

Suu Kyi Wins Myanmar Parliament Seat

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — She struggled for a free Myanmar for a quarter-century, much of it spent locked away under house arrest. Now, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate whose nonviolent campaign for democracy at home transformed her into a global icon is on the verge of ascending to public office for the first time.

Aung San Suu Kyi, 66, was elected to parliament Sunday in a historic victory buffeted by the jubilant cheers of supporters who hope her triumph will mark a major turning point in a nation still emerging from a ruthless era of military rule.

If confirmed, the election win will also mark an astonishing reversal of fortune for a woman who became one of the world's most prominent prisoners of conscience. When she was finally released in late 2010, just after a vote her party boycotted that was deemed neither free nor fair, few could have imagined she would make the leap from democracy advocate to elected official in less than 17 months, opening the way for a potential presidential run in 2015.

But Myanmar has changed dramatically over that time. The junta finally ceded power last year, and although many of its leaders merely swapped their military uniforms for civilian suits, they went on to stun even their staunchest critics by releasing political prisoners, signing cease-fires with rebels, relaxing press censorship and opening a direct dialogue with Suu Kyi — who they tried to silence for decades.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton congratulated Myanmar for holding the poll. Speaking at a news conference in Istanbul, Turkey, she said Washington was committed to supporting the nation's reform effort.

1940 U.S. Census Records To Be Released

NEW YORK (AP) — When the 1940 census records are released Monday, Verla Morris can consider herself a part of living history.

Morris, who is in her 100th year, will get to experience the novelty of seeing her own name and details about her life in the records being released by the U.S. National Archives online after 72 years of confidentiality expires.

"I'd be happy to see it there," she said. "I don't think anything could surprise me, really."

Morris is one of more than 21 million people alive in the U.S. and Puerto Rico who were counted in the 16th federal decennial census, which documents the tumultuous decade of the 1930s transformed by the Great Depression and black migration from the rural South. It's a distinction she shares with such living celebrities as Clint Eastwood and Morgan Freeman.

Morris, who has been working on her family history since 1969 and has written six books on its branches, said census records were essential for her genealogical work because oftentimes people don't want to give their personal information.

Jerusalem Holy Week Begins With Palm Sunday

JERUSALEM (AP) — Hundreds of Christian pilgrims marked Palm Sunday in the Holy Land on Sunday, holding masses and processions retracing Jesus' triumphant return to Jerusalem.

Palm Sunday marks the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem, where he was greeted by cheering crowds bearing palm fronds, according to the Bible.

The day's events began with a mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher — revered as the site where Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected. Several hundred worshippers and clergy lit candles and waved palm fronds in the dark, cavernous church.

"It's the holiest place in the world for Christians and it's important for me to come here at least once in my lifetime," said Etienne Chevremont, 49, a visitor from Paris who attended the Jerusalem Mass.

Visitors walked down the cobblestone alleyways of the walled Old City carrying olive branches, palm fronds and crosses.

HPV Link Helps Explain Higher Rates Of Cancer

CHICAGO (AP) — Provocative new research might help explain why black women are so much more likely than whites to develop and die from cervical cancer: They seem to have more trouble clearing HPV, the virus that causes the disease.

Doctors have long thought that less access to screening and follow-up health care were the reasons black women are 40 percent more likely to develop cervical cancer and twice as likely to die from it. The new study involving young college women suggests there might be a biological explanation for the racial disparity, too.

If further study confirms this novel finding, it would make the HPV vaccine even more important for black women, said Wortia McCaskill-Stevens, a prevention specialist at the National Cancer Institute. The vaccine is recommended for all girls starting at age 11.

The study was presented Sunday at an American Association for Cancer Research conference in Chicago.

Certain strains of HPV, the human papillomavirus, cause cervical cancer, but brief infections are very common in young women. They usually go away on their own within a year or so and only pose a cancer risk when they last long-term.



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Wis. GOP Primary Tests 2012 Momentum

BY THOMAS BEAUMONT AND BRIAN BAKST
Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Wisconsin voters are just warming up.

The national political spotlight promises to be hotter than normal this year, considering the series of contests in the state that serve as tests on issues confronting the country as a whole. And that's after Tuesday's Republican presidential primary, which effectively could end the race for the nomination.

Energized Republicans sense opportunities they haven't seen in a generation to complete a turn-around.

"You have an incredibly engaged and active electorate right now in Wisconsin," said Mark Graul, a Republican strategist in the state. "That will certainly hold through to November."

They see the chance to turn back a national effort to recall Gov. Scott Walker in a June election stemming from the first-term Republican's aggressive effort to strip public employee unions of power, and to pick a strong U.S. Senate nominee in August whose victory in November would give Wisconsin two GOP seats for the first time since 1957.

Ultimately, they see this sequence of votes, starting this coming week, as test runs they hope will build toward a Republican carrying Wisconsin in the general election, which hasn't happened since 1984.

"We've never been so optimistic. We have a chance like I've never seen in this state," John Kleczka, a 68-year-old Republican from Brookfield who attended a rally for GOP presidential front-runner Mitt Romney on Milwaukee's south side Friday.

Walker's recall dominates, despite Romney's chance of putting away conservative rival Rick Santorum on Tuesday.

