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Publisher: Wea H. Lee
General Manager: Catherine Lee
Editor: John Robbins, Jun Gai
Business Manager: Jennifer Lopez
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For Democrats, U.S. House win moves Pelosi to center stage

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Now that the Democrats have won control of the U.S. House of Representatives, they need to choose a leader and that means solving one of their toughest puzzles: Nancy Pelosi.

A contest among the Democrats for the House's top job of speaker will play out over the next 10 weeks or so, with the formidable 78-year-old San Francisco liberal at the center.

Pelosi, who has led the House Democrats in the minority or majority since 2003, told reporters on Wednesday she was confident she would be speaker of the House again. She has some critics who say it is time for generational change, but no challenger to her has emerged, and two senior Democrats said on Wednesday they would seek other leadership jobs. "I think I'm the best person to go forward, to unify, to negotiate," she said. Pelosi made history from 2007 to 2011 as the first woman speaker, a powerful position second in the line of emergency presidential succession after the vice president.

An unexpected intervention in the speaker's race came on Wednesday from Republican President Donald Trump, who tweeted that Pelosi deserved the job, even though he frequently assails her and other Democrats as obstructions to his agenda.

"In all fairness, Nancy Pelosi deserves to be chosen Speaker of the House by the Democrats," he said on Twitter. "If they give her a hard time, perhaps we will add some Republican votes. She has earned this great honor!"

Trump's intent with the tweet was unclear but he also telephoned Pelosi on Tuesday evening to congratulate her on the Democrats' win. Pelosi, acknowledging the tweet, told reporters: "I don't think anybody deserves anything. It's not about what you have done, it's what you can do."

Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway said he told Pelosi he was willing to make a deal on young illegal immigrants known as Dreamers and work on infrastructure spending, but he also wants to build a wall on the southern border.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) makes remarks a day after the Midterm Elections, in which the Senate Republicans retained their majority as the House saw Democrats sweep into control, and a possible



U.S. President Trump holds post-mid-term elections news conference at White House in Washington

return as Speaker for Pelosi, on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S., November 7, 2018. REUTERS/Mike Theiler

During the congressional campaigns that just ended, dozens of Democratic House candidates called for new leadership, registering indirect dissatisfaction with Pelosi, who has become a punching bag for Republicans. But not all the Democrats urging new leadership won election to the House.

With some races still undecided, Democrats were headed for a gain of about 30 seats, beyond the 23

they needed to claim their first majority in the 435-member House in eight years. Their first order of business as the House majority will be to decide whether to put the speaker's gavel back in Pelosi's hands.

At a victory celebration in Washington on Tuesday, Pelosi said a Democratic House "will work for solutions that bring us together because we have all had enough of division."

Wall Street rallies on U.S. elections; tech, health stocks

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Wall Street rose 2 percent on Wednesday, led by the technology and healthcare sectors as investors breathed a sigh of relief following the U.S. mid-term elections and made bets that a divided Congress would be good news for equities.

Democrats won control of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, while President Donald Trump's Republican party expanded its Senate majority, pointing to the likelihood of political gridlock in Washington.

The S&P's biggest boosts came from the S&P technology sector and the healthcare stocks, with both indexes gaining 2.9 percent. The consumer discretionary sector climbed 3.1 percent, spurred by a 6.9 percent rise in Amazon.com shares. Amazon provided the single biggest boost to the S&P 500.

"Now we're in an environment that people can understand again so they'll be willing to put some money back on the table. There was a little fear out there," said Peter Tuz, president at Chase Investment Counsel Corp in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 545.29 points, or 2.13 percent, to 26,180.3, the S&P 500 gained 58.44 points, or 2.12 percent, to 2,813.89, and the Nasdaq Composite added 194.79 points, or 2.64 percent, to 7,570.75.

The CBOE Volatility Index, the most widely followed gauge of expected near-term gyrations for the S&P 500, finished down 3.55 points at 16.36, its lowest close in about a month.

While a divided Congress will make it harder for President Donald Trump to push through new legislation such as additional tax cuts, investors were not expecting a reversal of tax cuts and deregulation already enacted under Trump.

"This outcome probably provides the most paralysis for new policies," said Brian Nick, chief investment strategist for Nuveen Asset Management in New York, adding that growth sectors such as tech and healthcare would continue to be strong.

"In a scenario where there's no (additional) fiscal stimulus and we're not experiencing severe growth concerns in terms of contraction, they're the best bet," he said.

