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â€˜South Asians for Bidenâ€™ Steps Up Efforts to Counter Rising Anti-Asian Hate Crimes in Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic

India-West Staff Reporter
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Indian American attendees at a â€˜South Asians for Bidenâ€™ March event with former Sen. John Kerry. (South Asians for Biden photo)

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic and a sharp increase of anti-Asian hate crimes in several parts of United States, a group of South Asians has stepped up its efforts for bringing in change to the White House, according to a press release. The group, South Asians for Biden, is organizing the Indian American and larger South Asian community in the U.S. for the 2020 U.S. presidential

elections. The group is backing former Vice President Joe Biden, who has been endorsed by all his Democratic challengers and, most recently by President Obama, making him the presumptive nominee of the Democratic Party for the 2020 general election for president of the United States.

On March 20, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights expressed concernÂ over the sharp rise in violent attacks against Asian Americans, noted the release. The CDC, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have also warned against the social stigma that has targeted the Asian American community in the wake of COVID-19.

In a letter to President Donald Trump, 29 Democratic U.S. senators reiterated the responsibility that Americaâ€™s leaders must embrace to avoid using rhetoric that fuels anti-Asian racism, and prevent confusion about COVID-19 from being exploited into any form of violence against communities of color.

â€œIt is imperative that we make clear that the enemy in our midst is not the Asian or Asian-American community, but rather a virus that endangers us all,â€ wrote the senators, according to the statemen. â€œWe must counter the mistaken belief that there is any link between the virus and a personâ€™s ethnicity. Such misconceptions have contributed to a surge of hate crimes against AAPI communities, acting as a pretext for individuals who exploited this crisis as an opportunity to harm people whose racial and ethnic backgrounds differ from their own.

The signatories include Senator Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y),Â Chris Coons (D-Del.),Â Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Mark R. Warner (D-Va.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Cory A. Booker (D-N.J.),Â Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Christopher S. Murphy (D-Conn.), Jeffrey A. Merkley (D-Ore.),Â Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.), and Senator Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), according to the release.

The senatorsâ€™ statement adds: â€œWe represent diverse states and communities, and some of us have also been personally targeted by prejudice. All of us must stand today in solidarity with the Asian and AAPI communities and amplify the many statements of concern that AAPI leaders and community organizations have issued in recent weeks.â€

The senatorsâ€™ letter follows a similar callÂ from a group of leading U.S. national security experts demanding heightened attention to the intensification of hate crimes targeting the Asian and Asia-American diasporas, particularly as communities of color in the United States are already being

disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

South Asians for Biden and the Biden for President Campaign is jointly hosting a virtual forum on the impact of Coronavirus and its impact on the community in early May. The event will feature Dr. Krishnan Narasimhan, board member of Doctors for America; and Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL).

Formed in 2019, SAB is an independent coalition of Democrats and concerned independents from all over the United States, many of whom have worked on previous political campaigns and some who hold positions within the Democratic Party at the state and local level.

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