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## B.C. premier condemns rise of anti-Asian racism in wake of COVID-19 pandemic

### **There have been a number of anti-Asian racist incidents across the Lower Mainland in recent months, including in Richmond**

Kirsten Clarke / Richmond News

May 17, 2020 01:56 PM





John Horgan says that racism is a "virus," and condemns the recent rise of anti-Asian racist behaviour since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photograph By Government of B.C. / Flickr

As British Columbians grapple with COVID-19, many are also facing the threat of another type of virus – racism – according to B.C. Premier John Horgan.

“We are hearing disturbing stories of a rise in anti-Asian racist behaviour since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Horgan in a statement released Sunday condemning that behaviour.

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“People are being targeted as they go about their daily lives. It is unacceptable. I have said it before: hate has no place in our province and it will not be tolerated.

“Our strength is in our diversity, and we reject all forms of racism, discrimination, intolerance and bigotry.”

Everyone, said Horgan, has a “right to live without fear of violence or discrimination.”

The premier’s message follows a number of anti-Asian racist incidents across the Lower Mainland over the past few months, including in Richmond.

On Friday, May 8, a man allegedly [hurled racial slurs](#) at two women at Garry Point Park in Steveston. The women claimed they were also physically intimidated when the man allegedly tried to hit them with his car. An account of the incident circulated on social media.

The man later wrote [a letter of apology](#) to the two women, and asked for their forgiveness, according to Richmond RCMP.

A number of anti-Asian racist incidents have also occurred in Vancouver, according to the city's police – for example, an assault on a 92-year-old Asian man with dementia March 13, and on April 2, the windows of the city's Chinese Cultural Centre were defaced with hateful graffiti.

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) also reported May 1 that there's been an increase in anti-Asian hate crimes.

In April, 15 hate crimes were reported to VPD, 11 of which had an anti-Asian element. Meanwhile, the VPD said there have been 20 anti-Asian hate crimes reported so far this year, compared to the 12 reported in all of 2019.

"Racism is also a virus. Through challenging times, British Columbians must stay united," said Horgan in the statement.


"We are always stronger and more resilient as a province when we treat each other with kindness, generosity and respect."

Horgan urged that British Columbians stand together, and "call out racism and discrimination when we see it."

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