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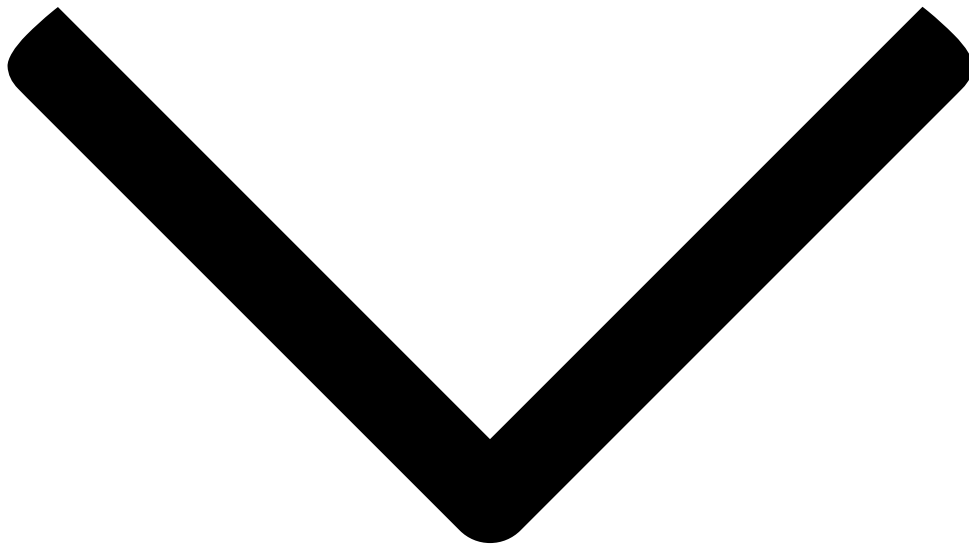
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## Coronavirus: Home secretary urged to act on 'unacceptable' rise in anti-Chinese hate crimes

Sky News revealed at least 267 hate crimes were recorded against Chinese people in three months in 2020 amid the COVID-19 crisis.



