



NEW YORK (The New York Post) — More than one-third of Americans, 37 percent, believe that they would make a better President of the United States than the current candidates. That's according to a new survey of 500 Democrats and 500 Republicans, which found that not only are Americans less than pleased with the candidates this election season, debate topics and important issues are also polarizing. On Thursday, June 27, 2024, President Joe Biden and Donald Trump will take the stage for the first presidential debate of the 2024 election season and three in five Americans (61 percent) will tune in. Conducted by Talker Research, the survey found that the rising cost of living (50 percent), inflation (49 percent) and immigration (38 percent) are the top three topics Americans want the candidates to debate. But Democrats and Republicans are at odds over which topics are most important to them. Though it ranked high on the list of overall debate topics, just 18 percent of Democrats indicated that immigration is important to them, compared to 51 percent of Republicans. Party lines also continue to divide Americans over abortion and healthcare access — 45 percent of Democrats say this is important to them, ranking as the second most important issue only below the rising cost of living (51 percent). Only 15 percent of Republicans feel the same.

ATHENS/SYMI (Reuters) — British TV presenter and healthy living advocate Michael Mosley has been found dead in a rocky area on the Greek island of Symi, just meters away from his destination, local mayors told Reuters on Sunday. Mosley, 67, had been missing since Wednesday after he went for a walk alone along a coastal path in searing heat. "It is certainly him," said deputy mayor Nikitas Grillis, pending formal identification. Police spokeswoman Constantina Dimoglidou earlier said that the body of a person believed to be Mosley had been found in the area of Agia Marina, north of the village of Pedi and opposite the northeast beach of Agios Nikolaos where Mosley set out for his walk. Another police official said his body had been found on rocky terrain, close to the sea.

SEOUL (Reuters) — South Korea resumed loud-speaker broadcasts directed at North Korea on Sunday, its military said, following through on a warning demanding Pyongyang stop sending balloons carrying trash into the South. The decision to resume the broadcasts, as a form of psychological warfare, was made after North Korea began launching on Saturday about 330 balloons with trash attached, with about 80 of them dropping over the border, South Korea's military said. "The measures we will take may be unbearable for the North Korean regime but they will send a message of hope and light to the North's troops and its people," South Korea's National Security Council said. South Korea had warned the North it would take retaliatory measures which could include propaganda broadcasts from huge loudspeakers set up at the border. The broadcasts were made Sunday afternoon and whether more will follow depends on how North Korea responds, South Korea's military said. The South Korean military said later on Sunday that more balloons had been launched by the North and could fly into the South, warning residents to not touch any objects they find attached to balloons. It gave no other details.

PUYLAURENS (AFP) — Police and masked activists clashed at a protest over a motorway project in southern France Saturday, leaving five people hurt, local officials said. Thousands of demonstrators ignored a ban on the gathering to turn out for the protest at the site of the A-69 motorway between Castres and Toulouse in the southwest. A police officer hit by a Molotov cocktail, two paramilitary gendarmes and two protesters were injured during the clashes, said the regional authorities. Ecologists and left-wing activists are trying to stop the building of an extension of the motorway, which scientists say will destroy wetlands, farmlands, trees and underground water sources. The first clashes broke out at around 3:00 pm (1300 GMT) when "radicalized protesters... determined to commit acts of violence" tried to reach a main road, said a statement from local officials. Riot police used tear gas to try to disperse the demonstrations and keep them from the road leading to the construction site. Some of the protesters fired fireworks and hurled Molotov cocktails at security forces.

MEXICO CITY (Anadolu) — An intense heatwave is devastating Mexico's wildlife, especially in Tabasco, with temperatures over 40 C (104 F) causing widespread casualties, including almost 250 dead howler monkeys. As of May 31, the Environment Department confirmed 204 howler monkey fatalities, with 157 occurring in Tabasco alone. Subsequently, the tally in Tabasco has surged to 198, indicating the nationwide toll is nearing 250. Conservationists warn of a dire situation, with the heatwave showing no signs of relenting, according to the report by the Voice of America. Unprecedented measures, including installing air conditioning in shelters, are underway to save the remaining animals. Authorities and environmental groups are collaborating on emergency efforts, providing water stations and shaded areas. Calls for enhanced policies and conservation efforts grow as experts link such extreme events to climate change.

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Somalia's government said five of its soldiers died in a battle in which they killed nearly 50 fighters from the militant group al-Shabab Saturday, about 350 kilometers (215 miles) north of the capital Mogadishu. Government troops and supporting militia forces got word of an attack planned by al-Shabab in Ceeldeher, in the Galgaduud region, set an ambush and "destroyed" them, said a statement. Their forces killed at least 47 members of the militant group while losing five soldiers in the battle, said the authorities. They said airstrikes were also carried out against the al-Shabab forces. Al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attack on Ceeldeher.

Millions in 20 EU Countries Vote for European Parliament on Final Day



Tens of millions of voters from Vilnius to Madrid cast ballots Sunday on the final day of elections for the EU's parliament.

