

Indian restaurant vandalised with racist graffiti in US

IANIS-English

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Indo-Asian News Service
IANS India's Largest Independent Newswire

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Body

New York, Oct 6 (IANS) In yet another case of growing racism and hate crime against Indians abroad, a restaurant in Henrico County, Virginia, was vandalised with vulgar and racist graffiti, local media reported.

The walls of India K' Raja restaurant, owned and operated by Tony Sappal, were spray-painted with derogatory words and phrases targeting Asian Americans.

"For 27 years, this has been home. Nobody has ever displayed that kind of anger or hate to us," Sappal told the Richmond Times Dispatch.

Sappal said he was returning from a catering event last weekend when he came across the racist graffiti. Operating in Henrico since 1995, the restaurant provided free lunches for students when schools shut down during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Henrico police told the local media that the incident is being investigated and that the suspects are still at large.

"This is heinous. We will not tolerate hate crimes and acts of racism in Henrico. India K' Raja is a beloved staple in our community," Virginia State Delegate, Rodney Willett, said in a tweet.

"India K' Raja is one of the best places to get Indian food in Central Virginia. To the people who committed this heinous crime - we will not be intimidated," Bob Shippee, House of Delegates candidate for the 57th district in the US, tweeted.

Anti-Asian hate crime increased by 339 per cent last year compared to the year before, with New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities surpassing their record numbers in 2020, according to research by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism.

Late in August, four Indian American women were told that they were "ruining" America and should "go back to India" by a Mexican-American woman in Texas.

Community members have also expressed concerns over multiple brazen attacks on Mahatma Gandhi's statue in New York and other US cities. Last month, Indian-Americans held a peaceful protest at Time Square against the recent spurt in hate crimes and instances of vandalism of the Gandhi statue in the city.

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Half a dozen murders, all within a week: Are Indian -Americans safe?

Half a dozen murders, all within a week: Are Indian-Americans safe?

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October 7, 2022 Friday

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Indo-Asian News Service
IANS India's Largest Independent Newswire

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Body

New Delhi, Oct 7 (IANS) A total of six murders, including that of an eight-month-old infant, within a week's time begs answer to the question every Indian wants to know -- is the community safe in the US?

The US is home to more than 4.5 million Indians, which is the highest-earning ethnic group in the country. President Joe Biden recently went on record to say: "It's amazing, Indian—of descent—Americans are taking over the country: you, my Vice President (Kamala Harris), my speechwriter, Vinay (Vinay Reddy)... You guys are incredible!"

Even as one grappled with the shock of four Sikh family members, within the age groups of eight months to 39 years, found dead in California, news of 20-year-old student Varun Manish Chheda stabbed to death on Purdue University campus, sent shockwaves running across the Indian community world over.

Earlier this week, Gurpreet Kaur Dosanjh, a Walmart employee, was shot dead and lumped inside a car in a parking lot in San Jose, California.

In June this year, Satnam Singh, 31, was shot dead while sitting in a parked SUV down the street from his home in New York. This came days after Sai Charan Nakka, a 25-year-old techie from Telangana, was killed after sustaining an apparent gunshot wound to his head in Maryland

Apart from the gruesome killings, Indian-Americans have been consistently battling racial taunts, assaults, hate crime robberies, and vandalism of their properties.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 161 anti-Asian hate crimes took place in 2019, which rose to 279 in 2020.

Giving a religious break-up, the FBI said that 54 anti-Sikh crimes occurred in 2019, which rose to 89 in 2020.

Anti-Asian hate crime increased by 339 percent last year compared to the year before, with New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities surpassing their record numbers in 2020, according to research by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism.

Late in August, four Indian American women were told that they were "ruining" America and should "go back to India" by a Mexican-American woman in Texas. In the same month, Krishnan Jayaraman was racially abused and called a "disgusting Hindu" by Californian Rajinder Singh in a Taco Bell outlet in Fremont.

Half a dozen murders, all within a week: Are Indian -Americans safe?

Community members have also expressed concerns over multiple brazen attacks on Mahatma Gandhi's statue in New York and other US cities.

"Such bigoted attacks motivated by racism, xenophobia, and other forms of hate victimise not only those directly targeted by them but also broader communities through creating an atmosphere of fear and danger," Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi had said recently.

Last month, Indian-Americans held a peaceful protest at Time Square against the recent spurt in hate crimes and instances of vandalism of the Gandhi statue in the city.

An Indian American Attitudes Survey released last year found that "one in two Indian-Americans reports being discriminated against in the past one year, with discrimination based on skin colour identified as the most common form of bias".

Somewhat surprisingly, Indian-Americans born in the US are much more likely to report being victims of discrimination than their foreign-born counterparts," the survey, supported by Carnegie Endowment, said.

Biden had spoken strongly against hate crimes at a recent event against racism.

It remains to be seen what Biden, who boasts of having appointed more than 130 Indian-Americans to key positions in his administration so far, does now for the community that has made significant contributions to this great landscape.

(Meenakshi Iyer can be reached at meenakshi.i@ians.in)

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Pope Francis condemns racism as a 'virus' that mutates and hides

Pope Francis condemns racism as a 'virus' that mutates and hides

UPI

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Dateline: March 21

Body



Pope Francis condemned racism on Sunday, comparing it to a "virus" that changes and persists throughout time.

The pope did not cite any particular instance of racism, but his comments come after a gunman opened fire at three massage parlors in Atlanta last week, killing eight people including six Asian women, and on the day the United Nations observes International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Pope Francis condemns racism as a 'virus' that mutates and hides

"Racism is a virus that quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting," he wrote. "Instances of racism continue to shame us, for they show that our supposed social progress is not as real or definitive as we think."

On Saturday, thousands of people gathered for a "Stop Asian Hate" rally in response to the attack on Tuesday during which Robert Aaron Long, 21, was charged with murder for targeting three Asian-owned spas in the Atlanta area.

Hyun Jung Grant, 51; Xiaojie Tan, 49; Daoyou Feng, 44; Yong Ae Yue, 63; Soon Chung Park, 74; Suncha Kim, 69; Delaina Ashley Yaun, 33; and Paul Andre Michels, 54 were all shot and killed, while Elcias Hernandez-Ortiz, 30, survived the shooting but remained in critical condition.

Police said Long cited a sex addiction as the reason for the shooting but Georgia state Rep. Bee Nguyen noted the fact that the businesses were all owned by Asians and six of the victims were Asian women.

"No matter how you want to spin it the facts remain the same. This was an attack on the Asian community," said Nguyen.

March 21 has also served as the day the United Nations observes International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, since 1960 when police in Sharpeville, South Africa killed 69 people at a peaceful protest against apartheid laws.

In a statement released Sunday, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi also compared the devastating impacts of racism to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Violent and deadly attacks against Black, Brown, Asian and Indigenous people, toxic language and daily and sustained racially charged acts have rightly forced painful -- but necessary -- conversations to re-examine prejudice, privilege, the way we view the world and most importantly how we act," Grandi said.

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