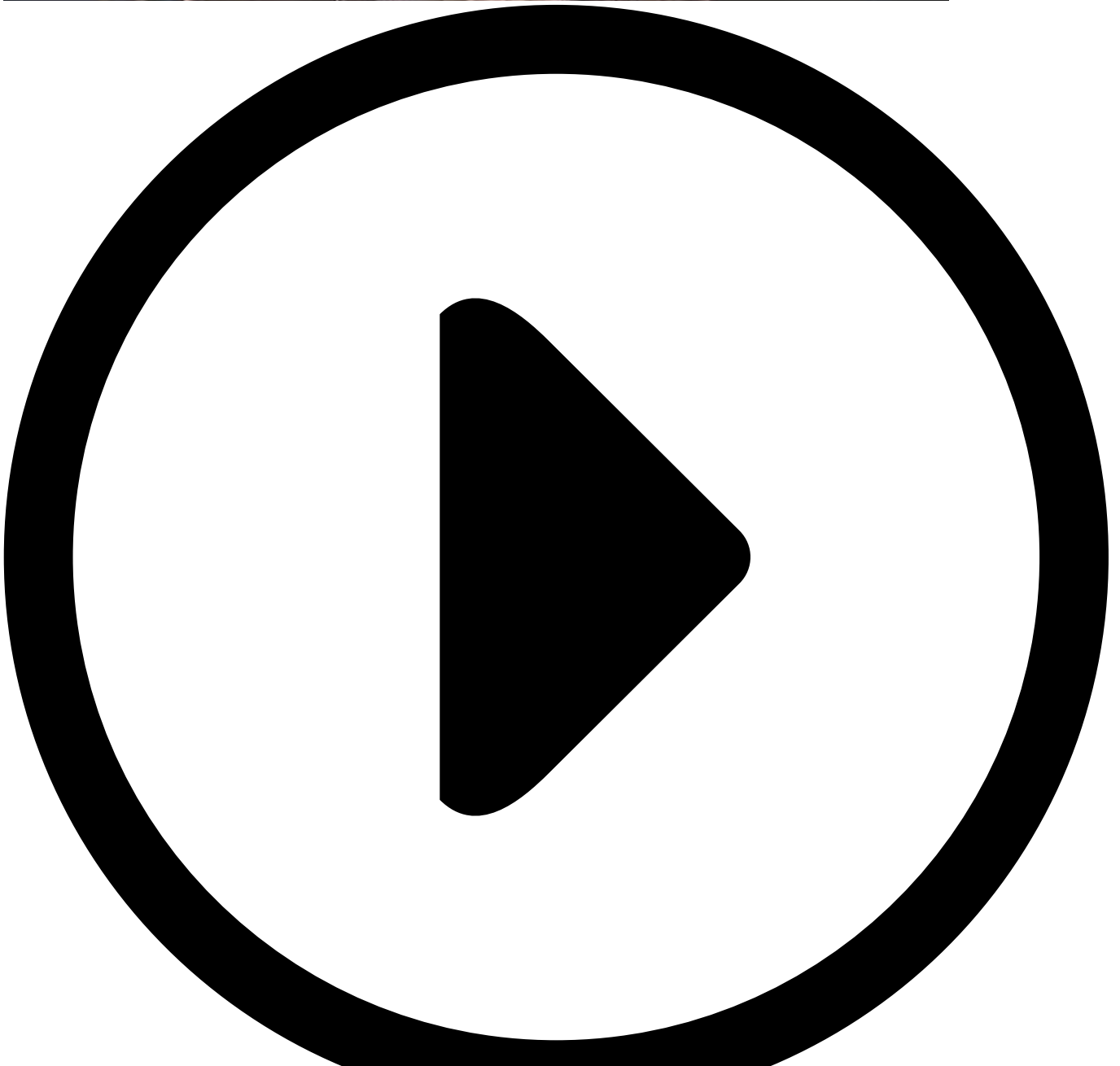
[David Mercer](#)

News reporter [@DavidMercerSky](#)



Wednesday 6 May 2020 00:51, UK

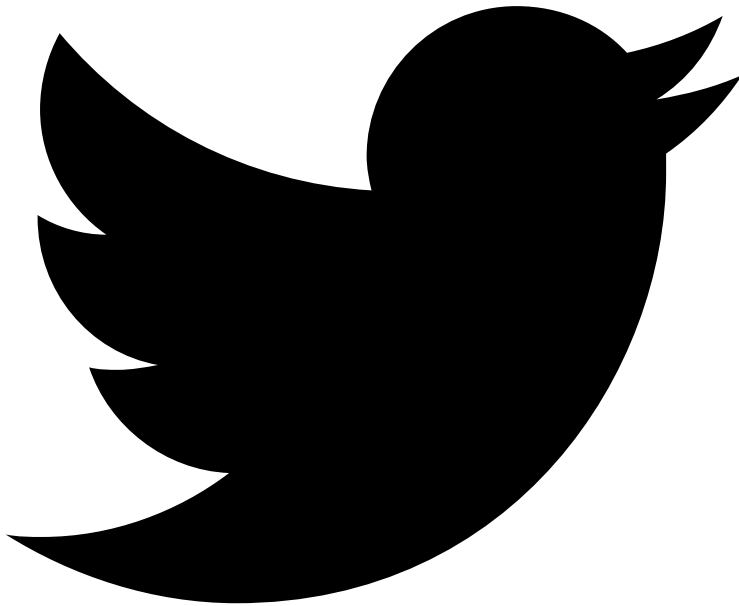
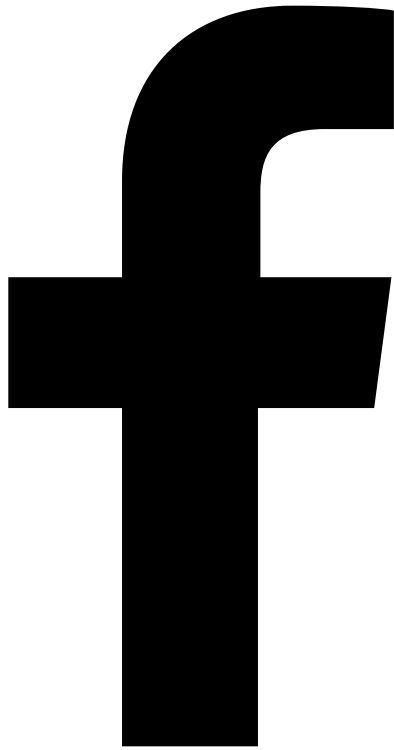
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Rise in hate crime against Chinese people

