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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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## Investigators say New York Governor Cuomo sexually harassed 11 women

NEW YORK, Aug 3 (Reuters) - An investigation into accusations of sexual harassment by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo found that he groped, kissed or made suggestive comments to 11 women and created a “toxic” workplace in violation of the law, the state’s attorney general said on Tuesday, with the White House calling the allegations abhorrent.

In a recorded statement issued after Attorney General Letitia James unveiled the findings of the five-month independent inquiry, Cuomo denied he had acted inappropriately and made clear he has no plans to resign. The civil investigation will not directly lead to criminal charges against Cuomo.

Cuomo, a third-term Democratic governor who has served in the post since 2011, called the findings inaccurate and unfair and said his words, gestures and demeanor were misinterpreted and were always intended to convey warmth to the women. The findings of the inquiry, detailed in a scathing 168-page report, dealt a devastating blow to Cuomo - once seen as a possible presidential candidate - and could hinder his administration.

“What this investigation revealed was a disturbing pattern of conduct by the governor of the great state of New York,” said James, a Democrat. “These 11 women were in a hostile and toxic work environment.”

President Joe Biden, a fellow Democrat who has previously said Cuomo should resign if the allegations were shown by an investigation to be true, plans to give his reaction later in the day, White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters.

“I don’t know that anyone could have watched this morning (James’ briefing) and not found the allegations to be abhorrent. I know I certainly did,” Psaki said.

The report’s findings prompted some U.S. lawmakers and senior New York Democrats to demand Cuomo’s resignation, underscoring the swift fall for a governor who had become nationally popular last year in the early days of the



COVID-19 pandemic by presenting himself as an authoritative figure in daily televised news conferences. The report said one woman Cuomo targeted was a state trooper. Anne Clark, who helped run the inquiry, said Cuomo stood behind the trooper in an elevator and “ran his finger from her neck down her spine and said, ‘Hey you.’” Cuomo also ran an “open hand from her belly button to her hip where she carries her gun,” Clark added. The trooper, according to Clark, said Cuomo inappropriately touched her from “her chest to her privates.”

Cuomo, a divorced father of three adult daughters, said he would “not be distracted” from his work battling the pandemic, a sign he has no intention of resigning.

“I want you to know directly from me that I never touched anyone inappropriately or made inappropriate sexual advances,” Cuomo said. “I am 63 years old. I’ve lived my entire adult life in

public view. That is just not who I am. And that’s not who I have ever been.”

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo speaks during a news conference in New York City, New York, July 6, 2021. REUTERS/Jeenah Moon  
New York Governor Andrew Cuomo makes a statement in this screen grab taken from a pre-recorded video released by Office of the NY Governor, in New York, U.S., August 3, 2021. Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo/Handout via REUTERS  
New York State Attorney General, Letitia James, speaks at a news conference regarding a probe that found New York Governor Andrew Cuomo sexually harassed multiple women, in New York City, New York, U.S., August 3, 2021. REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz  
New York Governor Andrew Cuomo makes a statement in this screen grab taken from a pre-recorded video released by

Office of the NY Governor, in New York, U.S., August 3, 2021. Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo/Handout via REUTERS

“The facts are much different than what has been portrayed,” Cuomo added.

‘BLANKET DENIALS’

The report rejected Cuomo’s suggestions that his conduct was an innocent reflection of an affectionate Italian-American culture in which he was raised. Investigators found little credibility in his “blanket denials and lack of recollection as to specific incidents.” “What these witnesses - and many others - described is not just old-fashioned, affectionate behavior - it was sexual harassment,” the report concluded. Carl Heastie, who as speaker of the Democratic-controlled New York Assembly has authorized an impeachment investigation into Cuomo’s conduct, said the governor is “not fit for office.”

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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

## CORONAVIRUS DIARY

08/03/2021



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## I Am Back In The Nation's Capital



Today a United Air airliner brought me back to Washington, DC, the nation's capital. This is the first time I have come back to DC since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Almost thirty years ago when my brother Dan and I walked through the DC Chinatown, we remembered Uncle Lee who was the one who greeted us at the Chung Wah

Association. He was not just a pioneer in Chinatown. His leadership brought many dedicated Chinese Americans to town. They all worked so hard to make Chinatown a great tourist spot in the nation's capital. The beautiful and colorful Chinatown Gate and under it a lot of businesses and many tourists taking photos and shopping and dining. Uncle Lee

passed away years ago but his friendly smile is always in our hearts.

Today when I visited Chinatown again, all the streets have been changed to a big sports complex and new shops, but the gate is still shining and bright.

I am back in DC to visit the Guinea Ambassador Yansane. He will go back to Africa soon and talk about our trade mission.

I love being in Washington DC, the power capital of the world. Maybe I should spend more time here

and continue to pursue my dream.

