

U.S. sets grim mass killings record in first half of 2023

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Washington, July 15 (RHC)-- The United States saw a record of 28 mass killings in the first half of 2023, The Associated Press has reported, as policymakers struggle to curb gun violence across the country. The AP analysis, published on Friday, said 140 victims were killed during that period. All but one of the mass killings – incidents in which four or more people are slain not including the perpetrator – involved firearms.

“What a ghastly milestone,” Brent Leatherwood, whose three children were in class at a private Christian school in Nashville in March when a former student fatally shot six people, told the AP. “You never think your family would be a part of a statistic like that.”

A database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University has been tracking large-scale violence since 2006. The 2023 milestone beat the previous record of 27 mass killings, which was only set in the second half of 2022.

James Alan Fox, a criminology professor at Northeastern University, never imagined records like this when he began overseeing the database about five years ago. “We used to say there were two to three dozen a year,” Fox told AP. “The fact that there’s 28 in half a year is a staggering statistic.”

Mass killings are rising with an overall uptick in gun violence. The country has endured 377 mass shootings since the start of the year, according to the Gun Violence Archives database.

Around the July 4th holiday, marking the U.S. Independence Day, multiple mass shootings killed and injured dozens of people across the country, including in the capital, Washington, DC, prompting renewed calls for stricter gun laws.

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