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The rise in hate crimes against Chinese people in the UK is "totally unacceptable" and offenders should face "the strongest possible consequences", the shadow home secretary has said.

Nick Thomas-Symonds said he had written to Home Secretary Priti Patel after a [Sky News investigation](#) found offences against the UK's Chinese community have soared during the [coronavirus](#) outbreak.

The Liberal Democrats claim the government has admitted it does not know the true number of anti-Chinese hate crimes in the UK because "information is not routinely collected on the ethnicity of victims".

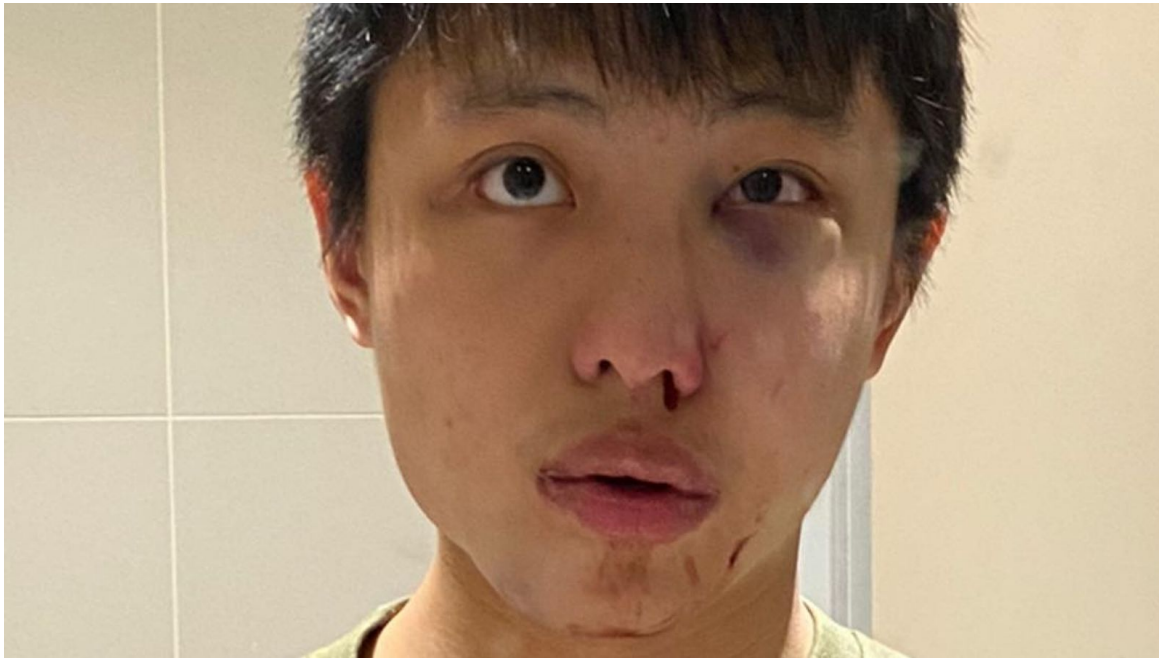


Image: Jonathan Mok, a student from Singapore, was attacked by people who allegedly said: 'I don't want your coronavirus'

Sky News revealed at least 267 hate crimes were recorded against Chinese people between January and March during the [COVID-19](#) crisis, with victims being punched, spat at and coughed on in the street.