The world is changing and so do the politics. We are so fortunate to be a media person. We can witness so many politicians who travel up and down in their careers.



**Southern DAILY** Make Today Different

## Editor's Choice



Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), talks with Kamala Lyles, 20, during a demonstration outside the U.S. Capitol to protest the expiration of the federal moratorium on residential evictions, in Washington. REUTERS/Evelyn Hockstein



Bronze medallist Simone Biles of the United States celebrates on the podium after the women's beam final at the Tokyo Olympics. REUTERS/Mike Blake



Mikel Merino of Spain and Maya Yoshida of Japan react after a penalty that was later overruled by VAR during their semifinal soccer match at the Tokyo Olympics. REUTERS/Kim Hong-Ji



Tara Davis of the United States in action during the women's long jump final at the Tokyo Olympics. REUTERS/Athit Perawongmetha



Karsten Warholm of Norway reacts after crossing the line to win gold and set a new world record in the men's 400m hurdles at the Tokyo Olympics. REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson



Simone Biles of the United States watches from the stands at the Tokyo Olympics. REUTERS/Mike Blake



## World Economic Forum Launches Coalition To Tackle Harmful Online Content



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The World Economic Forum has announced that it is launching a Global Coalition for Digital Safety which will accelerate public-private cooperation to tackle harmful content online.

It will serve to exchange best practices for new online safety regulations, take coordinated action to reduce the risk of online harms, and drive collaboration on programs to enhance digital media literacy

With the growing challenge of health misinformation, violent extremist and terrorist content, and the exploitation and abuse of children online, there is an urgent need for more deliberate global coordination to improve digital safety.

“The Forum recognizes this problem is only growing in size and complexity. This Coalition serves to bring together leaders in the public and private sector to cooperate globally on solutions that will ultimately reduce the consumption and distribution of material that is causing harm – especially to vulnerable members of our population,” said Cathy Li, Head of Media, Entertainment, and Sport Industries at the Forum.

**Coalition members highlighted the need to act more proactively when it comes to digital safety and the importance of further cooperation:**

“All the processes of the modern world are connected to the internet and information technologies. But at the same time, when we speak about high-tech processes, ‘digitalization’, we always know about the main goal – to create a safe online environment for our citizens. Therefore, the global initiative to create purposeful cooperation between states, organizations and businesses

is extremely relevant.”

H.E. Mykhailo Fedorov, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Transformation, Ukraine

Online content	
Illegal*	Harmful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pornography</li><li>• Child Pornography</li><li>• Copyright infringement</li><li>• Defamation</li><li>• Grooming</li><li>• Sexual exploitation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Violence</li><li>• Online harassment / bullying</li><li>• Hate speech</li><li>• Racism</li><li>• Bestiality</li><li>• Menacing / offensive</li></ul>

\*The Conceptions of illegality may vary depending on national legislations

“In order to improve digital safety, it is imperative that we accelerate public-private cooperation. This is an area that the World Economic Forum’s Global Coalition for Digital Safety, as an impartial platform, can look into.”

H.E. Johnny G. Plate, Minister of Communications and Informatics, Indonesia  
“The significance of national and international collaboration, multistakeholder engagement and investment in holistic solutions to address the proliferation of global online harms has never been more important. I am so pleased to be part of the World Economic Forum’s Digital Content Safety initiative and to have an opportunity to raise awareness about eSafety’s multifaceted approach to helping our citizens have safer, more positive experiences online. Securing harmonization across jurisdictions to avoid a patchwork and fragmentation of online safety legislation, governance arrangements and national online safety measures should be a priority for us all.”

Julie Inman Grant, eSafety Commissioner, Australia, “Global online safety is a collective goal that must be addressed by working across borders as well as

by individual nations. We look forward to collaborating with international Coalition members to reduce the risk of on-line harms and build a safer life online for everyone.” Dame Melanie Dawes, Chief Executive, Ofcom, UK  
“We believe that everyone should be free to share without harassment or abuse.”

Chris Priebe, Executive Chairman, Two Hat Security



“Technology offers tools to learn, play, connect, and contribute to solving some of the world’s greatest challenges. But digital safety harms remain a threat to these possibilities. As the World Economic Forum is uniquely positioned to accelerate the public-private collaboration needed to advance digital safety globally, Microsoft is eager to participate and help build whole-of-society solutions to this whole-of-society problem.” Courtney Gregoire, Chief Digital Safety Officer, Microsoft.

