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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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More Russian men look to avoid military service, some lawyers and rights groups

LONDON, July 8 (Reuters) - Danila Davydov said he left Russia within weeks of the Kremlin sending troops into Ukraine because he feared having to fight in a war he doesn't support.

The 22-year-old digital artist who had been living in St Petersburg said that as the conflict dragged on he was concerned that Russia could place pressure on young people like him to serve in the military.

"I didn't want to go to war or go to prison, so I decided to leave," Davydov told Reuters from Kazakhstan, where he said he's currently working.

He is among what some lawyers and rights advocates say is an increased number of young Russian men looking to avoid the country's mandatory military service since the conflict with Ukraine began in late February, illustrating the ambivalence in Russian society to the conflict.

Some young men are leaving the country while others are seeking advice on obtaining exemptions or alternative avenues, or simply ignoring their summons in the hopes that authorities don't pursue them, according to Reuters interviews with seven men currently seeking to avoid serving in the military as well as five lawyers and rights advocates.

That is despite the risk of facing fines or up to two years in prison - in a country where military service is mandatory for young men aged 18 to 27. One man told Reuters that refusing to fight has led to tensions with family members who believe military service is a young man's duty.

Davydov said that he was able to take himself off the military service register and leave the country because he had a job offer abroad. He wants to return home one day, he said, but laments it may not be any time soon: "I love Russia and miss it very much."

The Kremlin referred questions to the defence ministry, which didn't respond to a request for comment about how widespread draft avoidance is and whether it is impacting the function of the Russian armed forces. The ministry, on its website, says that "service in the army and navy is the honourable duty of a Russian citizen that bestows considerable advantages in the future."

Moscow says it is conducting a special military operation and that it is going as planned. Russian President Vladimir Putin has lauded those who fight for Russia as "heroes" who are saving Russian-speakers from persecution and foiling what he says is a Western plan to destroy Russia. In March, he described Russians whose thoughts were more in line with the West than Russia as



"traitors." read more

On Feb 24 Russia sent thousands of troops into Ukraine, embarking on Europe's biggest ground invasion since World War Two. Following Russia's withdrawal of troops from near Kyiv, the war has slowed to a grinding artillery contest with Moscow focused on taking territory in eastern Ukraine.

Putin is betting on a professional army that the West says has sustained significant losses in the war. If the army cannot recruit enough contract soldiers, Putin's options would include using conscripts, mobilising Russian society or scaling back his ambitions.

Although Putin has repeatedly publicly said conscripts should not fight in the Ukraine conflict, the defence ministry in early March said some already have. Last month, a military prosecutor told the upper house of parliament that about 600 conscripts had been drawn into the conflict and that around a dozen officers had been disciplined as a result. read more

Ukraine has imposed martial law: men aged 18 to 60 are banned from leaving the country. Kyiv says it will fight to the end against what it casts as an unprovoked imperial-style land grab.

'MANY PEOPLE ARE SCARED'

Since Peter the Great transformed Russia into a major European power, its rulers have often relied

on conscription as part of Russia's vast military, one of the world's biggest fighting forces. Men of military age must serve a year as a conscript. Russia calls up around 260,000 annually in a twice-yearly draft. Russia's combined armed forces total about 900,000, according to the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). read more

Avoiding the draft is a well-established practice, including via legitimate routes like deferring service by studying and claiming medical exemptions. But recent months have seen an increase in young men seeking help on how to do so, according to four lawyers and rights advocates groups that offer advice and legal aid to such young men. That has been mostly from people in major cities like Moscow and St Petersburg, according to two of those.

One group that provides free legal advice called Release is co-run by Dmitry Lutsenko, a Russian now living in Cyprus. He said the membership of a public Telegram group for those seeking advice on how to avoid conscription that the group runs has increased to more than 1,000 people, up from about 200 prior to the conflict.

Another rights group, called Citizen. Army. Law, focuses on advice to people seeking alternative types of military service, which involves working in a state-run organisation such as a hospital instead of the military. The group said it had seen a ten times increase in the number of people asking about alternative service to more than 400 this year, compared to about 40 during the equivalent period last year. "Many people are scared. They don't want to go into an army that is fighting," said Sergei Krivenko, who heads

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

07/08/2022

Former Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shot Dead

Shinzo Abe, former Japanese Prime Minister, who served the longest time in history, was shot dead Friday at a train station while making a campaign speech for a parliamentary candidate.

behind as he was starting his speech. He was rushed to the hospital, but he died hours later.

Police arrested a 41-year-old man, Tetsuya Yamagami, and confiscated a homemade gun.

