

The Boston Globe

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024

STORMS ALSO BATTER BOTTOM LINES OF CITIES

\$5,000

Amount most
Mass. towns
have set aside
for disaster
response

\$39m

Flooding
damage
in the state
during
September
storm

\$1b

Spent on
of weather-
related
disasters
in US last year



Leominster, others finding recovery resources limited

By Erin Douglas

GLOBE STAFF

LEOMINSTER — On the surface, this Central Massachusetts city seems back in working order: The roads are clear, bridges are passable, and small businesses such as restaurants are open.

But many here are still haunted by the devastating floods in September that caused \$39 million in damage in Worcester County and other parts of the state.

Memories are still vivid of the pungent odor of mold, dead fish, and sewage from the flash flooding that forced homeowners to rip out floors, drywall, and electric wiring. It comes from the sight of barren basements and backyards swallowed by streams. More damage lurks beneath freshly paved streets that had collapsed during the storm and still need to be entirely rebuilt.

“We’re still finding things,” said Mayor Dean Mazzarella, as he glanced at a stack of papers on his desk detailing the public works projects on his to-do list.

The financial burden of weather disasters is weighing

LEOMINSTER, Page A6



SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF

Graeme Noseworthy (top) examined what is left of his ground-level bathroom in Leominster. He has no money left for repairs. This home (above) on Pleasant Street will be taken over by the city and demolished.

Talks advance for cease-fire, hostage deal

Israel reportedly set to back plan for prisoner swap

By Ronen Bergman
and Patrick Kingsley

NEW YORK TIMES

Israeli negotiators have offered a significant concession in cease-fire talks with Hamas, signaling that they might be open to releasing high-profile Palestinians jailed on terrorism charges in exchange for some Israeli hostages still being held in the Gaza Strip, according to two officials with knowledge of the talks.

President Biden said Monday he believed negotiators were nearing an agreement that would halt Israel’s military operations in Gaza within a week, although earlier in the day, Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu was still talking about further military action.

Netanyahu said the Israeli military had presented a plan to the war Cabinet to evacuate civilians from “areas of fighting” in Gaza. He appeared to be speaking of Israel’s long-expected invasion of Rafah, the southern city where more than half of Gaza’s population is sheltering, many in makeshift tents.

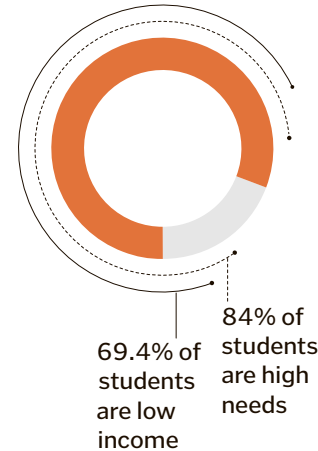
Netanyahu did not disclose any details of the evacuation plan, and it was not clear whether he was using the prospect of an invasion as a cudgel to gain leverage in the negotiations. On Sunday, he said an invasion could be “delayed somewhat” if Hamas agreed to release Israeli hostages.

Many countries and international aid groups have

MIDEAST, Page A4

At Massachusetts’ largest high school, budget cuts have led to dramatic understaffing, with the school’s diverse student population paying the price.

**81% of the school’s
3,600 students are
Black or Latino.**



SOURCE: State data and past Globe reporting
CHRISTOPHER HUFFAKER AND ASHLEY BORG/GLOBE STAFF



**Last summer, the
district laid off
130 employees
districtwide, about
5.9% of last year's
employee count.**

This was in response to an
\$18 million
budget deficit.

The United Way is planning to open an emergency overflow shelter for migrants at an office building in Fort Point “as soon as possible,” Governor Maura Healey said on Monday. B1.

The number of owners of buildings in Boston’s downtown core contesting their tax bills is back on the rise, according to data released by the city of Boston. D1.

Ukrainian troops have pulled out of a village in the east of the country, as French leader Emmanuel Macron said he would not rule out supporting use of Western troops to prevent the nation from falling to Russian forces. A4.



Let it drip

Tuesday: Cloudy, rain later.
High 51-56, low 46-51.
Wednesday: Windy, rain.
High 55-60, low 26-31.
Sunrise: 6:24. Sunset: 5:31.
Obituaries, **C9**.
Comics and Weather, **D5-6**.

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A Florida man, 2 abandoned boats, one long headache

Elusive owner vexes Nantucket,
Provincetown harbormasters

By Shannon Larson

GLOBE STAFF

When the abandoned sailboat was first spotted off First Point on Nantucket, the island’s harbormaster, Sheila Lucey, feared someone had gone overboard. Rescue crews searched the water around the weathered 32-foot vessel but found no sign of distress. And so the sailboat was tied to a large mooring in Nantucket Harbor.

But for Lucey, the distress was just beginning.

For the next nine months, she and authorities tried to track down the owner and have him remove his boat. This ordeal of unanswered calls and unkept promises only ended this month when the derelict vessel was mercifully towed away to be scrapped.

Along the way, Lucey found out that the owner, whom officials identified as Cody Fenstermaker of Key West, Fla., had abandoned another boat — this one in Provincetown.

“I was surprised,” Lucey said. “But not really.”

Abandoned boats are relatively common in states like Flor-

NANTUCKET, Page A6



CHARITY GRACE MOFSEN

After being abandoned in Nantucket Harbor 10 months ago, the sailboat Buenos Aires was recently pulled out of the water. Its owner also left a boat off Provincetown.

Case for amends links past to present

Report could give city a map for reparations

By Tiana Woodard

GLOBE STAFF

As Boston embarks on a massive undertaking to examine possible reparations for Black residents, a new report detailing the lasting legacy of slavery and systemic racism in the city offers solutions to redress the financial and emotional harms such discrimination has inflicted.

The report from Embrace Boston, titled “Harm Report: Connecting the Past to the Present State of Black Boston” and slated to be released Tuesday, could provide a potential road map to Boston’s reparations task force, which recently selected two research groups to analyze slavery’s impact on the city.

“This report hopefully puts blame not on people, but instead on processes,” said Imari Paris Jeffries, executive director of Embrace Boston, the organization that spearheaded the monument on Boston Common. “If we’ve created these processes, we can uncreate them.”

The suggested solutions

EMBRACE, Page A7

Brockton High students tie turmoil to budget cutbacks

By Deanna Pan
and Christopher Huffaker

GLOBE STAFF

BROCKTON — Isabela Katzki feels uneasy navigating the halls between classes at Brockton High School, where fights break out as many as three or four times a week, drawing mobs of students, running full-sprint, eager to film the brawls on their cell-phones. Katzki, 15, a sophomore, is tired of the mayhem, and so are her parents, who,

she said, are planning to home-school her for her junior and senior years.

She’ll miss her friends from Brockton High’s award-winning theater program, and she still plans to audition for the spring musical. But otherwise, Katzki has had her fill of the violence.

“Our school’s so overpopulated and there’s just not enough resources for all the students to get what they

BROCKTON, Page A7

SENTENCE MAY SOON BE UP FOR OLD NEW BEDFORD JAIL



STAN GROSSFELD/GLOBE STAFF

With a history dating back to 1829, New Bedford’s Ash Street Jail is believed to be the nation’s oldest continuously operating jail. There is a move to close the site that held Lizzie Borden, Stan Grossfeld writes. **B1.**