45% OF EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLE IN THE UK HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO A HATE CRIME IN THE LAST YEAR

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PRESS RELEASE

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45% OF EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLE IN THE UK HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO A HATE CRIME IN THE LAST YEAR

In its new alarming report, charity Protection Approaches reveals that hate crime experienced by ESEA communities remains chronically underreported, with trust in authorities low, as just 10% report hate crime to the police.

On Tuesday 23rd April, Protection Approaches – a UK-based charity working to prevent identity-based violence – in collaboration with the University of Leicester's Centre for Hate Studies, launch their report on East and Southeast Asian (ESEA) communities' experiences of hate crime in the UK in Parliament, with Sarah Owen MP as host and chair.

This report reveals what ESEA communities in the UK have long known, that hate against them remains high and victims are often unsupported. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a spotlight was shone on anti-ESEA hate crime in the UK spiked with a nearly 70% increase seen in incidents recorded by police in 2020 vs 2019. That period of increased reports and activism highlighted both a lack of services supporting ESEA community members who face hate, and the extent to which ESEA experiences of hate crime had been historically neglected in the public consciousness.

Sarah Owen MP said:

"The absence of a national strategy on hate crime has left policymakers ill-equipped to address the new challenges facing Britain in 2024, with communities paying the price. If we are to ensure our ESEA communities thrive, we must listen to their needs. This report should serve as a call to action for people, politicians, and policymakers alike."

Due to underreporting, there is very little reliable data on the true extent of hate crime faced by ESEA communities in the UK. For a long time, groups supporting ESEA community members, such as third party reporting and support service On Your Side, have known that the true picture is much higher than has been recorded to date but had no meaningful data to prove to policy makers and funders just how serious the problem is. Until now.

This report, funded by the Office of Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs at JPMorgan Chase, has been conducted in partnership with the Centre for Hate Studies at the University of Leicester, with the support of End Violence and Racism Against ESEA Communities and VoiceESEA, works toward closing this gap.

On the extent of hate crime experienced

The research has found that 45% (430,000) ESEA community members were subjected to a hate crime in the last year. As 55% were subject to more than one incident, this suggests that close to 1 million incidents targeting ESEA community members were committed in the last 12 months.

Underreporting and a lack of support

Just 1 in 10 of those who were subjected to hate crime in the past year reported to police. 63% of participants who did not report their experience of hate crime to police felt the police wouldn't take it

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We asked what would make those participants more likely to report to the police: 23% told us they would report if they thought the report would be taken seriously and actioned by the police / authorities, and 15% told us that they needed more awareness or understanding of what can be reported or how to report.

Who is perpetrating, and where?

In 75% of recent experiences of being subjected to hate crime, the offender/s were men, while 73% of hate crimes targeting ESEA women are perpetrated by men. Moreover, 42% of victims were targeted by groups of perpetrators, and at least 42% of participants told us that the most recent incident they were subject to was perpetrated by more than one person.

We found that in 53% of recent incidents participants believed the offender/s were under 30 years old. This shows that hostility and prejudice towards ESEA communities in the UK is not an issue of the past or confined exclusively to older generations.

What are the impacts on victims?

99% of those who have been subjected to hate crime suffered negative impacts to their well-being, 90% told us that their experiences of hate crime had made them upset, 72% had been made to feel anxious, 61% had been made to feel vulnerable, 26% were made to feel depressed, and 4% felt suicidal. Despite such serious impacts, only 5% of victims had ever received emotional support from any agency or organisation.

Victina Tse, Project Coordinator, On Your Side said:

“These findings underscore the necessity for tailored and culturally competent reporting mechanisms and support services specifically designed for ESEA communities who experience hate. At On Your Side, we are committed to providing these essential services through a 24/7 freephone helpline and in community casework support delivered by ESEA community groups across the country, ensuring our community members feel heard, supported, and safe.”

Andy Fearn, Co-Executive Director, Protection Approaches said:

“The findings of this research are a call to action for both the Government and funding bodies. The rise in hate crime faced by ESEA communities during COVID-19 was not just a passing trend but a significant societal issue that demands immediate and comprehensive intervention. It is imperative that the Government expedites the publication of a new national Hate Crime Strategy. This strategy should be developed in close collaboration with community organisations, as well as those dedicated to supporting hate crime victims and implementing prevention programs.”

These findings unveil a concerning trend of victims not feeling able to access support, report incidents, and a widespread mistrust towards authorities. It is clear much more must be done to prevent hate crime targeting ESEA communities and to ensure that victims are able to access the support they need.

This report offers a clear roadmap for change through better support for victims, and meaningful community-led initiatives toward the prevention of future crimes. Protection Approaches calls on His Majesty’s Government and funding bodies to take the following immediate steps:

- HMG should prioritise the publication of a new national Hate Crime Strategy, focussed on prevention and meaningful victim support, developed in partnership with community organisations as well as organisations supporting hate crime victims and delivering hate crime prevention programmes.
- Increase funding to third party support and reporting services by allocating more resources to national third party (non-police) reporting and reporting services like 'On Your Side'.
- Invest in and prioritise local community initiatives that address the unique needs of hate crime victims.
- Commission educational projects that raise awareness about hate crimes within ESEA communities. This could involve funding for community workshops, public educational adverts, and the creation of materials in various languages to ensure accessibility.
- Commission public awareness campaigns that encourage reporting and access to support for hate crime victims.
- Fund in-depth research community-based into hate crime experiences and their societal impacts to inform policymakers, toward developing targeted policies and response strategies.

ENDS.

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