The rate of offences in the first three months of 2020 was nearly three times that of the previous two years, according to data released by UK police forces.

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Mr Thomas-Symonds said: "Any hate crime is one too many. It's awful to see these incidents targeting Chinese people.

"I've already written to the home secretary on this - hate crime is totally unacceptable and those responsible should face the strongest possible consequences."

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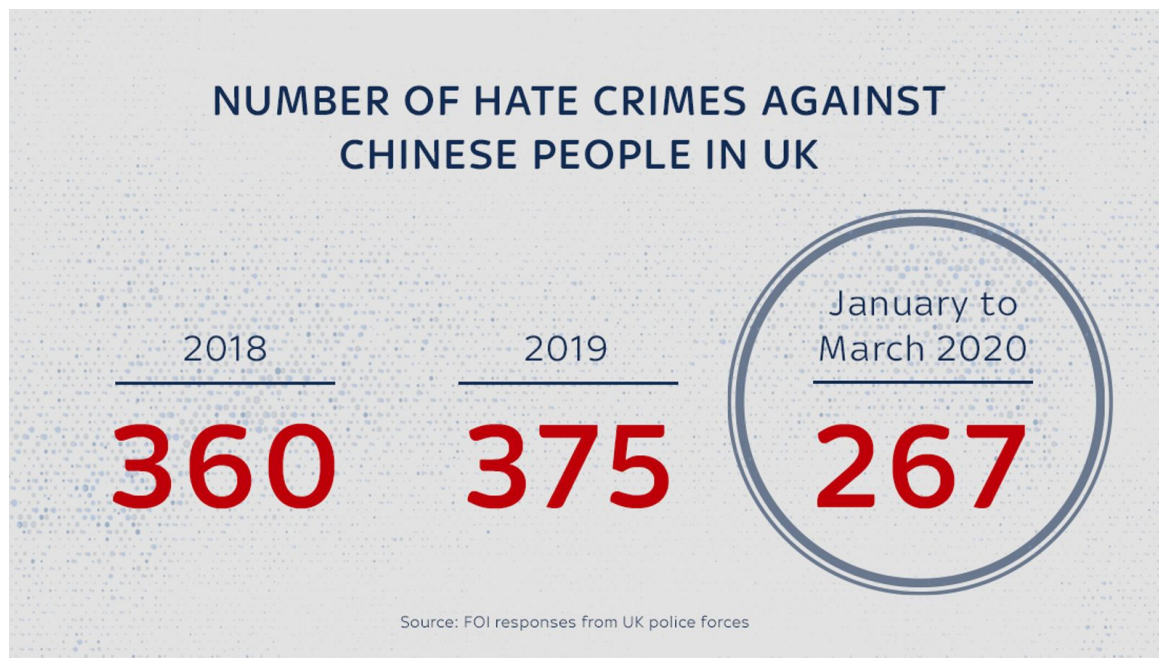


Image: Hate crimes against Chinese people have soared between January and March

Former shadow home secretary Diane Abbott called on ministers to condemn hate crimes against the UK's Chinese community "unreservedly".

"Racism is not stupidity - racism is hate'," she tweeted.

"All forms of racism are unacceptable. [I] would like to hear ministers condemn it unreservedly."

In response to a parliamentary question, policing minister Kit Malthouse said the government does not know how many anti-Chinese hate crimes are committed in the UK because "information is not routinely collected on the ethnicity of victims", according to the Lib Dems.



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The party has now urged the home secretary to "condemn this pernicious new form of racism".

Liberal Democrats' home affairs spokeswoman Christine Jardine said: "The home secretary must step up and tackle this appalling trend head-on.

"That work cannot be effectively undertaken unless the government records and tracks these crimes, so I urge the home secretary to enact that change today."