The recall is the culmination of a fight over the cost of public worker benefits amid austere budget times. Wisconsin's traditionally strong labor movement has attracted national help to fight Walker, elected in 2010 on a promise to get tough with public employee unions.

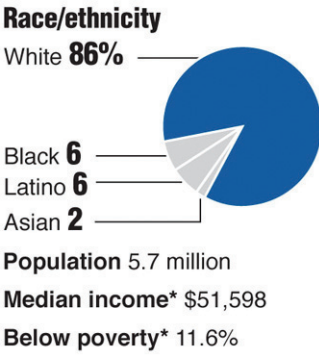
Other states such as Indiana have pushed to curb public-sector union benefits. But Walker's move, which led to huge demonstrations and national attention in Madison last year, has made Wisconsin the national test case.

It's also seen as an emotional turning point for both sides in a dispute that has raged since Walker jumped into the race three years ago.

The intensity of the battle is clear while cruising around the state of 5.7 million people. Lawn signs with competing "I Stand With Governor Walker" and "Recall

Next stop, Wisconsin

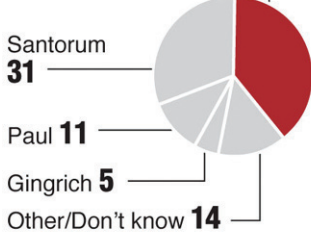
The stakes are high for Tuesday's primary in Wisconsin, which has an independent streak and where conservatives play a pivotal role.



Recent polling

Marquette University Law School poll, March 22-25

Romney **39%**



Walker" messages offer indications of the deeper philosophical rift.

To initiate the recall, Walker's foes accumulated more than 900,000 valid signatures, almost twice the number they needed.

On a labor row on the edge of Milwaukee, where several unions have their state headquarters, recall and solidarity signs are plastered over windows.

But Wisconsin has weathered the recession better than its Rust Belt neighbors. Personal income has risen \$2,000 since 2008, faster than the national average.

Unemployment was 6.9 percent in February, well below the 8.3 percent national average and better than Illinois' 9.1 percent, Michigan's 8.8 percent and Ohio's 7.6 percent.

Wisconsin's agricultural output remains robust while the state's manufacturing sector has also been stable, marked by success stories such as the revival of Harley-Davidson motorcycles in Milwaukee.

Since Democrat Barack Obama carried the state by 14 percentage points in the 2008 presidential race, Wisconsin's conservatives have awoken, uniting around fiscal issues.

Republicans dominate in the three counties surrounding heavily Democratic Milwaukee in the southeast. Democrats prevail in the college and state-worker heavy capital, Madison, about 80 miles west of Milwaukee.

The rest of the state is a blend of blue collar strength in the mill and plant towns in the north, and deep pockets of social conservatives in rural areas, small towns and suburbs.

Republicans recaptured both houses of the Legislature in 2010 and now have the edge in Wisconsin's congressional delegation.

"We have been building momentum a long time," said Mary Buestrin, a Republican National Committeewoman from GOP-heavy Mequon, an upper-middle class Milwaukee suburb.

In the past three years, Wisconsin has begun bending away from more than a decade of Democratic-leaning statewide votes. Tea party favorite Ron Johnson turned back three-term Democratic U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold in 2010.

U.S. Rep. David Obey, a longtime leader on the House Appropriations Committee, saw his seat in jeopardy in 2010, and retired after 40 years representing northern Wisconsin.

Big-name Republicans, including longtime former Gov. Tommy Thompson and former U.S. Rep. Mark Neumann, are seeking the Senate nomination. Four-term Democrat Herb Kohl is retiring.

Adding to the attention, Wisconsin also boasts two prominent Obama antagonists: U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, the House Budget Committee chairman, and Republican National Committee chairman Reince Priebus

Nations Pledge Millions For Syrian Opposition

ISTANBUL (AP) — A coalition of more than 70 partners, including the United States, pledged Sunday to send millions of dollars and communications equipment to Syria's opposition groups, signaling deeper involvement in the conflict amid a growing belief that diplomacy and sanctions alone cannot end the Damascus regime's repression.

The shift by the U.S. and its Western and Arab allies toward seeking to sway the military balance in Syria carries regional risks because the crisis there increasingly resembles a proxy conflict that could exacerbate sectarian tensions. The Syrian rebels are over-matched by heavily armed regime forces.

The summit meeting of the "Friends of the Syrian People" follows a year of failed diplomacy that seems close to running its course with a troubled peace plan led by U.N.-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan.

Indeed, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and other participants at the conference in Istanbul uniformly expressed concern that Annan's plan might backfire, speculating that Syrian

President Bashar Assad would try to manipulate it to prolong his hold on power.

Clinton said she was waiting for Annan's report to the U.N. Security Council on Monday on the status of his peace plan.

Clinton said the United States is

providing communications equipment to help anti-government activists in Syria organize, remain in contact with the outside world and evade regime attacks.

The Syrian regime agreed last week to Annan's plan, which calls for an immediate cease-fire, human-

itarian access to besieged civilians and a political negotiation process led by Syrians. Since then, there have been daily reports of violence, including shelling Sunday in the central city of Homs that activists said killed more than two dozen people.

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