

## Ala. ruling on embryos shakes IVF providers

Mass. doctors fear process could change drastically

By Felice J. Freyer  
GLOBE STAFF  
and Alexa Coultuff  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The Alabama Supreme Court's ruling that frozen embryos are children and deserve protection under the law has alarmed experts in Massachusetts, who worry the ruling could open a new front in the war over reproductive rights and make it more difficult for people with fertility issues to have babies.

The case raises the specter that abortion opponents might try to broaden the ruling beyond Alabama and eventually bring the question to the Supreme Court.

If the high court agrees to define embryos as persons under the 14th Amendment, in vitro fertilization or IVF — the process by which nearly 100,000 American children were born in 2021 — will most likely grind to a halt throughout the country, experts said Thursday.

Massachusetts has the highest percentage of babies born through assisted reproductive technology of any state in the country. And both medical professionals and advocates expressed concern over the ruling's implications beyond Alabama.

"This feels like a big wake-up call for infertility doctors everywhere," said Dr. Pietro Bor-toletto, director of reproductive surgery at Boston IVF Fertility Clinic.

"A decision like this shakes our whole community because it makes the practice of fertility treatment so vulnerable," added Kate

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## Erosion puts Nantucket in a tight spot

Sewage treatment plant may have to be rebuilt inland

By Beth Treffeisen  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

NANTUCKET — As a nor'easter bore down last week, David Gray, director of the Nantucket sewage treatment plant, stood on a pile of debris overlooking Surfside Beach on the south side of the island and gazed toward the angry ocean.

The debris was left over from repairs made to the plant at the end of January after powerful surf from an earlier storm flooded an exposed sewer bed that is the last step in the filtration process, rendering it useless.

"Since I grew up here, I've seen most of the south shoreline recede," Gray said. "But this year has been southeast storm after southeast storm, and the impact has been in our face, and it's been drastic."

So drastic that the treatment facility is now fully exposed, after storms erased 100 to 190 feet of beachfront and washed away the dune that had provided a modicum of protection. As a stopgap measure in late January, the town filled in the sewer bed with about 15,000 cubic yards of dirt left from a nearby development.

But with the relentless toll from rising seas, island officials are facing a difficult decision:

NANTUCKET, Page A7

## Father guilty of killing daughter

Montgomery convicted of beating Harmony to death, moving and repackaging her body

By Steven Porter  
GLOBE STAFF

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Adam Montgomery, a violent man with a history of crime and abuse, was found guilty of beating his 5-year-old daughter, Harmony Montgomery, to death in a case that exposed dangerous lapses in the child protection services of two states.

A jury of nine women and three

men, who began deliberating Wednesday afternoon, returned guilty verdicts Thursday on all five charges after more than two weeks of a trial that included gruesome testimony about how Adam Montgomery moved his daughter's body from one hiding spot to another before disposing of it months later.

The child's disappearance triggered a multistate search after her



Adam Montgomery is serving time for other crimes.

judge awarded custody to Adam Montgomery in 2019 despite his

mother, Crystal Renee Sorey, reported her missing to Manchester police in November 2021. Sorey had lost custody in 2018 while she was struggling with addiction, and a Massachusetts juvenile court

lengthy and violent criminal history.

Sorey told authorities she last saw her daughter on a video call at about Easter 2019, a short time after the girl began living with Montgomery in New Hampshire. Montgomery told police in December 2021 that he last saw his daughter around Thanksgiving 2019, and had returned her to Sorey in Massachusetts.

More than a month later, investigators acknowledged no one had seen Harmony in two years. Prosecutors charged Montgomery with

MONTGOMERY, Page A7

## More than just a game



PHOTOS BY MATTHEW J. LEE/GLOBE STAFF

Ibrahima Kourouma (left) and Alseny Barry showed their stuff during a game at the East Boston YMCA.

### Soccer, even played inside, feels like home for newly arrived African migrants

By Jason Laughlin  
GLOBE STAFF

A quick, powerful kick sent the soccer ball streaking toward the net from the left sideline.

It was the kind of strike Alseny Sylla prided himself on. On the soccer fields at home in Guinea, his friends counted on his speed and forceful physicality. Now, he was in East Boston on a frigid February night, playing on a YMCA basketball court. The ball ricocheted off the head of the goalkeeper with a boom that echoed through the gym.

Sylla, 19, is passionate about soccer. He played as a child in his home village even though it got him in trouble with devout parents furious that he wasn't studying the Koran. He made time to play while living with his sister



Alseny Sylla sat on his friend Mamadou Balde as Balde tried to do a few pregame pushups.

in the West African nation's capital, Conakry, amid protests against the country's military junta. He had friends killed during the military's violent responses to demonstrations, he said. When he came to Boston in October seeking asylum, he immediately wanted to know where he could play soccer. He hopes to play professionally some day, he said.

This winter, Boston Health Care for the Homeless and Soccer Without Borders, an international soccer program for immigrant children and young people, are creating a soccer club for homeless young migrants like Sylla, who have time on their hands as they wait for their asylum applications to proceed.

SOCCER, Page A6

## Gaza focus leaves progressives' other causes on back burner



SAUL LOEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

President Biden regularly faces protests from supporters of the Palestinians who disagree with his backing of Israel.

With relationships strained, coalitions begin to fracture

By Tal Kopan  
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — The anger among progressive elected officials and advocates over the ongoing conflict in Gaza has become a palpable presence in recent months, from protests frequently interrupting President Biden and other politicians to large demonstrations in major cities.

But the focus on the conflict is also having ripple effects behind the scenes of the far left, making it difficult for other pro-

gressive issues to break through or coalitions to organize, and straining relationships among lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

"It's kind of all consuming right now within the progressive community," said California Representative Jared Huffman, a progressive Democrat particularly active on climate change who has made qualified calls for a cease-fire. "Just the angst of it all. . . . There's a strain [on relationships] for sure. That's not something anybody really wants to talk about."

In light of the intense reactions to the protracted conflict between Israel and Hamas sparked by the Oct. 7 attacks in

PROGRESSIVES, Page A5

**Bruins announcer Jack Edwards said he's been given no medical explanation for the slowed speech** that has been plaguing him on NESN broadcasts. **C1.**

**DNA evidence implicates Karen Read in the death of her boyfriend**, whom she allegedly ran over and left for dead, prosecutors said. **B1.**

**Customers in Greater Boston and across the country had cellular network issues**, as AT&T reported a major outage. **B5.**

**One-quarter of menthol cigarette smokers quit in the year or two after a ban** on menthol went into effect, according to a study. **A2.**



### All-unclear signal

**Friday:** Fog, drizzle. High 42-47. Low 28-33.  
**Saturday:** Sunny, breezy. High 34-39. Low 17-22.

**Weather and Comics, G6-7. Obituaries, C9.**

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