Image: Priti Patel has been urged to 'condemn this pernicious new form of racism'

Suresh Grover, director of anti-racism charity The Monitoring Group, also reported a "worrying spike of race hate crimes against Chinese communities" since the COVID-19 crisis.

The coronavirus outbreak started in China, with the first case reported in Wuhan in Hubei province in December.

The first documented cases in the UK came in February, and the virus has now been linked to more than 29,000 deaths across the country.

Deputy Chief Constable Mark Hamilton, the national policing lead for hate crime, told Sky News that "no one is responsible for the outbreak and everyone has a right to be protected from targeted abuse".




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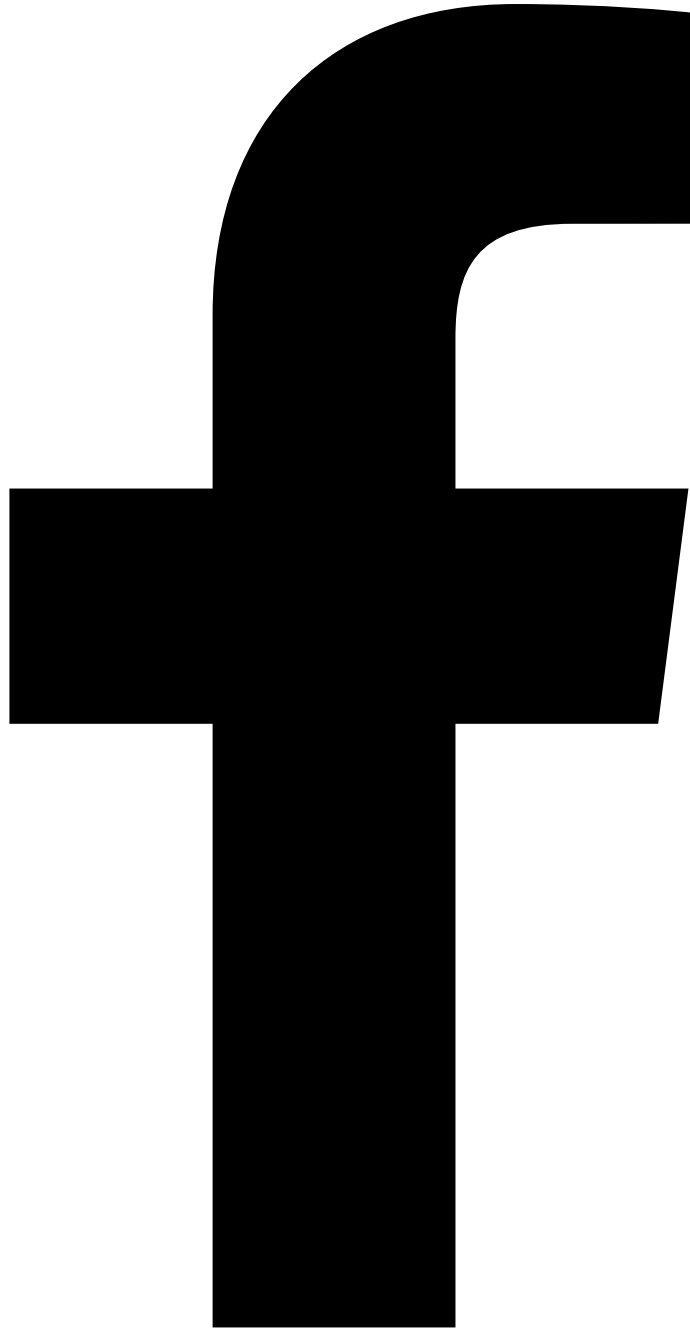