Some strategists said Democratic control of the House means that Trump will have a harder time gaining support for efforts to impose new regulations on Amazon.com.



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in New York, U.S., November 7, 2018. REUTERS/Brendan McDermid

But even as technology and healthcare stocks soared, several investors questioned whether the sectors could now

be at risk of additional regulatory scrutiny.

Even after Wednesday's gains, the S&P 500 was 4 percent below its record close in September, as investors kept their eyes on rising interest rates and the U.S.-China trade war.



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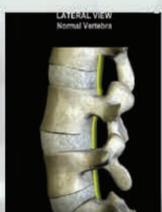
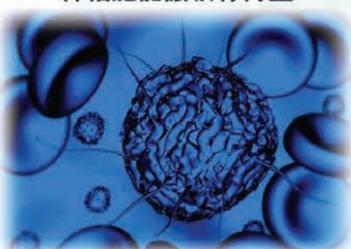
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Results from Houston's suburban elections on the Nov. 2018 ballot

Beto O'Rourke's loss to Sen. Ted Cruz gained national attention online Tuesday and Wednesday in Houston, and around the country, but there were also several major Houston-area suburban elections that also saw huge upsets.

In Fort Bend County, Republican incumbent Robert Hebert, who has served as county judge since 2003, was unseated by Fort Bend ISD board member and Democrat KP George. The Fort Bend County district attorney race also saw an upset with Democratic candidate Brian Middleton defeating Republican opponent Cliff Vacek.

In Montgomery county, for county judge, voters chose state Rep. Mark Keough, who unseated incumbent Craig Doyal in the Republican primary last March, over Democrat Jay Stittleburg, a project manager in the oil and gas industry. Fort Bend ISD voters approved the district's largest referendum to date, a \$992.6 million bond for new schools, land and upgrades. Alvin ISD's \$480.5 million bond package was also approved.



The district is asking voters to approve a \$480.5 million bond package and an accompanying measure to prevent an increase in the district's overall property tax rate. Proposition A will largely focus on constructing new schools, including two new elementary campuses, two junior high schools and a new high school.



Incumbent Robert Hebert (right) served as Fort Bend County Judge since 2003 and was unseated by Fort Bend ISD board member KP George.

Promise not to kill anyone? After losing election, TX judge wholesale releases juvenile defendants

After losing his bench in a Democratic sweep the night before, Harris County Juvenile Court Judge Glenn Devlin released nearly all of the youthful defendants that appeared in front him on Wednesday morning, simply asking the kids whether they planned to kill anyone before letting them go.

"He was releasing everybody," said public defender Steven Halpert, who watched the string of surprising releases. "Apparently he was saying that's what the voters wanted." In court, prosecutors voiced their concerns about the seemingly indiscriminate release of those accused of everything from low-level misdemeanors to violent crimes. "We oppose the wholesale release of violent offenders at any age," Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg said in a statement afterward. "This could endanger the public."

When reached by phone Wednesday, Devlin declined to comment.

1 in 5 children sent to state juvenile prisons

The long-time Republican jurist is one of two judges whose track record of favoring incarceration contributed heavily to doubling the number of kids Harris County sent to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department in recent years, even as those figures fell in the rest of the state.

Together, he and Judge John Phillips accounted for more than one-fifth of all children sent to the state's juvenile prisons last year, as detailed in the Houston Chronicle last month. Those two jurists not only sent more teens to juvenile prison, but they also sent them younger and for less-serious offenses than the county's third juvenile court, where Judge Mike Schneider presides.

But despite the differences in their courtroom practices, all three of the juvenile judges lost their benches to Democrats in Tuesday's election by at least 10-point spreads.

With the dust still settling from a massive shake-up in the local judiciary when Democrats swept the benches in 59 local courts, Devlin showed up for Wednesday's detention hearing docket ready to surprise.

By law, kids who are waiting in local lock-ups before their cases



are resolved are entitled to detention hearings every 10 working days to decide whether they need to stay behind bars or can safely be released under supervision.

It's not abnormal for Devlin to release juveniles facing serious charges, as long as they've behaved in detention and have adequate supervision in place on the outside, according to Halpert.

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Meet Dr. Beth Yip



Beth Yip, M.D., F.A.A.P.
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"I consider it a privilege to be allowed to help take care of patients and their families and make a difference in the life of a child. I view myself as a partner with the parents and patient and derive great satisfaction through our interactions. I love working with kids, a simple smile or hug will brighten my day."

