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Chinese envoy warns against Afghanistan being heaven again for terrorists



that the Afghan people stay away from war and can rebuild their homeland.

China hopes the Taliban can unite with all factions and ethnic groups in Afghanistan, and build a broad-based and inclusive political structure suited to the national conditions of Afghanistan, so as to lay the foundation for achieving enduring peace in the country, he said.

The current humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is very dire. Humanitarian assistance and epidemic prevention and control are under tremendous pressure. The international community should scale up humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and its neighbors that have received a large number of displaced persons from Afghanistan to help alleviate the regional humanitarian crisis. The relevant parties should ensure that the work of international humanitarian relief agencies can continue unhindered. The international community should also continue to help Afghanistan and its neighbors to control COVID-19, he said.

The current chaos in Afghanistan is directly related to the hasty withdrawal of foreign troops, said Geng.

Relevant countries should earnestly deliver on their commitments to supporting peace, reconciliation and reconstruction in Afghanistan and play a constructive role on the issue of Afghanistan. On the basis of respecting the leadership of Afghanistan and relevant efforts of the neighboring countries, they should continue to provide constructive assistance to Afghanistan in the political, security, development, humanitarian and anti-narcotics fields, he said.

Many council members said in their statements that they wished to see greater roles played by Afghanistan's neighbors and regional countries. China learned that some regional countries and Afghanistan's neighbors had made requests to participate in Monday's meeting. It is regrettable that their requests were rejected, said Geng.

For a long time, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan has played an important role in supporting the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan. Given that the current situation on the ground has undergone major changes, China hopes that the UN secretary-general will make proper arrangements to ensure the safety of personnel of the UN mission. China also looks forward to the secretary-general presenting practical and actionable views and recommendations to the Security Council as soon as possible on the future UN presence in Afghanistan, he said.

UNITED NATIONS, Aug. 16 (Xinhua) -- A Chinese envoy on Monday warned against Afghanistan becoming heaven again for terrorists.

In the last 20 years, terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State, al-Qaida and the East Turkestan Independence Movement (ETIM) have gathered and developed in Afghanistan, posing a serious threat to international and regional peace and security, said Geng Shuang, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

"Afghanistan must never again become heaven for terrorists. This is the bottom line that must be held firmly for any future political solution in Afghanistan," he told an emergency meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan.

"We hope that the Taliban in Afghanistan will earnestly deliver on their commitments and make a clean break with the terrorist organizations," he said. "All countries should fulfill their obligations in accordance with international law and Security Council resolutions, work with each other in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and take resolute actions to prevent terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State, al-Qaida and the ETIM from taking advantage of this chaos (in Afghanistan)."

The situation in Afghanistan has undergone major changes. China respects the will and choice of the Afghan people. The war in Afghanistan has lasted more than 40 years. To stop the war and realize peace is the shared aspiration of the Afghan people and the common expectation of the international community and countries in the region. The pressing task at the moment is to restore peace, stability and order as soon as possible, so as to avoid casualties and large-scale refugee flows, he said.

The rights and interests of diplomatic missions and personnel in Afghanistan are inviolable. The safety and security, and interests of foreign nationals in Afghanistan must be respected and guaranteed. All parties in Afghanistan have the responsibility to protect people's lives and property. They should provide assurance for the safe residence and orderly evacuation of foreign nationals, said Geng.

China has always maintained that a political solution is the only way out for Afghanistan. At present, Afghanistan's national prospects are at a historic crossroads. China has noted the Taliban's statement on Sunday that the war in Afghanistan was over and that they would hold talks aimed at forming an open, inclusive Islamic government in Afghanistan and take responsible actions to protect the safety of Afghan citizens and foreign diplomatic missions. China hopes these commitments can be honored so as to ensure a smooth transition of the situation in Afghanistan, keep at bay all kinds of terrorism and criminal acts, and make sure

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY 08/17/2021



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The Taliban Takes Over Afghanistan



President Biden addressed the nation saying that he stands 'squarely behind' his decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan after having a presence for 20 years while admitting that, "The fall of the country to the Taliban did unfold more quickly than we had anticipated."