Abe was shot from



Abe, 67, was one of the most influential politicians in Japan. With his so-called Abenomics, he tried to improve the country's national economy. In the meantime, he also tried to revise the constitution to allow Japan a more active military.



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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



A painted figure is seen on a wall of the home of the mother of Robert E. Crimo III, the 21-year-old suspect facing seven counts of first-degree murder in an attack on a Fourth of July parade, in Highland Park, Illinois, July 6. REUTERS/Cheney Orr



Alfa Romeo's Guanyu Zhou and Mercedes' George Russell crash out at the start of the British Grand Prix in Silverstone, Britain, July 3. REUTERS/Molly Darlington



U.S. basketball player Brittney Griner, who was detained in March at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport and later charged with illegal possession of cannabis, is escorted before a court hearing in Khimki outside Moscow, Russia, July 1. REUTERS/Evgenia...



Onlookers stand at the edge of floodwaters on a residential street following heavy rains in the Windsor suburb of Sydney, Australia, July 5. REUTERS/Loren Elliott



Models present creations by designer Virginie Viard as part of her Haute Couture Fall/Winter 2022-2023 collection show for fashion house Chanel in Paris, France, July 5. REUTERS/Johanna Geron



A firefighting helicopter drops water to extinguish a forest fire, with St. Peter's Basilica in the background, in north Rome, Italy, July 4. REUTERS/Yara Nardi

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

Celebrating Asian American And Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Six Charts That Shed Light On Images Of Asian Americans Held By Many



By Connie Hanzhang Jin - NPR Writer

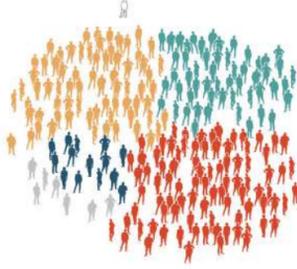
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

“Smart.” “Hard-working.” “Nice.” Those were among the adjectives that respondents offered up in a recent poll when asked to describe Asian Americans. The poll, conducted by the nonprofit Leading Asian Americans to Unite for Change (LAAUNCH), was another all-too-familiar reminder that Asian Americans are still perceived as the “model minority.” Since the end of World War II, this myth about Asian Americans and their perceived collective success has been used as a racial wedge — to minimize the role racism plays in the struggles of other minority groups, such as Black Americans. Characterizing Asian Americans as a model minority flattens the diverse experiences of Asian Americans into a singular, narrow narrative. And it paints a misleading picture about the community that doesn’t align with current statistics. Here’s a look at some common misconceptions driven by the model minority myth.

Myth: Asian Americans are a single monolithic group

Currently, more than 22 million people of Asian descent live in the U.S., making up approximately 7% of the nation’s population. They trace their heritage to different regions around the world, with people of East Asian and Southeast Asian descent making up the largest shares, though no group makes up a majority. More than 1.5 million Pacific Islanders, who descend from Micronesia, Melanesia or Polynesia, live in the U.S. as well.

ASIAN AMERICANS TRACE THEIR HERITAGE TO DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE WORLD



NOTES

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies a person of Asian descent as anyone who traces their heritage to a subset of countries in the continent of Asia. But there may be people outside of this classification who self-identify as Asian.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

Credit: Connie Hanzhang Jin/NPR

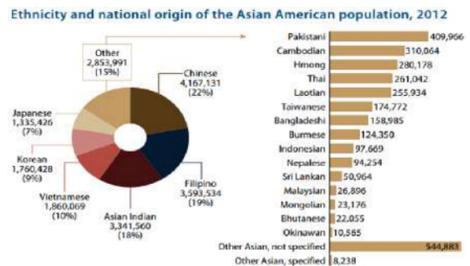
Academics and activists trace the term “Asian American” to 1968, when students at the University of California, Berkeley, founded the Asian American Political Alliance. At the time, the group sought to unite students of Japanese, Chinese and Filipino descent to fight for political and social recognition.

“Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders” (AAPI) is a term that has its roots in the 1980s and ‘90s, when the U.S. Census Bureau used the “Asian Pacific American” classification to group Asians, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders together. In 1997, the bureau disaggregated the categories into “Asian” and “Pacific Islander.”

Scholars and activists have critiqued both terms for masking differences in histories and needs among communities, as well as supporting the myth that Asian Americans are a monolithic group.

Within these regional groups, a huge variety of ethnicities exist within the Asian American community. People who identify their heritage as Chinese, Indian or Filipino make up the largest share.

