by the Asian American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (AALDEF) as a promising step toward a national reckoning with racism. The AALDEF noted that 2,800 hate crimes against Asian Americans were reported since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The executive order on tribal rights was welcomed by the National Congress of American Indians. "The first steps President Biden has taken toward truth and reconciliation with Tribal Nations are so responsive to our needs and aligned with our values and principles. This order will, in effect, improve federal processes around policy implementation and budgeting for tribal lands, ensuring that tribal members and Indigenous communities have a say throughout these processes and that principles of transparency are upheld."

Biden also declared that the federal government will stop profiting on private prisons, a first step toward removing the profit incentive from the criminal justice system. Reform advocates have long argued that the justice system criminalizes poverty through cash bail, civil forfeiture laws, and the overpolicing of poor communities.

(Article Continues Below)

(Article Continues From Above)

Asian American Business Leaders Launch Effort to Fight Anti-Asian Discrimination

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



President Joe Biden Signs COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act Into Law to Fight Anti-Asian Hate The law responds to the surge in hate crimes against Asian Americans.



President Joe Biden signs the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, in the East Room of the White House, on Thursday, May 20, 2021, in Washington, DC. | President Joe Biden signs the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, in the East Room of the White House, on Thursday, May 20, 2021, in Washington, DC. Clockwise from left: Sen. Tammy Duckworth, R-Ill., Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., Vice President Kamala Harris, Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., Rep. Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., and Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii. (Photo/Evan Vucci / AP)

US President Joe Biden signed the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act Thursday to address the nationwide surge in hate crimes against Asian Americans over the past year. The signing of the bipartisan legislation follows testimony from experts about the rise in violence and grassroots pressure to protect Asian American communities.

Over the past year, more than 6,600 hate crimes have been reported against Asian-Americans, according to the advocacy group Stop AAPI Hate. Experts point to misinformation surrounding COVID-19 and rising anti-Asian rhetoric from political figures and media pundits as instigating factors of the violence.

pervade many Asian American communities. This dread reached a peak in March when a gunman murdered six women of Asian descent at their places of employment.



Many Asian-American advocacy groups hailed the passage of the law as a historic moment.

"The passage of this bill today begins a much-needed step forward in prioritizing language access and culturally competent outreach to our communities in reporting and addressing anti-Asian hate, while also giving the communities power to allocate resources for community solutions to hate and discrimination, including non-law enforcement support services for victims and communities," said John C. Yang, the president and executive director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice, in a statement.

"This step forward also improves hate crimes reporting and data collection infrastructure to keep government agencies and law enforcement accountable to our communities' needs," he said.

Other groups, including Stop AAPI Hate, criticize how the law increases the power of law enforcement. "Because the Act centers criminal law enforcement agencies in its solutions, it will not address the overwhelming majority of incidents reported to our site which are not hate crimes, but serious hate incidents," the organization wrote in a press release.

Stop AAPI Hate calls on the federal government to pass "legislation that addresses the root causes of systemic racism and oppression" by investing in mental health and immigration services, funding community-based groups, elevating "voices and histories of all communities by expanding ethnic studies and education," and "strengthen[ing] federal civil rights laws that address discrimination in public accommodations." (Courtesy globalcitizen.org)



Protesters during the Asian Justice Rally in San Francisco, on 30 January. (Photo/Michael Ho Wai Lee/ Sopa Images/Rex/Shutterstock)

As the fastest growing racial or ethnic group in the US, Asian Americans are finally in a position to do more than stock up on pepper spray and hope for the best

A rise in Asian American gun ownership. Blocks-long lines for pepper spray in Manhattan Chinatown. Children kept home from school by fearful parents. Elderly people who have stopped leaving their homes. A warning to Filipinos in the US, issued by the Philippine embassy in DC. Across the US, Asian American communities have been gripped by anger and despair as hate crimes against them have increased sharply — rising by 339% last year compared with 2020, according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism.