-Beth Yip, M.D., co-managing physician, Pearland Clinic

Dr. Yip is a board-certified pediatrician who completed her medical degree, internship and residency at Baylor College of Medicine. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics and member of the American Medical Association, Texas Medical Association, Harris County Medical Society and Texas Pediatric Society.

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Editor's Choice



White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders attends Trump news conference at the White House in Washington



House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) makes remarks a day after the Midterm Elections, in which the Senate Republicans retained their majority as the House saw Democrats sweep into control, and a possible return as Speaker for Pelosi, on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S., November 7, 2018. REUTERS/Mike Theiler



U.S. President Donald Trump holds a news conference following midterm elections at White House in Washington



White House staff member tries to take microphone from CNN's Acosta as U.S. President Trump holds news conference at the White House in Washington



A White House staff member reaches for the microphone held by CNN's Jim Acosta as he questions U.S. President Donald Trump during a news conference in Washington



FILE PHOTO: Campaign signs are seen outside a polling station on the last day of early voting in Dallas



FILE PHOTO: U.S. Democratic congressional candidate Sherrill walks the fair as she campaigns during the New Jersey State Fair in Augusta, New Jersey

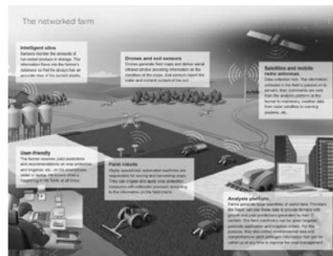
LAPU-LAPU CITY, Cebu — Dr. Gay Jane Perez was a postdoctoral fellow at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) in the United States when she realized how much data can be culled from satellite images.

“I was always looking at the Philippines through satellite images [and] saw that there really is a relationship between temperature and vegetation,” the 37-year-old scientist recalled. “I was at NASA in 2010, while we were having El Niño in the country.”

Such realization helped Perez bag this year’s Asean-US Science Prize for Women, the first Filipino to win it. Perez bested seven other female scientists from Southeast Asia and received a \$20,000 cash prize from the US government and its private partner, Underwriters Laboratories, a global safety science company.

Early-career boost

The competition supports promising early-career scientists across the region and encourages collaboration between member states and the United States in creating sustainable solutions to address development changes.



This year, the competition focused on precision agriculture and sought to award those working at the intersection of agriculture, digital tools, technology and data in support of small farmers and regional agriculture.

As Southeast Asia’s population continues to grow, so does the pressure on the region’s food system. Experts believe that by 2050, about 40 percent more food will be needed to feed the region. Other challenges like resource scarcity and extreme weather phenomena add to

Research Shows How Data Gathered By Satellite Can Help Farmers

Award-Winning Pinay Scientist Gives Farmers Crucial Tool: Satellite Data

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



Dr. Gay Jane Perez (right) talks about her research, which won this year’s Asean-US Science Prize for Women. Her impressive work, says Ryan Washburn (left), helps farmers by predicting drought and identifying the best areas for planting, thanks to data gathered by satellite.

the problem. Perez’s award-winning research focuses on using satellite data to forecast drought and identify the ideal planting areas and seasons that could result in improved crop yield.

“Farmers can be advised early on where to plant and what to plant, and if there’s drought, when to irrigate,” Perez explained.

We can also advise them to harvest or plant earlier [depending on weather forecasts based on satellite images],” she added in an interview on Friday.

Drought forecast

The system she has developed makes use of satellite data to derive geophysical parameters like vegetation indices, surface temperature, rainfall, soil moisture and evapotranspiration — the process by which water is transferred from land to atmosphere by evaporation from the soil and other surfaces and by transpiration from plants.



Such data helps forecast drought so that farmers could be warned about it. Dr. Perez, an associate professor from the Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology at the University of the Philippines (UP) in Diliman, Quezon City, started her research in 2013 and has finished its first phase.

The results have been turned over to the state weather bureau, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), as well as the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Dubbed as Drought and Crop Assessment and Forecasting (DCAF), the project initially showed a 73-percent accuracy in identifying drought occurrences in pilot areas, Perez said.

Once approved by Pagasa and the DABSWM, the technology can be integrated in these agencies’ advisory systems to help farmers across the country, she added.

Crop-specific

The project’s second phase, now ongoing, will be a collaboration with crop scientists and agriculture engineers aimed at developing a more crop-specific approach in coming up with advisories that can be disseminated to farmers.