The president said that, "After 20 years, I've learned the hard way that there was never a good time to withdraw our U.S. forces."

Administration officials have blamed the Afghan security forces, maintaining that the U.S. has provided billions

of dollars in support, training and equipment to them, but when "push came to shove," they decided not to step up and fight for their country.

President Biden said, "We gave them every chance to determine their own future, but what we could not provide them with was

the will to fight for that future."

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled the country without a succession plan and without a deal with the Taliban about the future of the country and without any support.

America's allies who believed President Biden made the right decision to finally exit a war that the United States could not win and that no longer was in U.S.'s future

interests sheds light on two questions: How much political damage has been done to America's reputation around the world, and how can the U.S. allies be protected by the U.S. when such critical times could erupt in their own countries?

Today when we look back over the last twenty years, we really owe so much to the members of the military and other Americans who put down their lives in foreign lands for our country.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



People who were evacuated from Kabul wave from inside the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) bus as it leaves the Hindon Air Force Station in Ghaziabad, India, August 17. REUTERS/Anushree Fadnavis



An Afghan boy receives a bag containing food from a Red Cross member after arriving at Fiumicino airport after Taliban insurgents entered Afghanistan's capital Kabul, in Rome, Italy, August 16. Italian Ministry of Defence/via REUTERS



Taliban forces patrol a street in Herat, Afghanistan August 14, 2021. REUTERS/Stringer



Officials from the Indian mission in Afghanistan and evacuated Indian civilians are pictured after their flight landed in the western Indian city of Jamnagar for refueling on the way to Delhi, India, August 17. REUTERS/Stringer



Indian civilians who were evacuated are pictured after their flight landed in the western Indian city of Jamnagar for refueling on the way to Delhi, India, August 17. REUTERS/Stringer



Carabinieri paramilitary police officers escort people outside Fiumicino airport as their return to Italy after Taliban insurgents entered Afghanistan's capital Kabul, in Rome, Italy, August 16. REUTERS/Guglielmo Mangiapane

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

CDC Reverses Indoor Mask Policy, Saying Fully Vaccinated People And Kids Should Wear Them Indoors



KEY POINTS

- The CDC recommended that fully vaccinated people begin wearing masks indoors again in places with high Covid transmission rates. The updated guidance comes ahead of the fall, when the delta variant is expected to cause another surge in new coronavirus cases and many large employers plan to bring workers back to the office. Experts say Covid prevention strategies remain critical to protect people from the virus, especially in areas of moderate-to-high community transmission levels.

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

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended Tuesday that fully vaccinated people begin wearing masks indoors again in places with high Covid-19 transmission rates. The agency is also recommending kids wear masks in schools this fall. Federal health officials still believe fully vaccinated individuals represent a very small amount of transmission. Still, some vaccinated people could be carrying higher levels of the virus than previously understood and potentially transmit it to others. "This pandemic continues to pose a serious threat to the health of all Americans," CDC Director Rochelle Walensky told reporters on a call. "Today, we have new science related to the delta variant that requires us to update the guidance regarding what you can do when you are fully vaccinated." The updated guidance comes ahead of the fall season, when the highly contagious

delta variant is expected to cause another surge in new coronavirus cases and many large employers plan to bring workers back to the office. In mid-May, the CDC said fully vaccinated people didn't need to wear masks in most settings, whether indoors or outdoors.



"In areas with substantial and high transmission, CDC recommends fully vaccinated people wear masks in public, indoor settings to help prevent the spread of the delta variant, and protect others. This includes schools," Walensky said.

The CDC recommends that everyone in grade schools wear masks indoors, "including teachers, staff, students and visitors, regardless of vaccination status." Walensky said new data shows the variant behaves "uniquely differently from past strains of the virus," indicating that some vaccinated people infected with the delta variant "may be contagious and spread the virus to others."