Today Asian Americans, the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the US, are finally in a position to do more than stock up on pepper spray and hope for the best.

Meanwhile, academic research on implicit and unconscious bias, improvements in data collection, and social movements like Black Lives Matter have contributed to greater understanding about racism and bias, and the ways that can translate into hate speech and violence. From the local through federal level, community advocates and other leaders have been organizing, debating, and building support, aimed at combating the ongoing epidemic of anti-Asian hate.



People rally calling for action and awareness on rising incidents of hate crime against Asian Americans in Times Square in New York City on 16 March. Photograph: Timothy A Clary/AFP/Getty Images

The Atlanta-area shooting deaths of eight people, six of them Asian women, by a white gunman in March 2021, President Joe Biden announced a set of actions to respond to anti-Asian violence and xenophobia, and in May, further established the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. "to advance equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHP communities." Among other actions, the initiative will improve data collection methods that have left Asian people underrepresented in government statistics, and by extension, the resulting programs and policies.

ly invisible by our history books," said four NJ assembly sponsors of the bill in a joint statement. "This erasure ... not only prevents students from gaining a full understanding of our nation's history, but also opens the door for racial biases that can turn into violence and hatred."



People gather at the Solidarity Against AAPI Hate rally on the National Mall in Washington DC on 31 May 2021. Photograph: Bryan Dozier/Rex/Shutterstock

The new hate crimes act aims to fill some of those gaps by making it easier to report incidents and incentivizing local police forces to improve their data collection methods, for example through better training around how to identify hate crimes. (It also includes provisions named after Heather Heyer, the woman run over and killed by a neo-Nazi in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017.)

However, critics say it does not address the root causes of hate, and fear the statistics will merely result in over-policing of Asian and other ethnic minority communities. "The community is divided about the role of police," says Jo-Anne Yoo, executive director of the Asian American Federation, an umbrella organization for non-profits in NYC.

In New York City, for example, people reluctant to interact with police can instead report incidents to the Commission on Human Rights, which collects data about (and sometimes acts on) bias, harassment and discrimination incidents in general — a wider array than hate crimes, which are narrowly defined.



Members of the Thai-American community along with political leaders and members of law enforcement participate in a rally against Asian hate crimes in Tharu Molina in Los Angeles on 8 April 2021. (Photo/Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times/REX/Shutterstock)

But the depth of the need is daunting. In New York, the most pressing issues Yoo has seen include food insecurity, financial struggle and lack of healthcare access among many Asian workers whose industries were disproportionately affected by the pandemic (eg nail salons, restaurants, and other service-based industries). Elderly people are afraid to leave their homes and isolated by language and technological barriers to accessing social service programs.

Domestic violence has increased. Yoo also says there is widespread fear and burnout among non-profit workers themselves, who have spent the past two-plus years on the frontlines: feeding people, organizing grief circles, going door-to-door setting up Zoom for elderly people, meeting with victims of violent attacks, and struggling "to figure out what we are going to do."

"This country is going through this major crisis on a global level, and it provides a breeding ground for racism, for hatred!" —Dr DJ Ida



Moreover, they, and many other Asian Americans, continue their work while feeling unsafe themselves. "I get a lot of emails saying, my boss is asking us to come back to work but I'm afraid to ride the subway," Yoo said. "I'm calling on corporations to come up with a plan to protect their staff, because the fear is very real."

Yoo sees an enormous need for mental health services — for victims of racially motivated violence, bystanders who witness such crimes, the communities traumatized by fear, and perpetrators themselves. "Many of the assaults were homeless with severe mental illness. Where's the help for them?" she says. (New York City's unhoused population is at its highest level since the Great Depression, and the city, under the new Eric Adams administration, has been forcibly removing unhoused people from the city's subways and tearing down homeless encampments.)

"This country is going through this major crisis on a global level, and it provides a breeding ground for racism, for hatred, and oppression of all sorts," says Dr DJ Ida, executive director of the National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association. "When people are stressed, the ugliness rears its head."