MANY ETHNICITIES FALL UNDER THE ASIAN AMERICAN UMBRELLA



Source: Bureau of the Census, “Asian alone or in any combination by selected groups, 2012,” available at <https://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/data/asian>; IPeds to base, accessed March 2016.

Notes

Ethnicities with fewer than 100,000 people not shown. The U.S. Census Bureau classifies a person of Asian descent as anyone who traces their heritage to a subset of countries in the continent of Asia. But there may be people outside of this classification who self-identify as Asian.

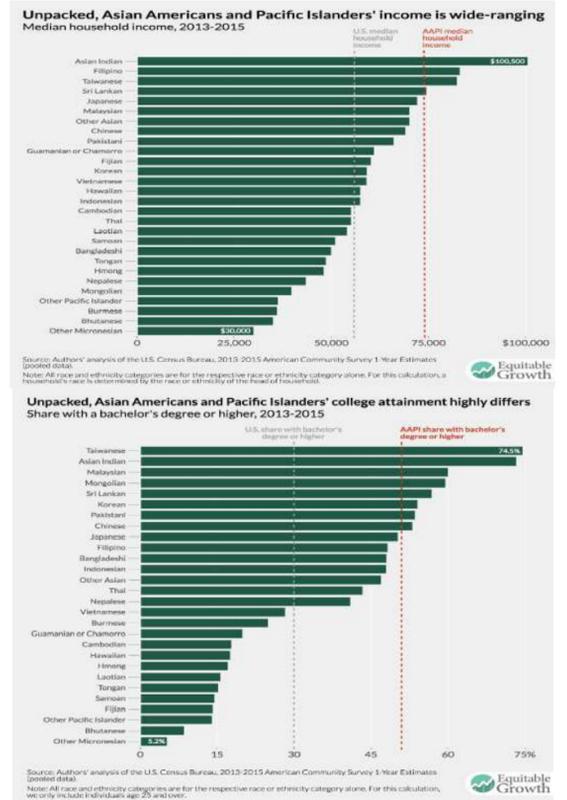
These numbers have risen rapidly in recent years. The Asian American population is the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the U.S., growing by 81% from 2000 to 2019. The Hispanic population saw the second-fastest growth, at 70%, followed by Native Hawaiians and Pacific

Islanders, at 60%. The white population grew by only 1% in that time.

Myth: Asian Americans are high earning and well educated Asian Americans have a median household income of around \$78,000 a year, which is higher than the national median of about \$66,000. However, that overall statistic obscures large differences among different Asian-origin groups.

These economic disparities are partially driven by similar disparities in education levels among Asian Americans. The highest-earning groups — Indian American and Taiwanese American households — also have the highest levels of education, while the lowest-earning groups have comparatively lower levels of education.

Key Disparities In Income And Education Among Different Asian American Groups



NOTES

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies a person of Asian descent as anyone who traces their heritage to a subset of countries in the continent of Asia. But there may be people outside of this classification who self-identify as Asian.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

Credit: Connie Hanzhang Jin/NPR

(Continued On Page C4)

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

(Continued From Page C3)

Six Charts That Shed Light On Images Of Asian Americans Held By Many



INDIAN AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS ARE THE HIGHEST-EARNING GROUP, WITH A MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF \$127,000 A YEAR. ON THE OTHER END OF THE SCALE, BURMESE AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS ARE THE LOWEST-EARNING GROUP, WITH A MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF \$46,000 A YEAR.

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

In fact, a 2018 Pew Research Center study found that Asian Americans were the most economically divided racial or ethnic group in the U.S., with Asian Americans in the top 10th of the income distribution making 10.7 times more than those in the bottom 10th. Myth: Asian Americans immigrate to the U.S. in the “right” way More than half of those who identify as Asian American and at least 17% of Pacific Islanders were born outside the U.S., according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Asian American community has the highest proportion of immigrants of any ethnic or racial group in the United States. Yet, Asian Americans are often overlooked in debates about immigration reform. Asians have a wide range of reasons for immigrating to the U.S., including those coming as refugees or asylum-seekers. Out of the almost 11 million estimated undocumented immigrants in the U.S., around 1.5 million (14%) are from Asia, according to the Migration Policy Institute. A LARGE NUMBER OF ASIANS IN

AMERICA ARE UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANTS Out of the top 10 most common origin countries for unauthorized immigrants in the U.S., an estimated one million people come from India, China or the Philippines.

Table with 3 columns: ORIGIN COUNTRY, EST. NUMBER OF UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANTS, SHARE OF TOTAL. Includes countries like Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, Honduras, China, Philippines, Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Brazil.