Health experts fear delta, already the dominant form of the disease in the U.S., is hitting states with low vaccination rates. Those states are now being forced to reintroduce mask rules, capacity limits and other public health measures that they've largely rolled back in recent months.

White House chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci said Sunday that the CDC was considering whether to revise mask guidance for vaccinated Americans, saying it was "under active consideration."



"It's a dynamic situation. It's a work in progress, it evolves like in so many other areas of the pandemic," Fauci, also the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told CNN. "You've got to look at the data."

The CDC's guidance is only a recommendation, leaving it up to states and local officials on whether to reintroduce their mask rules for certain people. But even before the CDC's anticipated guidance Tuesday, some regions were reintroducing mask mandates and advisories as Covid cases began to spike again.

Walensky said a majority of the hospitalizations and deaths in the U.S. are occurring among unvaccinated people, pointing to vaccines she said worked well in protecting against severe illness and death. "But the big concern is that the next variant that might emerge, we're just a few mutations potentially away where it could potentially evade our vaccines," she said.

President Joe Biden said the CDC's updated guidance was necessary to defeat the virus, and that he will lay out "next steps" to get more Americans vaccinated on Thursday.

"Although most U.S. adults are vacci-

nated, too many are not. While we have seen an increase in vaccinations in recent days, we still need to do better," he said in a statement. "More vaccinations and mask wearing in the areas most impacted by the Delta variant will enable us to avoid the kind of lockdowns, shutdowns, school closures, and disruptions we faced in 2020." (Courtesy cnbc.com)

Related: Fauci Defends Reversal on Masks—He Says CDC Hasn't 'Flip-Flopped': 'What Has Changed is the Virus'



National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director Dr. Anthony Fauci

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director Dr. Anthony Fauci said on Wednesday that the change in CDC guidelines over wearing masks reflects the latest surge in coronavirus cases amid the Delta variant spreading in the United States.

On Tuesday, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky announced, "In areas with substantial and high transmission, CDC recommends fully vaccinated people wear masks in public, indoor settings to help prevent the spread of the Delta variant and protect others."

The guidance applies to schools, she said, in that her agency "recommends that everyone in K-12 schools wear a mask indoors, including teachers, staff, students, and visitors regardless of vaccination status."

On Wednesday, Morning Joe co-host Mika Brzezinski asked Fauci "why we are discussing vaccine mandates and why we're looking at a mask mandate all over again because there are some who say the CDC doesn't know what it's doing, what is it going to be today?"



Fauci replied that since the CDC guidance on masks in March — that vaccinated individuals do not need to wear masks indoors or outdoors — "something has changed."

"What has changed is the virus. The CDC hasn't changed. The CDC hasn't really flipped-flopped. What's happened is that when that earlier recommendation was made dealing predominantly with the Alpha variant," said Fauci.

"And the alpha variant, when you look at individuals who are vaccinated, that the level of virus in the nasopharynx of vaccinated people who might breathe through infection, that the level of virus was really low, indicating that it would be extremely unlikely that a vaccinated person who happened to get infected, and that happens because the vaccine is certainly not 100% effective, that that would be very unlikely that that would transmit."

"However," he continued, "now, we are dealing with the delta variant, which is really quite a lot more transmissible than the Alpha variant."



Another reason for the new CDC guidelines, according to Fauci, is that "the data are clear, the most recent data, that when a person gets infected who has been vaccinated, namely a breakthrough infection, and they get infected with the Delta variant, that the level of virus in their nasopharynx is about a thousand times higher than with the Alpha variant."