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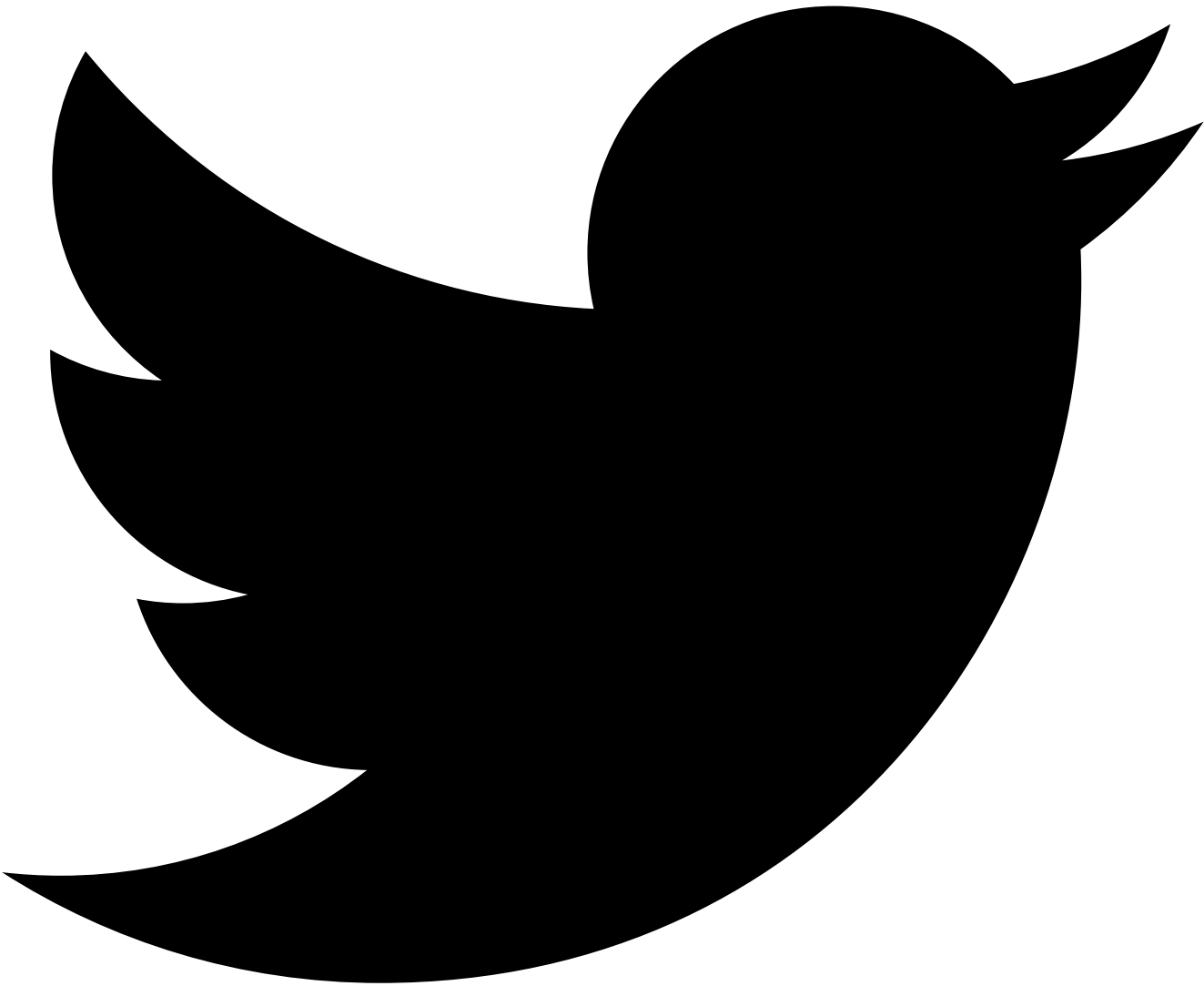
He added: "We know that some forces have unfortunately had reports about a small number of offenders who have committed hate crimes against those from Chinese and South East Asian communities and linked to the COVID-19 outbreak.

"The police, prosecutors and the courts have all made it clear that they will take such crimes very seriously.