NOTES: Data as of 2018. Source: Migration Policy Institute Credit: Connie Hanzhang Jin/NPR

Heightened immigration enforcement has also impacted Asian Americans. From 2015 to 2018, Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrested about 15,000 immigrants from Asia, according

to a report by the nonprofit Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

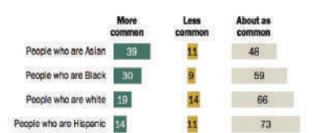
The report also found that Southeast Asian immigrants were three to four times more likely to be deported for old criminal convictions compared with other immigrant groups. Out of the approximately 16,000 Southeast Asians with final removal orders in that period, more than 13,000 had removal orders that were based on old criminal convictions.

Myth: Asian Americans Face Less Systemic Racism And Discrimination Since the coronavirus pandemic started, hate crimes and violence against Asian Americans have increased. In an April survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 32% of Asian American adults — a greater percentage than any other racial or ethnic group — said that they feared someone might threaten or physically attack them.

ASIAN AMERICANS AND OTHER GROUPS REPORT NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES SINCE THE START OF THE PANDEMIC

About four-in-ten Americans say it is more common for people to express racist views about people who are Asian than before COVID-19

% saying it is... for people to express racist or racially insensitive views about each of the following groups in our society compared to before the coronavirus outbreak



*Asian adults were interviewed in English only. Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown. White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 4-10, 2020. Many Black and Asian Americans say they have experienced discrimination amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

Share of respondents who say each of the following has happened to them since the coronavirus outbreak because of their race or ethnicity.

NOTES

Asian American adults were interviewed in English only. Sample does not include Pacific Islanders.

Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted April 5-11.

Credit: Connie Hanzhang Jin/NPR



In response, the House of Representatives passed the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act on May 18. The bill would have the Justice Department appoint a point person to expedite the review of hate crimes related to COVID-19. It would also direct resources toward making the reporting of hate crimes more accessible.

Despite increased news coverage of various attacks against Asian Americans and the upcoming legislation, the LAAUNCH survey, which was conducted between March 29 to April 14, found that 37% of white Americans were not aware of increased incidents of hate crimes.

But anti-Asian bias and discrimination are not new to the pandemic. To understand the current climate, it's important to look at historical context. In past periods of national tension, especially during times when the U.S. has been at war with Asian countries, anti-Asian racism has similarly risen.

Myth: Asian Americans are fairly represented in leadership positions

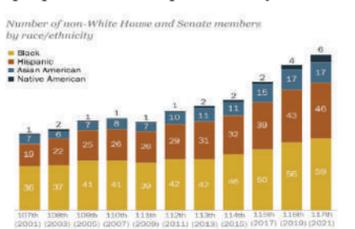
The recent LAAUNCH survey also found that almost half of Americans incorrectly believe that Asian Americans are over-represented or fairly represented in senior positions within American companies, politics, media or other realms.

In reality, Asian Americans are underrepresented in these positions of power, holding about 3% of these positions in comparison with composing 7% of the U.S. population, a report from The New York Times found last year.

More specifically, Asian Americans have the lowest degree of representation in political office compared with any other racial or ethnic group.

Asian Americans Are The Most Politically Underrepresented Group

When it comes to holding elected office, as of last year Asian Americans were underrepresented relative to their population by a differential of -85%. White people were overrepresented by 46%.



Note: Nonvoting delegates and nonrepresentatives are excluded. Figures for the 117th Congress are as of Jan. 20, 2019. Asian Americans include Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics are of any race. Members who have more than one racial or ethnic identity for the above groups are counted in each applicable group. Source: Congressional Research Service, CD Staff Carl, Brookings Institution.

Asian Americans are even underrepresented in states with a high concentration of Asian American residents, like New York and California, according to a report by the Reflective Democracy Campaign. Especially since the start of collective activism among Asian Americans in the 1960s, Asian Americans have had a rich history of political activism and involvement. But that history has not always translated to greater representation in political leadership.



One finding in the LAAUNCH survey may point to answers: 92% of Americans polled said they were comfortable with Asian Americans as doctors or friends, but only 85% said they were comfortable with an Asian American as a boss and 73% as a president of the United States. Despite these perceptions, Asian Americans are pushing forward. Asian Americans increased their voter turnout rate by more than any other racial or ethnic group in the 2020 election and in part helped Joe Biden win Georgia. In that same year, 158 Asian Americans ran for state legislatures, the highest number since the 2018 midterms. (Courtesy <https://www.npr.org/>)