

SEPTEMBER 2026

STOP
AAPI
HATE

THE STATE OF ANTI-SOUTH ASIAN HATE

Stop AAPI Hate's latest research shows that South Asian communities¹ continue to face high levels of hate both online and on the ground. Growing anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies, together with a backlash against the increased visibility of South Asians, have contributed to heightened hostility toward them. As a result, many people worry about their safety and belonging in the U.S., leading some to withdraw from civic, political, and community life.

“[Fitness studio staff] refused to allow me to sign up for a class or answer questions. **Told me my kind aren't valued there**, started to ignore my questions ... **said I couldn't afford classes and then called me ch-nk, curry-muncher, darkie, half-breed**. As I left, the employee gestured the middle finger towards me, and **I heard her remark how Indians are smelly, poor, and subhuman.**”

– Multiethnic Indian woman in California



CONTENT WARNING

This brief contains real-life examples of highly offensive language, including uncensored racial slurs. These terms are presented explicitly to ensure clarity for readers who may not be familiar with them. Our intent is to expose and educate, not to normalize or condone their use.

KEY FINDINGS

Anti-South Asian hate rose significantly online

Between January 2023 and December 2025, use of **anti-South Asian slurs** rose by 109%.

The majority of online threats of violence were directed at South Asian communities

71% of all anti-Asian threats of violence between August 2024 and December 2025 were directed at **South Asians**, making them the most frequently threatened Asian regional group in online spaces associated with targeted violence.

Half of South Asian adults experienced a race-based hate act

48% of South Asian adults said they experienced a **hate act** due to their race, ethnicity, or nationality in 2025.

Half of South Asian adults have felt the harms of the current anti-immigrant climate

55% of South Asian adults said they or another Asian American or Pacific Islander (AA/PI) person in their community **have been impacted by changing immigration policies or anti-immigrant sentiment**.

Arrests, detentions, and deportations of South Asian citizens have increased substantially under Trump

Among Asian regional groups, **South Asians have the highest number of ICE arrests, detentions, and deportations under the second Trump administration**. Compared with the previous administration, ICE actions involving South Asian citizens rose sharply, **with deportations approximately 14 times higher**.

This research brief draws on data from four sources: 1) online monitoring of anti-South Asian slurs and threats of violence conducted by [Moonshot](#) on behalf of Stop AAPI Hate from 2023 to 2025; 2) Stop AAPI Hate's January 2026 national survey of 306 South Asian adults on experiences with hate, conducted by [NORC at the University of Chicago](#); 3) Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrests, detentions, and deportations data involving people with citizenship in South Asian countries from 2023 to 2026;² and 4) firsthand accounts of anti-South Asian hate reported to Stop AAPI Hate's reporting center in 2025.³

Online Hate Against South Asians, 2023–2025

As South Asians became more visible in U.S. politics, immigration debates, and public life, online hostility toward South Asian communities intensified. **Since 2023, anti-South Asian slurs have steadily increased in online spaces associated with targeted violence (TV),⁴ with a sharp escalation in 2025.**

- Between January 2023 and December 2025, **anti-South Asian slurs rose by 109%** from 22,996 to 48,033.
- Anti-South Asian slurs made up **66% (over 1.3M)** of all anti-Asian slurs in TV spaces between January 2023 and December 2025. The slurs “jeet” or “pajeet” made up **55%** of all anti-Asian slurs.
- Threats of violence against South Asians made up **71% (10,471)** of all anti-Asian threats between August 2024 and December 2025.⁵
- **A dominant theme in online posts was the xenophobic narrative of an Indian “invasion” or “great replacement,” in which Indian people are portrayed as taking jobs away from white people.**⁶ Debates over H-1B visas have fueled substantial increases in anti-South Asian slurs.

There have been major spikes in online hate coinciding with moments of greater South Asian visibility and rising anti-immigrant policies and sentiment. Please refer to [our previous analysis](#) for additional context.