Fauci acknowledged that "even though it's a rare occurrence those individuals can and have transmitted the virus to uninfected individuals," it is "for that reason, the recommendations and the guidelines have been changed to say that if you are vaccinated, even though you are vaccinated, when you are in an indoor public setting in an area of the country with a high degree of viral dynamics, mainly the red and orange sections on the CDC chart, then you need to wear a mask even though you are vaccinated." (Courtesy https://www.mediaite.com/)

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

2020 Saw A Steep Rise In Attacks Against Asian Americans

There Have Been Over 9,000 Anti-Asian Incidents Since The COVID Pandemic Began



Illustration: Aida Amer/Axios

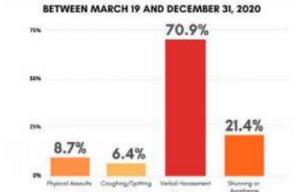
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The frequency of anti-Asian incidents — from taunts to outright assaults — reported in the United States so far this year seems poised to surpass last year despite months of political and social activism, according to a new report released Thursday.

Stop AAPI Hate, a national coalition that became the authority on gathering data on racially motivated attacks related to the pandemic, received 9,081 incident reports between March 19, 2020, and this June. Of those, 4,548 occurred last year, and 4,533 this year. Since the coronavirus was first reported in China, people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent have been treated as scapegoats solely based on their race. Lawmakers, activists and community groups have pushed back against the wave of attacks. There have been countless social media campaigns, bystander training sessions and public rallies. In May, President Joe Biden signed the bipartisan COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, expediting Justice Department reviews of anti-Asian hate crimes and making available federal grants. Those supporters should not feel discouraged because the data hasn't shifted much, Stop AAPI Hate leaders said.

"When you encourage hate, it's not like a genie in a bottle where you can pull it out and push it back in whenever you want," said Manjusha Kulkarni, co-founder of Stop AAPI Hate and executive director of the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council. "There's too much perpetuating these belief systems to make them go away."

TYPES OF ANTI-ASIAN HATE CRIMES BETWEEN MARCH 19 AND DECEMBER 31, 2020



Several factors contributed to the data, from an increase in incidents to a greater desire to report, according to Kulkarni. As the economy opened up more in the past few months, it meant more public interactions and opportunities to attack, she said. Also, a bump in reporting typically occurs after a high-profile incident like the March 16 Atlanta-area spa shootings that left six Asian women dead. "There, too, is where we saw some that were incidents that had taken place weeks or months before, but they just were either not aware of our reporting center or didn't take the time to report," Kulkarni said.

The reports aggregated by Stop AAPI Hate are from the victims themselves or someone reporting on their behalf, like an adult child. Overall, the report found verbal harassment and shunning — interactions that don't qualify legally as hate crimes — make up the two largest shares of total incidents. Physical assaults made up the third. But their percent-

age of the incidents this year increased from last year — 16.6% compared to 10.8%. More than 63% of the incidents were submitted by women. Roughly 31% took place on public streets, and 30% at businesses. Many Asian Americans and others blame former President Donald Trump for ratcheting up the danger by talking about the virus in racially charged terms. While Biden has demonstrated allyship, there is concern that a U.S. investigation into the origins of COVID-19 could lead to more hostility and treatment of Asian Americans as enemy foreigners.



"We understand that other nation-states are competitors to the United States, and a number of them do have authoritarian regimes," Kulkarni said. "But the ways in which we talk about the people and the ways in which blame is assigned somehow looks different for communities of color than it does for, say, the Russian government or the German government." Many of the headline-making attacks over the past year and a half have been against elderly Asian people on both coasts. In most of those cases, a senior was beaten, kicked, shoved or even stabbed out of nowhere. Several such incidents have been caught on video.

A U.S. Census survey released earlier this month found Asian American households were twice as likely as white households to admit they didn't have enough food throughout the pandemic because they were afraid to go out — not due to affordability or transportation issues. In contrast, other racial groups' households said they were experiencing food insecurity because of the pandemic. Asian American respondents didn't say specifically if it was fear of racial attacks that kept them at home.

