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AAJA Condemns Anti-Asian Racism and Challenges Newsrooms to Prioritize Coverage of Anti-Asian Violence

📅 February 11, 2021 👤 Jessica Xiao 📁 News/PR/Statements, Statement ✎
anti-asian, coronavirus, coverage, mistreatment, racism, updates

February 11, 2021

AAJA Condemns Anti-Asian Racism and Challenges Newsrooms to Prioritize Coverage of Anti-Asian Violence

The Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA) condemns the latest incidents of anti-Asian violence across the country and calls on newsrooms to accurately cover such events.



These attacks are a part of a disturbing trend of harassment and violence targeting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, exacerbated by xenophobia and discrimination stemming from the coronavirus pandemic. This violence includes AAPI journalists facing race-related harassment while doing their jobs.

In the past few weeks alone, there has been a notable number of violent crimes targeting our most vulnerable, elderly Asian Americans, including the following:

- In San Francisco, an 84-year-old Thai American died from injuries when he was pushed to the sidewalk.
- In San Jose, CA, a 64-year old Vietnamese American woman was robbed of \$1,000 in cash which she had just withdrawn for Lunar New Year.
- In New York, a 61-year old Filipino American was slashed in the face during a subway confrontation.
- In Oakland's Chinatown, a 91-year-old man was shoved to the ground by an assailant who is believed to have shoved two other elderly Asians to the ground. These attacks in Oakland are part of more than 20 robberies and assaults reported to Chinatown community leaders ahead of the Lunar New Year.

In addition, more than a dozen Asian-owned businesses in Portland were recently vandalized. Across the United States, there were almost 1,800 racist incidents against Asian Americans in the period between March and May 2020, according to a report issued by the United Nations. Approximately 32% of Americans, and 60% of Asian Americans have witnessed blaming Asians for the coronavirus, according to a Center for Public Integrity/IPSOS poll.

AAJA calls on national and local media outlets to prioritize coverage of this ongoing violence against AAPIs, and to empower their journalists to report on these incidents immediately, accurately and comprehensively.

AAJA applauds newsrooms that have consistently reported on increased anti-Asian discrimination stemming from the coronavirus pandemic. We know that news coverage shapes attitudes toward the AAPI community and that public awareness galvanizes positive change.

We also urge newsrooms to highlight the expertise and insight of AAPI leaders, including those who are featured in AAJA Studio, our speakers bureau. Journalists can reach AAPI leaders with expertise in civil rights, race and racial justice. These experts can speak about the history of hate crimes against Asian Americans, and importantly, also have local expertise and community relationships in many local communities.

Resources for those who have experienced harassment and violence:

- Stand Against Hatred, incident reporting center by Asian Americans Advancing Justice
- Stop AAPI Hate, incident reporting center managed by Asian Pacific Planning and Policy Council, Chinese for Affirmative Action and the Asian American Studies Department of San Francisco State University
- Mental health and counseling resource for coping with anti-Asian racism and Covid-19, by Harvard University

In the coming weeks, AAJA will work to convene conversations around the impact of anti-Asian violence on our communities, and the state of media coverage of these issues.

— AAJA Board of Directors



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