A framework proposed in the new report, Advancing Digital Safety, will serve to better protect users online. It is centered on industry standards, which establish a safety baseline, together with regulation to govern enforcement. Coalition members are committed to charting a course that will resolve key tensions in privacy, safety, expression, business incentives and corporate versus public responsibility to effectively minimize the risk of harms encountered online. (Courtesy weforum.org)

**Related**

### Advancing Global Digital Content Safety Through A Global Coalition

The Global Coalition for Digital Safety aims to accelerate public-private cooperation to tackle harmful content online and will serve to exchange best practices for new online safety regulation, take coordinated action to reduce the risk of online harms, and drive forward collaboration on programs to enhance digital media literacy.

#### Our Approach To The Problem

Advancing Global Digital Content Safety is an initiative focusing on solutions to tackle the spread of harmful content online. Online content has the power to influence minds, incite action, and shape the fabric of society. What is posted and shared on the internet has proliferated substantially, leading to questions on how to reduce the spread of harmful content, particularly across social networks, search engines, streaming services, and others within a layered internet ecosystem.



This initiative aims to explore solutions to advance industry

try and regulatory progress in the area of digital content safety. Taking into account and developing further the outcomes of the previous and current initiatives on the topic, the analysis will be centered around three main workstreams:

**1. Content Moderation:** This workstream will look at current practices used by platforms to define harmful content and take action on such content, highlighting best practices for processes of categorizing, detecting, reporting, and governing content, as follows:

•What practices are currently in place to moderate content on major platforms?

•What is the current balance between safety and free expression implied or stated based on content moderation decisions we have seen to date?

•What are the best practices for developing and executing on the necessary tools, processes, governance, and reporting to moderate content effectively?

•For harmful content with a clear definition, how can detection and removal be improved?

•For content with a less clear definition of harm, how can decisions be made more transparently?

**REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT** •What independent auditing may be needed and how would this function?

•What metrics, if any, should be used to assess performance of content moderation practices?

•How can content moderation best practices be harmonized across the media ecosystem to enhance public accountability?

**2. Regulation and Liability:** This workstream will look at current regulation of platforms globally, highlighting various approaches to assigning responsibility / liability for third party content across social networks, search engines, and other internet companies

•What is the responsibility for addressing harmful content across the internet stack?

•How do current liability laws (e-Commerce directive, section 230 of CDA) impact content on platforms?

•How should social platforms be treated when it comes to content liability (on the spectrum of publisher to distributor)?

•Is a two-tiered regulatory approach needed, and how would this function effectively if so?

•Should concept of fiduciary duty be regulated upon platforms?

•Should specific measures / targets (e.g. exposure) be enforced with regulation?

•What are the most effective remedies to

put in place if a company has violated regulations related to content on its platforms?



•What should be self-governed vs regulated?

•Given regulations that improve safety for consumers may sometimes

be in conflict with regulation that improve privacy, how should regulation be effectively coordinated to optimize for consumer well-being?

**3. Business Model and Competition:** This workstream will analyze the impact of an engagement-driven business model as well as the role of competition in addressing exposure to harmful content while considering impacts to innovation and growth

•What is the role of increased competition in addressing exposure to harmful content?

•Would increased competition be effective in reducing (in part) the average exposure to harmful content – how could this be modelled?

•How do various consumer well-being goals (price, security, safety from harmful content, choice, privacy, etc.) need to be balanced here?

•How do current business model practices – focused on maximizing user engagement to drive advertising revenue - impact the type of content that users see?

•Are current business model practices incompatible with long-term goals of gaining user trust and avoiding engaging in controversial content governance decisions? If so, what long-term strategic shifts could be taken by platforms to maintain or grow profits whilst reducing dependence on advertising revenues (reference to Value in Media insights)?



The three workstreams will address harmful content of the following scope:

- Harms with a clear

definition (e.g., child sexual exploitation)

- Harms with a less clear definition (e.g., disinformation)

- In light of COVID-19, we will specifically focus on health-related misinformation

The report culminating the findings of this work can be found here: <https://www.weforum.org/whitepapers/advancing-digital-safety-a-framework-to-align-global-action>

This initiative is now focused on driving forward solutions through the work of the Global Coalition for Digital Safety which can be found here: <https://www.weforum.org/global-coalition-for-digital-safety/home> (Courtesy weforum.org)

## Pandemic Brain: Half Of Americans Fear They’ll Never Fully Recover From COVID Pandemic Stress



Illustration by John S. Dykes

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

In record numbers, Americans are anxious, worried, sleep-deprived, distracted, and depressed. The Covid-19 pandemic’s triple whammy of an invisible and omnipresent threat (coronavirus infection), profound disruptions in daily life, and uncertainty for the future has thrust many people into a chronic, high-stress state that is, let’s just say, less than optimal for rational thinking or any other sort of higher-order cognitive functioning.

While the Covid-19 pandemic rages on worldwide, the immediate mental health impact of this collective trauma is coming into focus even as the outlook for long-term psychological effects remains considerably fuzzier.