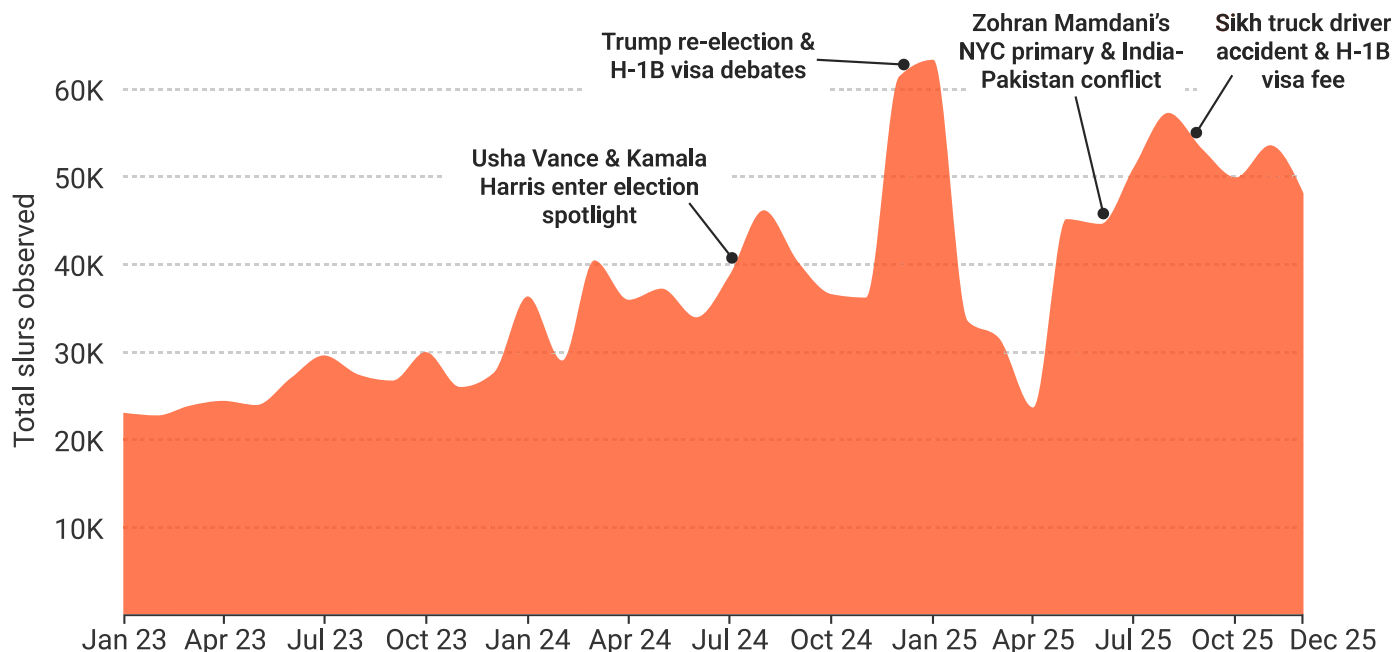
- **August 2024:** Kamala Harris and Usha Vance entered the election spotlight.
- **December 2024 – January 2025:** Trump was re-elected, and heated debates emerged among his supporters over H-1B visas, 73% of which are granted to South Asians.
- **May – June 2025:** Zohran Mamdani gained national attention during New York City’s mayoral race, and conflict between India and Pakistan escalated.
- **August – September 2025:** A fatal collision involving a Sikh truck driver received national attention, and the Trump administration instituted a \$100,000 H-1B visa fee.



Above: An example of the “great replacement” narrative from an X post in 2025.

Online Hostility Against South Asian Communities Spikes Due to Visibility and Xenophobia

Anti-South Asian slurs, slogans, and phrases observed in online spaces associated with targeted violence (TV) between January 2023 to December 2025



Note: Dip in April 2025 was due to 4chan being temporarily offline.