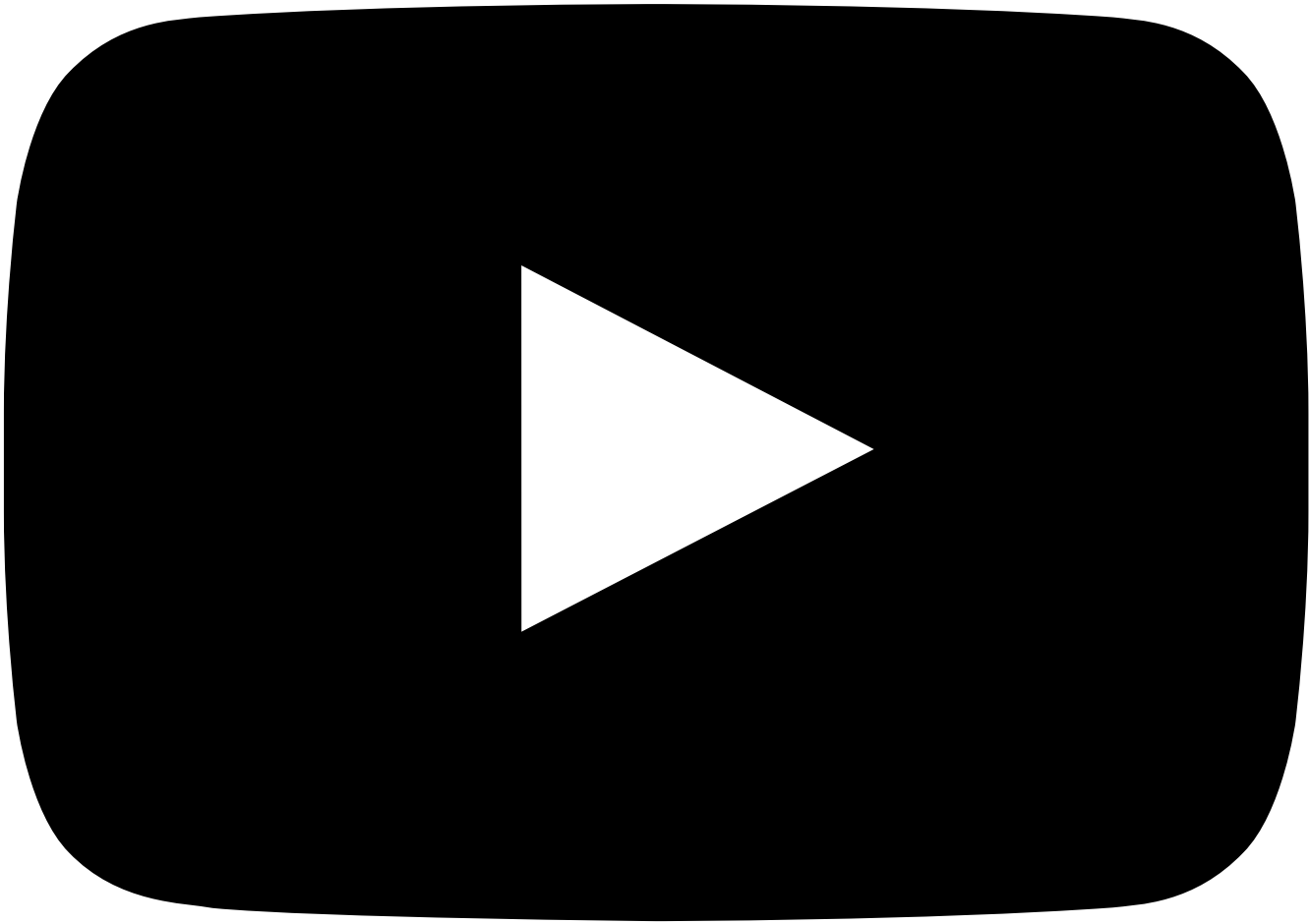
"We will continue to monitor any trends that arise, and to support affected communities, including with translated information on how they can report issues to the police and get the appropriate support."