Are we experiencing a pandemic of mental illness? Much has been reported about the ill-termed “mental health pandemic” that seems to be surging through the U.S. and other countries in lockstep with lockdowns and the death, societal disruption, and economic devastation of the viral pandemic. Many experts have sounded the alarm for an approaching tsunami of psychological maladies that could sink an already overburdened mental healthcare system.

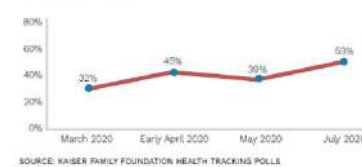


A growing cache of data seems to bear out those fears. One of the most recent, a population survey conducted in April and May, found a three-fold increase in depression since the pandemic began. The researchers examined mental health problems relative to 13 pandemic-specific stressors, including loss of a job, death of someone close to you due to Covid-19, and financial problems (see box for full list). The more stressors people reported, the more likely they were to also report symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Other studies show similar rises. From April to June, the Census Bureau tracked anxiety and depression symptoms among Americans in weekly emergency surveys, finding a sharp rise in both. In a Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Survey conducted in July, more than half of U.S. adults (53 percent) said worry and stress related to coronavirus has had a negative impact on their mental health, up from 39 per-

cent in May.

Percentage of Adults Who Report That Worry and Stress Related to Coronavirus Has Had a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health



Half of Americans say that the COVID-19 pandemic has been so stressful they worry they’ll never fully be able to de-stress, even after it’s all over.

A survey of 2,000 Americans finds stress levels have been so bad since 2020 that 25 percent would go as far as escaping to a cabin in the woods by themselves in order to get away from the daily stresses of life. Another 15 percent would need to be even more remote, choosing a desert island as their de-stressing sanctuary. Crucially, respondents add they’d have to be totally alone to truly be able to de-stress. The study, conducted by OnePoll and commissioned by CBDistillery, also finds that for many, getting rid of stress is all about the finer things in life. In fact, 35 percent of respondents think a trip to a luxury resort would do the trick.



#### De-stressing still takes work

The average American feels they would need 10 days in their ideal location to completely de-stress. This is borne out by the numbers, too; 55 percent admit their current stress levels have left them feeling burnt out.

Researchers also discovered that stress has a major impact on personal relationships. Seven out of 10 Americans say they get upset or frustrated with someone in their household for no reason at least once a week. These spats aren’t surprising though, as 51 percent admit they find it difficult to de-stress because they live with others.

“Sometimes it’s the smallest things that can trigger stress,” says a spokesperson for CBDistillery in a statement. “Our

results found 45 percent of respondents admitted their coping mechanisms for dealing with stress aren’t the healthiest – which can then create a cycle of stress, making these issues worse.”



With all of this in mind, it’s no wonder 46 percent say they’re desperate for a more effective way to handle stress. Nearly three in five respondents believe just having one extra hour of free time to do nothing every day would help their stress levels immensely.

#### Entertainment is the top coping mechanism for pandemic stress

In attempts to find their happy place and find peace, some of the top coping mechanisms Americans use include listening to music (45%), taking a walk (38%), binge-watching TV (33%), and exercising (29%). Other common coping mechanisms include cuddling with a pet, taking deep breaths (both 29%), eating a snack (28%), reading a book (26%), and playing video games (24%).

“It’s clear Americans are desperate to find a solution for their stress,” the spokesperson adds. “Whether it’s grabbing your favorite snack, taking a walk – there are so many things you can try until you find what works for you.”

#### Related

### From The CDC: Coping With Stress

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major effect on our lives. Many of us are facing challenges that can be stressful, overwhelming, and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but they can make us feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. Learning to cope with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and those around you become more resilient.

**Stress can cause the following:**

•Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration. Changes in appetite, energy, desires, and interests. Difficulty concentrating and making decisions. Difficulty sleeping or nightmares. Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes. Worsening of chronic health problems. Worsening of mental health conditions. Increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances

It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are ways that you can help yourself, others, and your community manage stress.



#### Healthy Ways to Cope with Stress

•**Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories**, including those on social media. It’s good to be informed, but hearing about the pandemic constantly can be upsetting. Consider limiting news to just a couple times a day and disconnecting from phone, tv, and computer screens for a while.

•**Take care of your body.**

•Take deep breaths, stretch, or . Meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Exercise regularly. Get plenty of sleep. Avoid excessive alcohol, tobacco, and substance use. Continue with routine preventive measures (such as vaccinations, cancer screenings, etc.) as recommended by your healthcare provider. Get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine when available.

•**Make time to unwind.** Try to do some other activities you enjoy.

•**Connect with others.** Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

•**Connect with your community- or faith-based organizations.** While social distancing measures are in place, try connecting online, through social media, or by phone or mail. (Courtesy <https://www.studyfinds.org/> and [www.cdc.gov/](https://www.cdc.gov/))