Source: Moonshot, Chart: Stop AAPI Hate

Anti-South Asian Hate Acts in 2025

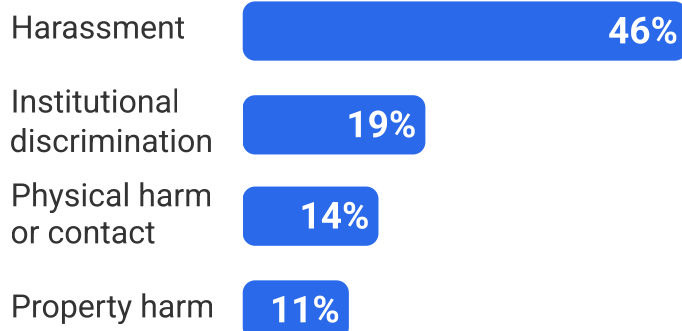
Beyond online hate, our national survey⁷ points to the broader scale of the problem:

48% of South Asian adults experienced a hate act⁸ in 2025 due to their race, ethnicity or nationality. Hate against South Asian adults rose significantly from 2023 (43%) to 2024 (54%) and remained high in 2025 (48%).

Types of Hate
The most common type of hate South Asian adults experienced was harassment.

In 2025, harassment was the most common type of anti-South Asian hate

% of South Asian adults who said they experienced _____



Source: Stop AAPI Hate Survey, conducted by NORC in January 2026

Reports submitted to our reporting center reveal how **heightened anti-immigrant rhetoric and immigration enforcement are contributing** to the high prevalence of hate.



Location

The top locations where South Asian adults experienced hate were **online (49%); in public streets, parks, parking lots, or on public transit (40%); and at businesses (34%).**

“Customer came in asking for help with something. Me and my coworker were calmly explaining what the process is going to be ... He starts yelling profanities — ‘tramp,’ ‘troll,’ ‘Indian sl-t’ — and proceeds to say, **‘I am glad Trump is deporting you b-tches. I hope you have a green card.’**”

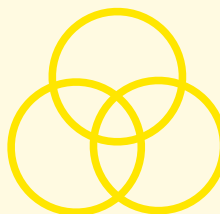
– Indian woman in Texas

“[At a fast food restaurant], a lady came up right behind us mumbling ‘murderers.’ We asked her if she was talking to us, to which her response was to yell at us, ... ‘you’re murderers, you’re dirty murderers and rapists. **I’m going to call ICE on your dirty -sses so you get deported back to India’** (we are all U.S. citizens). ... She ... threw food at our feet as she walked out.”

– Indian woman in Georgia

“While out with a friend at a Thai restaurant, a random stranger approached us and then proceeded to accost me. He [was] **calling me ‘f-ggo-t’ (because I wear earrings) and ‘lesbian.’** [He] told me that **Trump was President, and I would have to ‘go home’ and ‘do Bharatatyam in my living room.’** He also threatened to kick my -ss and said he would wait for us outside the restaurant.”

– Indian man in Virginia



Intersectional Identity

Many South Asian adults (61%) were also targeted for other aspects of their identity in addition to their race, ethnicity, or nationality in hate acts. The top additional identities targeted were religion (29%), immigration status (23%), and class (23%).



Impacts of Hate

Hate had wide-ranging mental, physical, financial, and social impacts on South Asian adults. Half reported negative effects on their health.

The Mental and Physical Toll of Hate: Arun's Story

Arun is a South Asian man from New York who drives for a rideshare company. He shared with us:

"I was driving on my way to pick up a passenger. Another driver followed me ... hit my tail light with his hand and opened my driver side. [He] tried to hit me and yelled, 'why did you honk?' ... He punched me on my neck and then he kicked me on the glutes. ... [H]e started saying racist statements like 'f-ck you Punjabi,' 'f-ck you Bangladeshi,' 'Go back to your country,' 'You are an Indian immigrant!' 'You smell bad' ... "

After the hate act, Arun felt traumatized, saying, "This is a country of immigrants, and [this man] is also an immigrant. I don't know why he was doing all these nonsense things." In addition to the mental toll, he has also been experiencing neck and back pain, dizziness, and memory loss, and he has been seeing orthopedic and neurology specialists for his injuries.