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Tens of millions of voters from Vilnius to Madrid were casting ballots Sunday on the final day of elections for the EU's parliament, with far-right parties eyeing gains at a pivotal time for the bloc.

Twenty-one of the bloc's 27 countries, including heavy hitters France and Germany, were voting on the election's biggest day to help shape the European Union's direction over the next five years. "In the current world situation, where everyone is trying to isolate each other, it's important to keep standing up for peace and democracy," said one voter in Berlin, Tanja Reith, 52.

The election comes as the continent is confronted with Russia's war in Ukraine, global trade tensions marked by U.S.-China rivalry, a climate emergency and a West that may soon have to adapt to a new Donald Trump presidency.

"Right now we are living in a scenario of uncertainty," Jaime Bajo, a sports center operator, said as he cast his vote in Madrid. "I can understand that people feel fear and vote with a hard mindset," said the 40-year-old, who predicted a "rise of extremist forces" in Europe.

More than 360 million people were eligible to vote in the four-day election, although turnout in EU polls is historically low.

The bloc's next parliament will help decide who runs the powerful European Commission, with German conservative Ursula von der Leyen — who cast her vote in her home country — vying for a second term.

While centrist parties are predicted to keep most of the legislature's 720 seats, polls suggest they will be weakened by a stronger far right pushing the bloc toward ultraconservatism.

European voters, hammered by a high cost of living and some fearing immigrants to be the source of social ills, are increasingly persuaded by populist messaging.

France will be the EU's high-profile battleground for compet-

ing ideologies.

With voting intentions above 30 percent, Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally (RN) is predicted to handily beat President Emmanuel Macron's liberal Renaissance party, polling around half that.

In Germany, the election could also deal a blow to Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who voted accompanied by his wife and stopped to pose for a picture with a young couple and a baby.

Leading the polls in Europe's biggest economy are the opposition center-right Christian Democrats, with a projected 30 percent of votes.

The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), on 14 percent, was seen either neck-and-neck or ahead of all three parties in Scholz's ruling coalition: the SPD, the Greens and the liberal FDP.

In Italy, holding its second day of voting, the far-right ruling Brothers of Italy party of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was expected to come out on top.

Meloni is being courted both by von der Leyen — who needs her backing for a second mandate — as well as Le Pen and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who are eyeing the formation of a far-right parliament supergroup.

Unlike Le Pen, however, Meloni aligns with the EU consensus on maintaining military and financial assistance to Ukraine.

"I want security, especially for the Baltic states. And greater support for Ukraine to end the war," said Ieva Sterlinge, a 34-year-old doctor.

Likewise in Romania's capital Bucharest, psychologist Teodora Maia said she cast her vote "on the theme of war, which worries us all, and ecology."

In Paty, a village outside Budapest, Hungarian voter Ferenc Hamori struck a different tone. The 54-year-old said he wanted more EU leaders like Orban, who maintains close relations with President Vladimir Putin — even though he expected Orban to remain "outnumbered in Brussels."

China: U.S. Turning South China Sea Into 'Whirlpool of Arms Race'



The USS Gabrielle Giffords receives passing honors by Philippine navy officers aboard BRP Gregorio Del Pilar, a naval tradition rendered to ships passing close aboard, on Feb. 9, 2024.

BEIJING (Reuters) — The U.S. poses the largest security challenge in the South China Sea as its military deployment there is turning it into "the whirlpool of an arms race", Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong said in remarks published on Sunday.

Recent maritime run-ins between China and the Philippines, a U.S. treaty ally, have made the highly strategic South China Sea a potential flashpoint between Washington and Beijing.

"At present, the biggest security challenge in the South China Sea comes from outside the region," Sun said in comments published by his ministry, after attending a high-level meeting on East Asian cooperation in Laos.

Sun said U.S.-led forces were "promoting military deployment and actions in the South China Sea, inciting and intensifying maritime disputes and contradictions, and damaging the legitimate rights and interests of coastal countries".

A move by the United States to deploy medium-range missile systems in the area "is dragging the region into the whirlpool of an arms race, placing the entire Asia Pacific region under the shadow of geopolitical conflicts", Sun said.

China is committed to properly managing disputes with the parties in the South China Sea through dialogue, he added.

In April, the Philippines said during a meeting with U.S. allies that it was determined to assert its sovereign rights in the South China Sea, accusing China of escalating "its harassment" of the Philippines.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, a conduit for more than \$3 trillion in annual ship commerce, and has deployed hundreds of coast guard vessels as far as 1,000 km off its mainland to police what it says is its jurisdiction.

The Philippines and China have sparred repeatedly this past year near disputed features that fall within Manila's exclusive economic zone. China routinely accuses the Philippines of encroachment. The United States has said it stands with Manila.

Ukraine Says Latest-Generation Russian Fighter Jet Hit for First Time

KYIV (Reuters/AP) — Ukrainian forces have for the first time hit a latest-generation Russian Sukhoi Su-57 fighter jet at an air base inside Russia, Kyiv's GUR defence intelligence agency said on Sunday, showing satellite pictures which it said confirmed the strike.