Anni Chung, president and CEO of San Francisco-based Self-Help for the Elderly, says the seniors they help were hit by a "second virus that is a hate virus." The nonprofit provides food and programs to more than 40,000 older adults in the Bay Area, most of them Asian. The organization went from transporting a pre-pandemic load of 400 meals daily to over 5,000 per day. Last year, they gave out 963,000 meals overall compared with 436,000 typically.



worse than the pandemic," Chung said. For them, the fear is more than a headline but something in their own backyard. "One of our clients was on the bus. Right before the man got off the bus, he just punched her," Chung said. "She said no one — not the bus driver and a number of Chinese on the bus — went to her care."

Giving into that fear means seniors have missed important things like doctor's appointments or exercise routines at the park. So, in June, with some funding from the city, Self-Help for the Elderly expanded a volunteer escort service to accompany seniors on errands or outings around Chinatown and other neighborhoods. It had more than 200 requests that month.

The onslaught of verbal and physical assaults has drawn more skepticism than sympathy from some. Peter Yu, a Republican U.S. Senate candidate in Colorado who is also Chinese American, came under fire last month for characterizing anti-Asian hate crimes as exaggerated. "I would welcome him to look at the data and see there has been a significant increase," Kulkarni said. "This may be a situation when people refuse to see racism or misogyny. I think they're just really refusing to see reality and how unfortunately, in the U.S. we have allowed those forces to prevent people from living their lives." (Courtesy apnews.com)

Related: A rise in assaults against Asian Americans last year seems primarily tied to the coronavirus pandemic, but heightened tensions between the U.S. and China and growing fears of China's espionage activities stateside are further complicating the situation.

Driving the news: There were more than 2,800 incidents of verbal and physical assaults directed at Asian Americans in 2020, according to Stop AAPI Hate, an organization founded early last year to track hate crimes against people of Asian American Pacific Islander heritage, Axios' Shawna Chen reports.



What's happening: Hate crimes tend to surge around "big political moments" and during election years, Michael Jensen, a researcher at the University of Maryland and author of a 2020 report on hate crimes, told NPR.

"When President Trump began and insisted on using the term 'China virus,' we saw that hate speech really led to hate violence," Russell Jeung, creator of the Stop AAPI Hate tracker and chair of the Asian American studies department at San Francisco State University, told USA Today.

But Trump "could not have rallied the kind of hatred that he did without this country's long history of systemic and cultural racism against

people of Asian descent," writes Princeton professor Anne Anlin Cheng in a Feb. 21 essay for the New York Times.

That history includes: history includes:

In 1871, at least 17 Chinese residents of Los Angeles were killed by a mob of 500 people. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act banned Chinese laborers from entering the U.S. In 1885, white residents set fire to Chinese-owned businesses and expelled the Chinese residents of Tacoma, Washington. During World War II, Japanese and Japanese Americans in California were forcibly interned in camps.



"People attacking Asian Americans during the quarantine ... are not fearing contagion from disease but assigning blame for it. Asian Americans are ... alleged to be culpable for sins ranging from the Vietnam War to an invisible infection. We are guilty by association even if our grandparents lament our alienation from their traditions."

— Frank H. Wu, president of Queens College, City University of New York, in a recent report on the targeting of Asian Americans in New York

Fast forward: The geopolitical tensions between the U.S. and China today, and some proposed approaches for addressing espionage and intellectual property theft in U.S. scientific research, may exacerbate suspicions toward Chinese Americans.

The Department of Justice's recent indictments of some Chinese scientists at U.S. universities for failing to disclose Chinese government-linked projects has raised concerns of racial profiling.



Trump-era regulations imposed sweeping visa restrictions that could apply to hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens, and some legislative proposals could prohibit Chinese students from pursuing graduate studies in fields that involve sensitive technology, a controversial approach being pushed by Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.).

What to watch: The New York Police Department created a task force last year to focus on hate crimes directed at Asians. If assaults continue to occur, other regions may consider similar measures. (Courtesy axios.com)