Hate affected South Asian adults in many ways — with particularly **high impacts on their health**

Of South Asian adults who experienced anti-AA/PI hate, % who reported the following impacts:



Source: Stop AAPI Hate Survey, conducted by NORC in January 2026.



Beyond direct experiences of hate, many South Asian adults also reported harm from the broader social and political climate — particularly changing immigration policies and anti-immigrant sentiment, which affected not only individuals but their families, friends, and broader AA/PI communities. This shows how exclusion and discrimination can stem from policy and climate, not just individual hate acts.

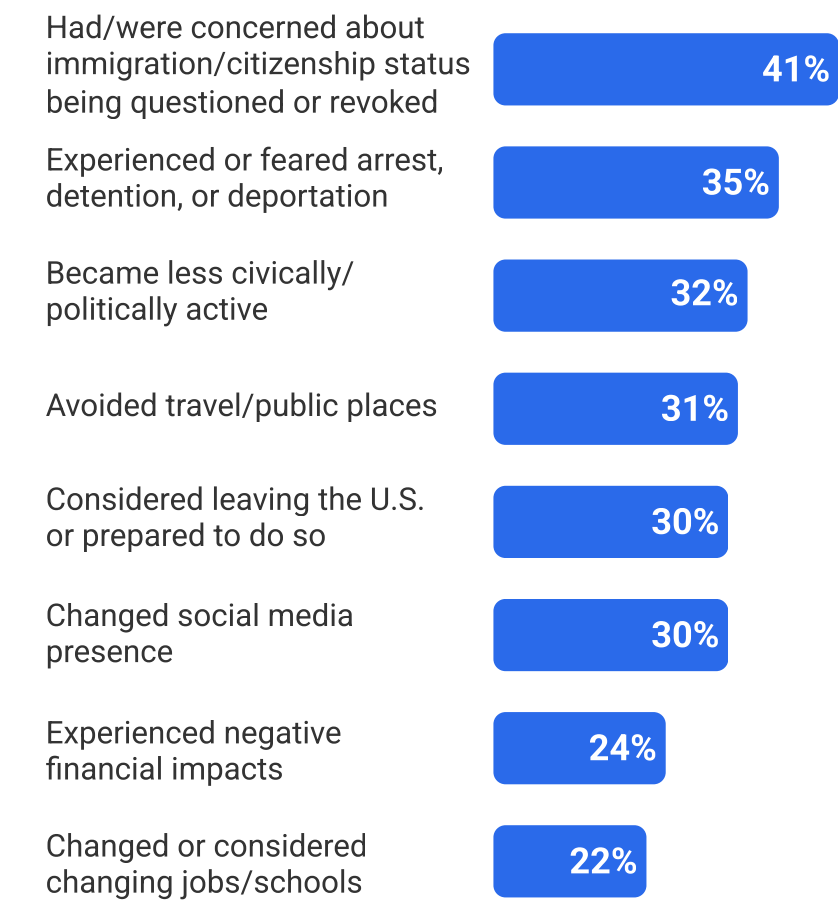


Impacts of Anti-Immigrant Climate

55% of South Asian adults said they or another AA/PI person in their community (e.g., family member, friend, co-worker) have been impacted by changing immigration policies or anti-immigrant sentiment.

Many South Asians felt the harms of changing immigration policies and anti-immigrant sentiment

% of South Asian adults who said they or another AA/PI person in their community were impacted in the following ways:



Source: Stop AAPI Hate Survey, conducted by NORC in January 2026



ICE Actions Against South Asians, 2025–2026

Among Asian regional groups,⁹ **South Asians have the highest number of ICE arrests, detentions, and deportations.**¹⁰

The following section examines ICE actions — including arrests, detentions, and deportations — affecting people from South Asia between January 20, 2025, and August 6, 2026. It highlights enforcement trends by country of origin and state, as well as increases in ICE actions compared to the previous administration.

