

## More Democrats put heat on Biden

NATO news conference today called critical

By Annie Karni  
NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — President Biden faced a fresh wave of pressure on Wednesday to end his campaign or rethink his decision to run for re-election, as Democrats from Hollywood to Capitol Hill aired grave concerns that he would lose to former president Donald Trump in November and drag his party's chance of controlling Congress down with him.

Representative Nancy Pelosi of California, the former House speaker and a longtime Biden ally, gave the strongest public signal yet that Democrats were still divided on Biden's candidacy, saying that "time is running short" for him to make a decision.

Speaking on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," Pelosi, 84, said that she would back Biden, "whatever he decides."

Biden, 81, has said his mind is made up about continuing his campaign and called on Democrats to come together behind him. But lawmakers are still agonizing over his decision and hoping to at least keep alive a conversation about an alternative path, as many feared the president would lead their party to an electoral rout from which it could take years to recover.

**BIDEN, Page A8**

## Steward paid \$1.6m for dirt as it neared bankruptcy

By Jessica Bartlett, Hanna Krueger, and Robert Weisman  
GLOBE STAFF

As it struggled to pay vendors for needed medical supplies in the months before filing for bankruptcy, Steward Health Care paid nearly \$1.6 million to a British private intelligence firm that it had used to surveil and dig up dirt on critics of the company.

Steward disclosed the payments and reams of other financial information in a new filing Wednesday in its bankruptcy case, which has left the future of its more than 30 hospitals, including eight in Massachusetts, in limbo. Bids are due Monday for Steward's Massachusetts hospitals, which the company is trying to sell along with other properties in order to pay its creditors.

The robust payments Steward disclosed for surveillance came as the company was not paying some vendors and was running short of critical supplies for its hospitals. The documents show Steward made six payments to the British private-intelligence firm Audere International from February to April 2024, totaling nearly \$1.6 million. One bill from February ran as high as \$465,204.

Steward filed for bankruptcy May 6.

A recent Globe Spotlight Team investigation revealed how Steward, for years, relied on

**STEWART, Page A9**



EYAD BABA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

A Palestinian child suffering from malnutrition was nursed at the Nasser hospital in Khan Yunis, on the southern Gaza Strip.

## Again, Palestinians warned to flee

Israel indicates Gaza City assault will continue; video shows carnage from airstrike on Tuesday

By Aaron Boxerman and Raja Abdulrahim  
NEW YORK TIMES

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military on Wednesday urged Palestinians across Gaza City to evacuate to the south, a sign that the renewed fighting meant to crack down on a resurgent Hamas insurgency would likely continue after nine months of war.

Israeli planes dropped leaflets on the city urging its residents to head for the central Gaza Strip through four "safe corridors." Is-

rael has already issued warnings for Palestinians to leave specific parts of Gaza City, and it was not clear if its latest statement amounted to an expansion of those calls. But the notice raised new fears among residents, many of whom have been displaced multiple times.

"Gaza City will remain a dangerous combat zone," the Israeli military said in a statement published on social media. It said that Palestinians who left Gaza City through the approved routes would get out "quickly and

without inspection."

Israeli troops had sent ground troops into the Shajaiye neighborhood late last month and the fighting has since expanded to other parts of the city. The military said later on Wednesday that it had concluded its operation in Shajaiye, but it gave no indication that fighting would end elsewhere.

The warning followed an Israeli airstrike Tuesday night that hit outside a school-turned-shelter, killing at least 27 Palestinians, according to Gaza authorities. Video shared by Al Jazeera and verified by The New York Times recorded the instant the airstrike hit. It first shows a moment of re-

**GAZA, Page A7**

'It's another way for corporations or unions to do end-runs around the system.'

RAY LA RAJA, cofounder of the UMass Amherst Poll

## This year will be a big one for Mass. ballot questions

At least four lined up, including ones on MCAS, psychedelics

By Matt Stout  
GLOBE STAFF

Millions of Massachusetts voters will hit the polls in November to cast a presidential ballot. They also could rewrite state laws in ways unseen in decades.

Unions, advocates, and out-of-state groups are pushing to put five ballot questions before voters this fall, creating what would be the largest single slate in 24 years. The breadth of the lineup appears likely to spur one of the most expensive ballot question campaigns in Massachusetts history, with groups collectively having spent millions of dollars before the

ballot has even been finalized.

For voters, that not only could mean enduring an onslaught of political advertising, but also wrestling with weighty policy decisions. Should the state scrap MCAS exams as a graduation requirement, reversing years of educational standards? Should it legalize psychedelic mushrooms? Should ride-share drivers be allowed to unionize?

The number and diversity of the proposals underscore how advocacy and special interest groups are willing to not only turn to the ballot box — and bypass the Legislature — to realize their policy ambitions, but also plunk down major dollars to do so.

And often, whichever side spends the most wins.

"It's the express line to legislating,"

**QUESTIONS, Page A9**

## Before murder-suicide, an insurance change

Families at odds over who is really wife's beneficiary

By Dana Gerber  
GLOBE STAFF

On the afternoon of Christmas Eve, a fax was sent to Genworth, a life insurance company in Virginia. It was a form bearing the signature of Teena Kamal, requesting to change the beneficiaries of her \$1.25 million life insurance policy.

Before then, in the event of her death, the primary beneficiary had been her husband of more than three decades, Rakesh Kamal, also known as Rick. The backup, or "contingent," beneficiary was her teenage daughter, Arianna Kamal. But the faxed form changed things: Rick and Arianna Kamal would now share the primary designation, and Rick Kamal's brother, Manoj Ka-



PAULA SWIFT PHOTOGRAPHY

Arianna Kamal and Teena Kamal were killed by Rick Kamal, who shot himself.

mal, would be the contingent.

Four days after the fax arrived, Rick Kamal, 57, shot and killed Teena and Arianna Kamal in their Dover home, before turning the gun on himself.

In the months since, Rick and Teena Kamal's families have been tasked with wading through the wreckage of their finances in probate court. Unbeknownst to even his im-

**INSURANCE, Page A12**

## RELIEF PICTURE

Face it, the heat and humidity aren't going anywhere (it is July, after all), so people are taking advantage of air conditioning wherever they can find it. Boston Public Library was a popular spot on Wednesday, as Surya Adams worked on research. Others are finding the T a mixed blessing — a sweaty challenge while waiting underground, then a cool delight when the subway car comes. **B1.**



ANDREW BURKE-STEVENS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

**Ukraine is on an "irreversible" path to NATO membership, US and European officials said, advancing assurances that it will be allowed to join the military coalition after the war with Russia ends. A4.**

**A lawyer for Karen Read said a fourth juror has come forward** to say the panel unanimously voted to acquit her of second-degree murder and a lesser count. **B1.**

**"Waterfire" has had a huge impact on Providence since it was created three decades ago, but it's facing financial problems** and questions about its future. **D1.**

**Celtics guard Derrick White will play for Team USA in the Olympics, replacing Kawhi Leonard, who withdrew. C1.**



## Soup? Nuts

**Thursday:** Humid but breezy. High 86-91. Low 70-75.

**Friday :** The usual. High 87-92. Low 69-74.

Sunrise: 5:18 Sunset: 8:21

**Weather and Comics, D5-6. Obituaries, C11.**

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