From 60 entries, eight scientists from the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Burma, Singapore and Vietnam were shortlisted, according to Ryan Washburn, head of the US delegation to the Asean Committee on Science and Technology.

en to pursue scientific research,” Dr. Perez said in her three-minute video introduction.



Dr. Gay Jane Perez (center), winner of the 2018 Asean-US Science Prize for Women takes center stage at the winner’s ceremony. Her work details how satellite images can help forecast droughts in farms.

NASA Fellow

After her years at UP, Perez became a postdoctoral fellow at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center Hydrospheric and Biospheric Sciences Laboratory in the United States where she learned more about the immense data gathered by satellite images.

When she got back to the Philippines, Perez started working on drought forecasting through the DCAF project, which involves viewing different farm areas all over the country through satellite images enhanced by our very own Diwata 1 and 2 satellites.

The technology can help scientists view areas up to the barangay level, but Perez said they hoped to improve their data’s resolution to reach farm levels, thanks to the prize money she received.

Perez and other scientists are also working with state universities in Ilocos Norte, Nueva Ecija, Isabela, Bicol, Cebu, Iloilo and Bukidnon to help them improve their data and validate their research results in the field. (Courtesy <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net>)

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Overview

Migrants that are currently marching north through Mexico towards the USA reportedly refused offers to house and employ them in Mexico.

Authorities in Mexico have stepped in to offer aid in the form of food, shelter, medical care, as well as education and jobs to those in need.

But the thousands of Central American migrants have reportedly refused all offers of help – saying they want to get to the United States.

Mexico's President Enrique Pena Nieto made the generous offer on Friday, telling the caravan migrants they could apply for refugee status in his country provided they agreed to stay in the two southern states.

However, a show of hands vote held in the town of Arriaga saw hordes turn down any help, with the majority insisting their final destination had to be the US.

According to news reports, the migrants yelled "no thank you" when presented with the offer, adding they are "heading north".

Mexican authorities said approximately 8,000 people are walking towards the border, with a further 1,000 following behind.

The country has allowed them to travel across its territory but has so far refused to offer any aid, insisting that must be for those who register legally.

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis has now authorised the use of troops and other military resources at the southern border as the Government seeks to stem the flow of people illegally crossing in the US.



Thousands of Central Americans are walking north towards the US border (Pic: GETTY)

'We Want America'

Migrant Caravan Refuses Offers Of Housing And Jobs In Mexico

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



HANDS: Migrants voted with a 'show of hands' NOT to accept the aid offer (Photo/GETTY)

Although the Pentagon has not commented on how many will go there, it is thought they could number around 800. The US military said Secretary Mattis had authorised the military to provide "mission-enhancing capabilities" to US Customs and Border Protection, including engineering support to help build temporary barriers and housing. It is unclear if the soldiers will be armed. President Donald Trump has taken a strong line on the migrant issue, writing on Twitter that he was "bringing out the military for this National Emergency. They will be stopped!"

The caravan, which began in Honduras

nearly two weeks ago and picked up other Central Americans along the way, has angered Trump, who has maintained a hard-line on immigration. Congressman Adam Smith, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, condemned the mobilisation of forces.

"There is absolutely no reason to further politicise and militarise this humanitarian crisis," he said. (Courtesy <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/world-news/>)

Related

Medical Expert: Migrant Cara-

van Could Pose Public Health Threat



Dr. Jan Orient, executive director of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, said on Breitbart News

Daily that the thousands of people marching toward the U.S. border with Mexico could bring diseases that could pose a threat to public health.

"It just makes no sense from a public health standpoint to let in a lot of people who have not been screened," Orient told Amanda House, deputy political editor for Breitbart News and host of Breitbart News Sunday on the SiriusXM Patriot Channel.

Orient said that unlike the days when Ellis Island was the place where migrants were tested for diseases and put in quarantine to protect against diseases in the incubation stage, in recent years people have been allowed to enter the country and settle across the country without proper screenings.

Orient said border security is not only important for public safety but for public health.



"I think we really need to control entrance to our county," Orient said.

"It just doesn't make any sense in these days of exotic diseases [and] increasing antibiotic resistance to be allowing an invading flood of people," Orient said.

The Trump administration, including President Donald Trump, has said it will not allow this latest and largest group of as many and 14,000 migrants to enter the country and that the U.S. military will be used to make sure the border is not breached.

The Military Times is reporting that the Department of Defense will be deploying "800 active-duty troops, not National Guard forces, to increase the 2,100 National Guardsmen" already stationed along the border. (Courtesy <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/>)

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