TABLE 1 | South Asian ICE Actions by Country of Origin

Country of Origin	Total Arrests	Total Detentions	Total Deportations
Bangladesh	483	433	175
Bhutan	102	101	76
India	6,111	5,235	2,349
Nepal	505	422	222
Pakistan	501	470	194
Sri Lanka	142	131	49
All South Asia	7,844	6,792	3,065

Source: Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of government data provided by ICE to a FOIA request from the Deportation Data Project, January 20, 2025–August 6, 2026.



Reflecting their large population in the U.S., people from India experienced high shares of enforcement actions, comprising **29% of all Asian arrests, 28% of detentions, and 24% of deportations (see Table 2)**. We also see that people from Bhutan are overrepresented among ICE actions relative to their share of the U.S. Asian-born non-U.S. citizen population.¹¹

TABLE 2 | Comparison of South Asian ICE Action Shares and Asian-Born Non-U.S. Citizen Population Shares by Country of Origin

Country of Origin	Share of Asian Arrests	Share of Asian Detentions	Share of Asian Deportations	Share of Asian-Born Noncitizens ¹²
Bangladesh	2.3%	2.3%	1.8%	2.3%
Bhutan	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%	0.2%
India	29.0%	27.9%	24.5%	30.7%
Nepal	2.4%	2.2%	2.3%	2.0%
Pakistan	2.4%	2.5%	2.0%	2.5%
Sri Lanka	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%
All South Asia	37.2%	36.2%	32.0%	38.2%

Source: Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of government data provided by ICE to a FOIA request from the Deportation Data Project, January 20, 2025–August 6, 2026. Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of the 2020–2024 5-year American Community Survey IPUMS.

The highest percentages of South Asian arrests were in the following states: California, Texas, New York, Indiana, and Pennsylvania (see Table 3). Indiana, in particular, accounted for a disproportionately large share of South Asian ICE arrests relative to its share of the South Asian-born non-U.S. citizen population.

TABLE 3 | States with the Highest Shares of South Asian ICE Arrests, Compared with Their Shares of the South Asian-Born Non-U.S. Citizen Population

State	Share of South Asian Arrests	Share of South Asian-Born Noncitizens ¹³
California	27.6%	17.3%
Texas	14.7%	12.9%
New York	11.5%	7.5%
Indiana	4.7%	1.4%
Pennsylvania	4.5%	3.5%

Source: Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of government data provided by ICE to a FOIA request from the Deportation Data Project, January 20, 2025–August 6, 2026. Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of the 2020–2024 5-year American Community Survey IPUMS.

Across all South Asian groups, arrests, detentions, and deportations were markedly higher during the Trump administration compared to the previous administration (see Table 4). Arrests are 5 times higher, detentions are 6 times higher, and deportations are 14 times higher.¹⁴ People from Nepal experienced the largest increases in all three enforcement actions, including deportations that were 28 times higher under Trump.

TABLE 4 | Increase in South Asian ICE Actions Under Trump Compared with the Previous Administration

Country of Origin	Total Arrests	Total Detentions	Total Deportations
Bangladesh	4× higher	4× higher	10× higher
Bhutan	6× higher	6× higher	N/A ¹⁵
India	5× higher	6× higher	15× higher
Nepal	8× higher	9× higher	28× higher
Pakistan	5× higher	6× higher	6× higher
Sri Lanka	6× higher	7× higher	25× higher
All South Asia	5× higher	6× higher	14× higher

Source: Stop AAPI Hate's analysis of government data provided by ICE to a FOIA request from the Deportation Data Project.