In a Telegram post, the GUR did not specify how the Su-57 was hit or by which unit of the Ukrainian military.

A popular Russian pro-war military blogger who calls himself Fighter-bomber and focuses on aviation said the report of the strike on the Su-57 was correct and that it had been hit by a drone.

The GUR said the aircraft was parked at the Akhtubinsk airfield, which it said was 589 km (366 miles) from front lines in Ukraine between Ukrainian and Russian invasion forces.

"The pictures show that on June 7, the Su-57 was standing intact, and on (June 8th), there were craters from the explosion and characteristic spots of fire caused by fire damage near it," the GUR said, with the images posted alongside the message.

Ukraine has been fighting a full-scale war since February 2022. Both sides conduct regular strikes hundreds of kilometers into enemy territory with missiles and drones.

Ukraine, which lacks the vast



Two civilians were killed in Ukrainian attacks on Russian-administered areas of eastern and southern Ukraine.

arsenal of missiles available to Moscow, has focused on making long-range drones to strike targets deep inside Russia.

Russian blogger Fighterbomber said the jet fighter was struck by shrapnel and the damage was currently being assessed to see if the aircraft could be repaired.

He said if the plane were to be deemed beyond repair it would be the first combat loss of a Su-57.

Russian state-run news agency RIA Novosti's military analyst Alexander Kharchenko posted a cryptic message which did not directly acknowledge the strike but derided the

lack of hangars to protect military aircraft.

Despite being touted as a Russian fifth-generation fighter aircraft to rival its U.S. equivalent, the Su-57 was plagued by development delays and a crash in 2019. According to its manufacturer, serial production of the aircraft began in 2022.

It is a heavy fighter jet capable of fulfilling a variety of battlefield roles.

In another development, two civilians were killed in Ukrainian attacks on Russian-administered areas of eastern and southern Ukraine, officials there said on Sunday.

India's Modi Sworn In as Prime Minister for Historic Third Term

NEW DELHI (Reuters) — Narendra Modi was sworn in as India's prime minister on Sunday for a record-equaling third term, but as a restive coalition's head after a shock poll setback that will test his ability to ensure the world's most populous nation.

President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of office to Modi at a grand ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the president's palace in New Delhi, attended by thousands of dignitaries, including the leaders of seven regional countries, Bollywood stars and industrialists.

Modi, who started as a publicist of the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological parent of his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is only the second person after independence leader Jawaharlal Nehru to serve a third straight term as prime minister. Modi, 73, secured the third term in

elections that concluded on June 1 with the support of 14 regional parties in his BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), unlike in the previous two terms when his party won an outright majority.

The outcome is seen as a big setback to the popular leader as surveys and exit polls had predicted BJP would secure even more seats than in 2019.

Modi delivered world beating growth and lifted India's global standing but appeared to have missed a step at home as a lack of enough jobs, high prices, low incomes and religious faultlines pushed voters to rein him in.

When Modi was the chief minister of the western state of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014, BJP enjoyed strong majorities, allowing him to govern decisively.

Modi's new term as prime minister, therefore, is likely to be fraught with challenges on building con-

sensus on contentious political and policy issues in the face of different interests of regional parties and a stronger opposition, analysts say.

Some analysts worry that the fiscal balance in the world's fastest growing economy could also come under pressure due to demands for higher development funds for states ruled by the NDA's regional partners and a possible push by BJP to spend more on welfare to woo back voters it lost in this year's election.

Modi, whose election campaign was marked by religious rhetoric and criticism of the opposition for allegedly favoring India's 200 million minority Muslims, has adopted a more conciliatory tone since the shock result.

"We have won the majority ... but to run the country it is unanimity that is crucial ... we will strive for unanimity," he said on Friday after the NDA formally named him coalition head.

Shooting Leaves 3 Dead, 2 Injured in South Dakota

PIERRE (Dispatches) — A shooting in a Sioux Falls neighborhood in the U.S. state of South Dakota left three people dead and two others injured Saturday, police said.

Police said they have a suspect in custody. They said there does not appear to be any further danger to the community. The investigation is ongoing.

Police said in a news release that they found the victims around 2:45 a.m. while responding to a call about a disturbance, the Argus Leader reported.

The injured were taken to a hospital to be treated. Their wounds were not believed to be life-threatening. Authorities did not release any additional details. Sioux Falls police did not respond to three phone messages left with dispatchers or to a social media message from AP.

A day earlier, one person was killed and four others were injured during a shooting at a backyard party in

Compton.

The incident was reported around 7:50 p.m. near Mayo Avenue and Greenleaf Boulevard, ABC 7 reported.

According to the Compton Fire Department, a man was found dead on the scene. Another man and three women were rushed to the hospital, though their conditions are unknown.

It's unclear what sparked the shooting but witnesses on the scene told Eyewitness News the shooting happened at a birthday pool party that was being held in the backyard of a home nearby.

People scattered from the scene and ran throughout the neighborhood in their bathing suits, leaving their possessions behind at the party.

Compton College is in the immediate area but the campus was not directly linked to the shooting. The school was holding its commencement Friday at an off-campus location in Carson.