

Survey: U.S. residents unhappiest they have been in 50 years

A new survey out on Tuesday suggests people in the United States are more unhappy today than they have been in nearly 50 years.

The bold - yet unsurprising - conclusion comes from the COVID Response Tracking Study, conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. It has found that just 14 percent of American adults say they are very happy, down from 31 percent who said the same in 2018. That year, 23 percent said they often or sometimes felt isolated in recent weeks. Now, 50 percent say that.

The survey, conducted in late May, draws on nearly half a century of research from the General Social Survey, which has collected data on American attitudes and behaviours at least every other year since 1972. No less than 29 percent of Americans have ever called

themselves very happy in the survey.

Most of the new survey's interviews were completed before George Floyd's death sparked nationwide protests and a global conversation about race and police brutality, adding to feelings of stress and loneliness Americans were already facing from the coronavirus outbreak - especially for Black Americans.

Among other findings from the new poll:

- The public is less optimistic today about the standard of living improving for the next generation than it has been in the past 25 years. Only 42 percent of Americans believe that when their children reach their age, their standard of living will be better. A solid 57 percent said the same in 2018. Since the question was asked in 1994, ... **P2**



A look at the world

Trump signs executive order on police reform

Following weeks of national protests since the death of George Floyd, President Donald Trump signed an executive order on policing Tuesday that he said would encourage better police practices and establish a database to keep track of officers with a history of excessive use-of-force complaints.

In Rose Garden remarks, Trump stressed the need for higher standards and commiserated with mourning families, even as he hailed the vast majority of officers as selfless public servants and held his law-and-order line, while criticizing Democrats.

"Reducing crime and raising standards are not opposite goals," he said before signing the order flanked by police.

Trump and the GOP have been rushing to



respond to the mass demonstrations against police brutality and racial prejudice that have raged for weeks across the country in response to the deaths of Floyd and other black Americans. It's a sudden shift for the Republican Party — and one Democrats are watching warily — that shows how quickly the protests have changed the political conversation and pressured Washington to act.

But Trump, who has faced criticism for failing to acknowledge systemic racial bias, has continued to emphasize his support for law enforcement, even after meeting in private Tuesday with families of victims. At the signing event, he railed against those who committed violence during the largely peaceful protests and made no mention of racism.

Trump's executive order would establish a database that tracks police officers with excessive use of force complaints in their records. And it would give police departments a financial incentive to adopt best practices and encourage co-responder programs, in which social workers join police when they respond to nonviolent calls involving mental health, addiction and homeless issues.

Dexamethasone is first drug to reduce COVID-19 death rate



A low-cost synthetic steroid has been found to reduce COVID-19 deaths by up to a third in what is being described as a "groundbreaking development" in the fight against the virus.

The British government announced on Tuesday that dexamethasone is to be used on COVID-19 patients "from this afternoon." Dexamethasone was one of several drugs tested by the UK's Recovery trial between March and June.

More than 2,100 COVID-19 patients were treated with a low-dose of the steroid once per day for 10 days and results were compared with 4,321 patients receiving only the usual care.

Researchers found that dexamethasone reduced death by one-third in ventilated patients — those with severe respiratory complications due to the novel coronavirus — and by one fifth in other patients receiving oxygen only.

There was no benefit among those patients who did not require respiratory support and the trial did not involve any patients outside a hospital setting.

Peter Hornby, a professor of Emerging Infectious Diseases at the University of Oxford and one of the Chief Investigators for the trial, said that dexamethasone "is the first drug to be shown to improve survival in COVID-19," and that it should therefore "become standard care" in patients requiring oxygen treatment.

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More than 2,100 COVID-19 patients ... **P2**

Turkey, Russia perform 17th joint patrol in N. Syria

Turkish and Russian troops carried out their 17th joint patrol along the key M4 highway in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib, Turkey's National Defense Ministry said Tuesday.

"To maintain the Turco-Russian ceasefire agreement in Syria, the 17th Combined Land Patrol was conducted in Idlib province Tuesday," the ministry said on Twitter.

"Due to a detonation of an unidentified



explosive, a patrol vehicle was lightly damaged and taken to a safe location," it added, noting that no personnel had been harmed in the incident.

The M4 highway, also known as the Aleppo-Al Hasakah road, is about 30 kilometers (19 miles) from Turkey's southern border.

This March, Ankara and Moscow agreed on a protocol urging parties to "cease all military actions along the line of contact in the Idlib de-escalation area."

The protocol said joint Turkish-Russian patrols would begin on March 15 along the M4 highway from the settlement of Trumba -- 2 km (1.2 mi) west of Saraqib -- to the settlement of Ain al-Havr.

Idlib has long been under siege by Assad regime forces and its allies, and previous cease-fires for the region were plagued by violations.

Turkey has worked to protect the local civilian population as well as rid the wider region of terrorist elements.



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