

# The Boston Globe

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## A case at junction of power and sex

### Brothels inquiry reveals abuses, activists contend

By Sean Cotter and Danny McDonald

GLOBE STAFF

They were isolated and shuffled from city to city, with little contact with anyone besides the men they were forced to have sex with and the people accused of pimping them out.

Now, according to activists, the sex workers in the brothel ring that catered to the elite and wealthy in Cambridge, Waretown, and the Washington, D.C., suburbs face the difficult challenge of breaking free from a violent, abusive industry that controlled their lives and from the people who exploited them.

The women have not been publicly identified or criminally charged. They are victims, federal prosecutors say, brought here, in many cases from Asia.

“This case brings an attention to the disparity here: wealthy people buying vulnerable people,” said Cherie Jimenez, founder of the Eva Center nonprofit in Boston that’s aimed at helping women exit the commercial sex industry.

Jimenez said she was in the

**SEX WORKERS, Page A6**

## Teachers strike pits neighbor vs. neighbor

Rising hostilities threaten to divide Newton, some say

By Deanna Pan and Christopher Huffaker

GLOBE STAFF

NEWTON — Newton mother Vineeta Vijayaraghavan invited a group of 10 concerned parents to her home last week for an off-the-record discussion with a School Committee member about the ongoing teachers strike that had so many of them on edge.

The committee member wasn’t at the bargaining table, but he tried to answer the parents’ questions anyway. The parents were irate, Vijayaraghavan said, their voices rising with fury.

“Right now, people think whoever doesn’t agree with them is crazy or evil,” said Vijayaraghavan, who has a 10-year-old and 17-year-old in Newton Public Schools. She has lived

**NEWTON, Page A6**

## Deadly Jordan attack tied to mix-up

Air defenses confused American spy drone with an enemy one, according to US sources

By Eric Schmitt

NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — Air defenses failed to stop an attack on a US military outpost in Jordan on Sunday that killed three soldiers at least in part because the hostile drone approached its target at the same time a US drone was returning to the base, two US officials said Monday.

The enemy drone was mistaken for a

US surveillance drone returning to the remote resupply base, and air defenses were not immediately engaged, according to the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss preliminary findings of a major cause of the episode.

Two other drones that attacked other locations nearby in southeast Syria were shot down, they added.

The Wall Street Journal earlier re-

▶The main United Nations relief agency in the Gaza Strip warned that its funding would dry up if countries withdraw their funding. **A3.**

ported the drone mix-up, now at the heart of an investigation by the military’s Central Command. The deadly attack has drawn vows of retaliation from President Biden, raised doubts about American military defenses in the Middle East, and begged anew questions about the administration’s efforts to deter Iran-backed militias, who have targeted mer-

chant vessels, warships, and military bases in the region.

Sunday’s attack killed three US Army Reserve soldiers, the first known US military fatalities from hostile fire in the turmoil spilling over from the Israel-Hamas war. The Pentagon on Monday raised the injured toll to at least 40, with a warning that the list would probably grow as additional troops come forward with symptoms of brain trauma from the blast.

Biden administration officials blamed a drone launched by an Iran-backed mili-

**MIDEAST, Page A4**



SOURCE: Google Earth

GLOBE STAFF

## How a high-profile food fight has split the North End

Battle over outdoor dining touches Italian-American enclave’s identity

By Diti Kohli

GLOBE STAFF

There was briefly a time when the North End saw what could be: a blend of old charm and modern bustle.

Residents and tourists alike would lounge under streetside umbrellas on balmy summer days, sipping cocktails and eating spaghetti. All fun, no fuss. There were complications with the outdoor dining program, sure. Boston was trying something new after all. But any quarrels felt solvable.

“If we can come together and figure this out ... we can have this for years to come,” said restaurateur Nick Varano at a spring 2022



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

Mayor Michele Wu with Paul Barker, owner of Pauli’s restaurant on Salem Street.

press conference, Mayor Michelle Wu by his side. “But if we don’t, it’s going to be something that’s lost.”

Lost, indeed. Boston officials

**NORTH END, Page A7**

The North End has long been revered for its cobblestone streets, its ambiance, and its Italian restaurants.

## As end of fare-free bus program looms, what’s next?



JONATHAN WIGGS /GLOBE STAFF

The Route 28 bus is one of three fare-free MBTA lines the city has funded. Critics of fare-free transit say improved service, not eliminating fares, will get more people to ride.

Wu, T debate how to expand, pay for effort

By Taylor Dolven

GLOBE STAFF

Almost five years ago, Michelle Wu, then a city councilor, proposed in the pages of The Boston Globe a far-fetched idea: eliminate fares on the MBTA. Dozens of cities around the world had abandoned user fees, and — she argued — it was time for Boston to try it.

After she became mayor, Wu used federal COVID money in 2022 to fund a pilot pro-

gram making the 23, 28, and 29 MBTA buses through Mattapan, Dorchester, and Roxbury free to ride for two years. It was meant to prove that without fares, more people would ride the bus, save money, travel faster, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And a city study said it mostly did that.

The mayor hoped the results would spur the MBTA to fund and expand fare-free service. But that’s not happening. On March 1, the city funds that cover the cost of the three lines run out and the T is scheduled to start charging

**MBTA, Page A7**

With such a convoluted and confusing primary schedule, voters could tune out not only this year in the election for president but in years to come, experts warn. **A2.**

The Healey administration seeks to spend \$10 million to help migrant families launch independent lives, complete with jobs and housing. **B1.**

Problems with the availability of ambulances in Winthrop, which were revealed in the case of a child in cardiac arrest, have drawn the attention of the state’s Public Health Department. **B1.**

Former Sox manager Jimmy Williams dies. He was 80. **C10.**



Freeze, enter prize

Tuesday: Cold, breezy. High 25-30, low 20-25.

Wednesday: Warmer. High 35-40, low 27-32.

Weather and comics, **D5-6.** Obituaries, **C9-10.**

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