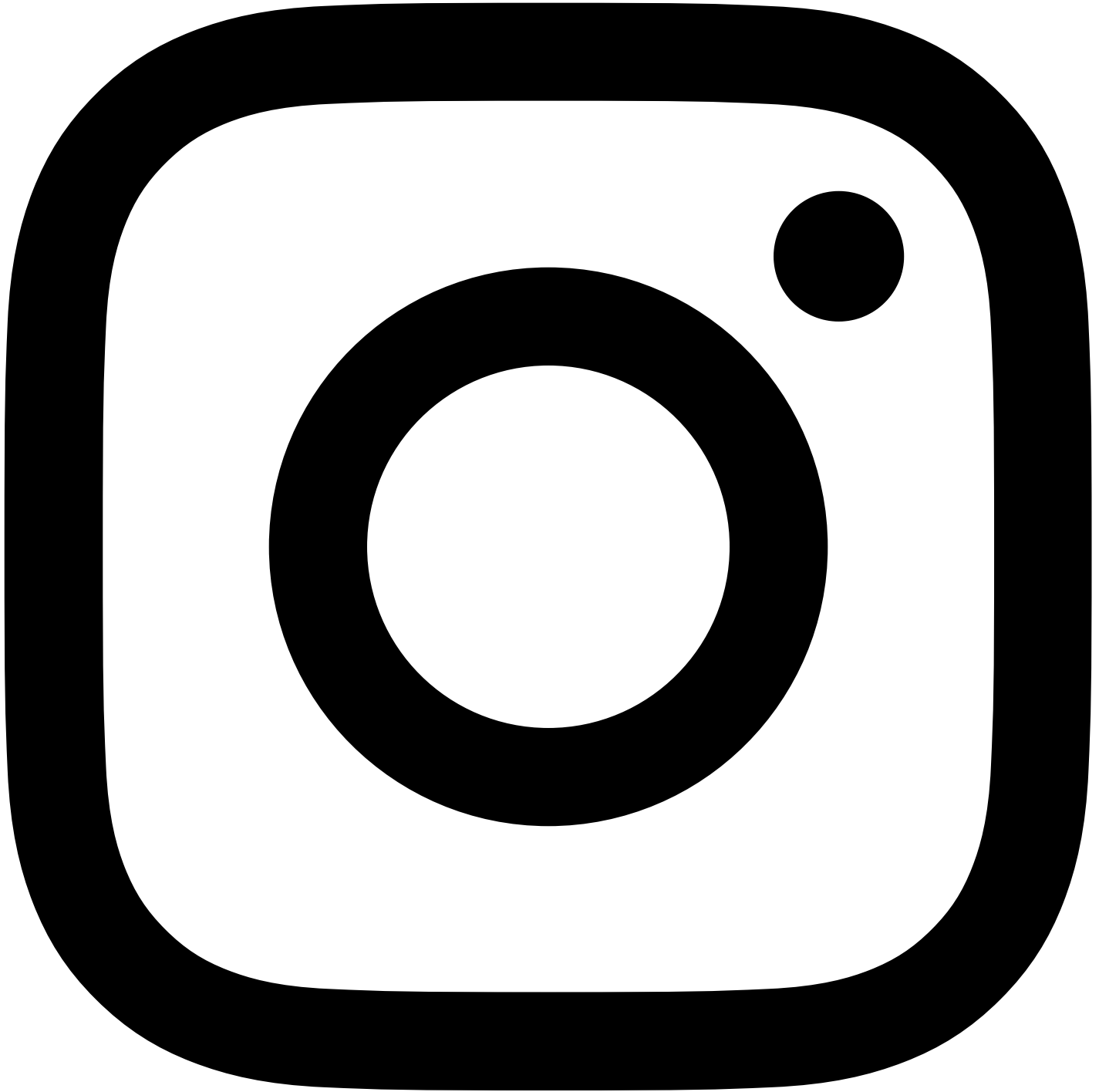
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