The findings in this brief illustrate the deep impacts of the current climate of racism and xenophobia on South Asian communities. To help address these challenges and strengthen belonging, safety, and democratic participation, please see the recommendations section of Stop AAPI Hate’s ["Closing Doors, Widening Harm: Persistent Hate Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in an Anti-Immigrant Climate"](#) report, which outlines actions that policymakers, institutions, and community organizations can take to combat hate and support impacted communities.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ South Asian people are individuals with ancestry from South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, representing diverse cultures, religions, and languages.
- ² Government data provided by ICE in response to a Freedom of Information Act request to the Deportation Data Project and analyzed by Stop AAPI Hate.
- ³ We only share stories in which we have been given consent to share anonymously. The gender, ethnicity, and geographic information is for the person targeted. To preserve anonymity, we only share gender, ethnicity, and geography if there are at least 20,000 people who share those demographic and geographic characteristics. If the population of a particular demographic is less than 20,000 or for particularly vulnerable populations, we either use more general categories or remove quasi-identifiers. Stories are in people's own words, but we lightly edit for clarity.
- ⁴ Moonshot defines TV-relevant spaces as "users, groups, and channels that promote extremist views and narratives of relevance to U.S. audiences." Monitored spaces include 4chan, Patriots.com, X, Gab, and Truth Social, among others.
- ⁵ Stop AAPI Hate and Moonshot's tracking of anti-Asian threats of violence started in August 2024. We track both slurs and threats of violence. Threats of violence include statements with explicit threats of violence directed at a community (e.g., "kill all Indians").
- ⁶ The "great replacement" conspiracy theory is used to demonize immigrants, portray them as an existential threat, and justify calls for violence against them.
- ⁷ For methods and findings on the national sample of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders or more data on South Asians, including methods for analyses, please contact dataresearch@stopaapihate.org.
- ⁸ Stop AAPI Hate uses the term "hate act" to refer to any event motivated by bias or prejudice, whether explicit or implicit, against a person or group's actual or perceived identity(ies) that inflicts individual or community harm. This includes hate crimes, like bias-motivated assault, murder, arson, and vandalism, and non-criminal hate incidents, like calling someone a racial slur or bias-motivated refusal of service at a business.
- ⁹ Asian regional groups are subgroups by geographic region and include: Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.
- ¹⁰ We use ICE's "citizenship country" field to identify actions involving South Asian people because ICE does not consistently collect detailed Asian ethnicity data. Rather than "citizenship country," we say "country of origin," and instead of "citizens," we say "people from ____." This is because refugees and stateless people, like Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, are not recognized as citizens by their listed "citizenship country." There were no arrests, detentions, or deportations of citizens of the Maldives, thus they were not included in our findings.
- ¹¹ This includes Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. For more information on this community, see: <https://www.asianrefugees.org/our-work/we-belong-here-anti-deportation-campaign>.
- ¹² The share of Asian-born non-U.S. citizens is used as the reference population for assessing proportionality. It is calculated using the birthplace and citizenship status variables from the 2020–2024 5-year American Community Survey IPUMS. The total percentage of "All South Asia" only includes the countries listed in the table.
- ¹³ The share of South Asian-born non-U.S. citizens is used as the reference population for assessing proportionality. It is calculated using the birthplace and citizenship status variables from the 2020–2024 5-year American Community Survey IPUMS.
- ¹⁴ Arrests may or may not have resulted in detention/deportation. To compare administrations, we use time periods of equal length. For the current Trump administration, we analyze data from Inauguration Day (January 20, 2025) through the most recent date available (August 6, 2026.) We then compare this with the same number of days under the previous administration, ending January 19, 2025.
- ¹⁵ There were no deportations during the previous administration so comparisons are not possible here.

ABOUT STOP AAPI HATE

Stop AAPI Hate (501c3) is dedicated to exposing and combating racism and discrimination against Asian American and Pacific Islander people in the U.S. We research and document anti-AAPI hate, support and empower survivors, spread awareness of our communities' challenges and triumphs, and advocate for policies that help our communities thrive.

For more information, visit stopaapihate.org.