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On campuses, a vast chasm over war in Gaza

Students describe an atmosphere filled with tension, fear — and little dialogue

By Maddie Khaw
and Daniel Kool
GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS

Ariela Rosenzweig and Brooke Verschleiser are both undergraduates at Brown University, and both

►US readies UN cease-fire plan. A3.

are Jewish. But their sharply divergent experiences at school this year underscore how the Israel-Hamas war has triggered one of the most vitriolic periods on college campuses since the Vietnam War.

A senior, Rosenzweig spent eight days this semester on a hunger strike with 18 other pro-Palestinian activists, going so long without food that her toes went numb and her muscles ached.

Meanwhile, Verschleiser, a junior, took down the Israeli flag that flew outside her off-campus apartment after her building received an anonymous note: “Those who stand for death will die by their own hand.”

Although the protests and vigils that erupted after the Oct. 7 Hamas

attack on Israel and the ensuing Israeli war in Gaza are smaller now, an atmosphere of tension — and for some Jewish students, isolation — reigns, visits to a handful of New England campuses in recent days found. For some students, the war in the Middle East, and the fear and anger it has provoked on campus, has marked their college years indelibly.

“There’s no world where I look back on my college experience and don’t think about all of this and everything that’s happened,” Verschleiser said as she sat at a table in the campus Hillel Center. “There’s no separating it now.”

In interviews with more than 60

students, a picture emerges of two groups living in immediate proximity to each other but separated by a chasm of difference over Israel. Pro-Palestinian activists, who have been staging sit-ins, hunger strikes, and rallies across campuses, said they feel silenced by school administrators. Jewish students who support Israel — and who in some cases are also critical of its military campaign — said they are clearly in the minority on their campuses, and felt uncomfortable voicing their feelings among peers. Many on both sides described retreating into familiar social circles, with few, if any, bridges between them.

CAMPUS CLIMATE, Page A7

Crew flees ship after Houthi attack

Iran-backed militia fired missiles; US Navy helps rescue vessel’s members

By Vivian Nereim
NEW YORK TIMES

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Houthi rebels, in one of their most destructive attacks on shipping, fired two missiles at a British-owned cargo vessel on Monday, prompting a US warship to rush into the area and help rescue the crew after they abandoned the ship in the Red Sea.

The attack on the Rubymar involved two anti-ship ballistic missiles launched from Yemen between 9:30 p.m. and 10:45 p.m., according to the US military. The military’s Central Command said that one of the missiles struck the Rubymar, prompting the crew to make a distress call.

A warship that is part of a US-led coalition, as well as another merchant ship, responded to the call, and the crew was taken “to a nearby port by the merchant vessel,” Central Command said in a statement.

A Houthi military spokesperson, Yahya Sarea, said in a statement Monday that the militia had fired “a number of missiles” at the vessel, severely damaging it, bringing it to a “complete halt” and leaving it “at risk of sinking.” The New York Times could not verify those claims.

An employee who answered the phone at the
YEMEN, Page A4

Among GOP ranks, a tide of isolationism

As foreign threats spike, ‘America First’ embraced

By Jess Bidgood
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — Over the course of about 36 hours last week, Washington found itself ablaze with the news of an emerging Russian nuclear threat high in the cosmos — and then in mourning following the authorities’ announcement that a Russian opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, had died in prison 40 miles above the Arctic circle.

It was further evidence of the brutality of Russia’s president, Vladimir V. Putin, President Biden said in a news conference, casting the death as a grim reminder of why the United States needs to provide continued support to Ukraine as it fights its neighbor’s two-year invasion.

“History’s watching,” Biden warned.

But many in the GOP see a political upside in opposing the aid, as isolationism fueled and reflected by former president Donald Trump and his “America First” campaign slogan picks up adherents among the ranks of congressional Repub-

ISOLATIONISM, Page A5



PHOTOS BY CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF

A Globe analysis concluded the bus routes that pass through Nubian Station are mostly behind schedule during rush hours.

Missed connections at Nubian

Irregular arrivals, departures at MBTA bus station leave riders scrambling

By Daniel Kool
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT
and Vince Dixon
GLOBE STAFF

For Leisa Lackland, the Nubian Square bus terminal is a critical nexus in her daily commute, where she joins hundreds of other riders on the busy station’s jammed platforms to transfer from one bus line to another.

But as she knows all too well, this precise handoff hinges on the one thing the MBTA’s bus system is not known for: punctuality.

One morning in December, like many before and after it, her Silver Line bus ran late just enough that she and her daughter missed the transfer to the 44 and were doomed to miss the start of day care.

“I think I missed it by, like, not even like three minutes,” the 32-year-old said. “Now I have to wait 36 minutes for the next one.”

More often than not, the 16 T bus routes that pass through Nubian Station are behind schedule during rush hours, according to a Boston Globe analysis of arrival and departure

NUBIAN SQUARE, Page A6



Riders boarded a bus recently. With worsening traffic, overall travel times have increased over the last two years, according to the MBTA.

Brockton School Committee members have requested the National Guard to quell violence at the high school. B1.

Capital One says it will buy Discover Financial for \$35 billion, a deal that would merge two major US credit card firms. D1.

Really lit

Tuesday: Sunny but chilly.

High 33-38, low 23-28.

Wednesday: Sunny, warmer.

High 37-42, low 25-30.

Sunrise: 6:34. Sunset: 5:22.

Obituaries, C10.

Comics and weather, D4-5.

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Opposition was a plus for Newburyport’s mayor

Debate over Whittier Tech proposal lifted Reardon’s profile

By Billy Baker
GLOBE STAFF

NEWBURYPORT — Sean Reardon is having a moment.

He’s sitting in the corner office of City Hall, in his one and only dream job, a rising political star in the state’s top-right corner after his leading role in torpedoing plans for a costly regional tech school.

On a shelf in the corner of Reardon’s office is a framed print of Ted Lasso’s sign: “Believe.”

It’s a memento from his campaign in 2021, when he was way behind in the primaries after nearly a year of campaigning, trailing a city councilor backed by the departing mayor. But a final siege in the closing weeks shrunk the gap, and Reardon pulled out a win by just 27 votes.

He’s the fifth generation of his family in town, and when he was a kid, the then-mayor, Dick Sullivan, lived two doors down.

“I had a front-row seat and he seemed larger-than-life,” Reardon said on a recent sunny day as he sat at a huge round table next to his desk in the mayor’s office. “There are days I still can’t believe I’m in this office.”

His first year in office as mayor was relatively unremarkable. But in the fall of his second year, that changed after Whittier Tech in Haverhill announced its plan to build a nearly half-billion-dollar school. As debate erupted across the region, Reardon suddenly emerged as the face of the “Vote No” faction.

Reardon, a former teacher and School Committee member from a family of educators and coaches, had problems with the plan from the get-go, and kept finding more.

By Jan. 23, when the school district used its powers under a regional agreement to conduct a vote in the 11 cities
REARDON, Page A7



SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF

When Whittier Tech in Haverhill announced its plan to build a nearly half-billion-dollar school, debate erupted across the region and Mayor Sean Reardon of Newburyport emerged as the face of the “Vote No” faction.