

ON AND OFF
Showers early today and then again later this afternoon; clearing tonight.
Forecast, B6

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Protesters' sandals are scattered on the ground in Yangon after Myanmar security forces fired tear gas and warning shots from automatic weapons, forcing the crowd to flee yesterday.

The struggle for Myanmar

Nine are reported killed in the country also known as Burma as the nation's military dictatorship strikes back against protesters.

BY HENRY CHU
LOS ANGELES TIMES

NEW DELHI — As thousands of angry residents continued to pour onto the streets of Yangon in defiance of an official ban, Myanmar's military dictatorship yesterday tightened its clampdown on anti-government protests in a show of force that left at least nine people dead.

Among those killed in clashes in the nation's capital was a Japanese photographer who was shot while trying to capture images of the large-scale demonstrations that have offered the repressive ruling junta its most powerful challenge in nearly 20 years.

Eyewitness accounts, television footage and photographs beamed

through cell phones showed security forces with riot shields marching down Yangon's boulevards on the second day of an increasingly brutal crackdown.

Security forces fired tear gas and warning shots from automatic weapons to disperse the crowds, which scurried for cover, leaving behind sandals in their haste and pools of blood where the face-off turned violent.

The spiraling unrest stoked fears of a repeat of a 1988 massacre of pro-democracy protesters in which an estimated 3,000 people were killed in the Southeast Asian nation, also known as Burma. It also sparked concern among bordering countries of growing instability on their doorstep, in a region that has seen its share of political chaos.

Even China, Myanmar's traditional ally, issued a public admonition to the country's military regime to pro-

SEE **MYANMAR, A7**



The Myanmar Student Monks Association in Sri Lanka protests outside the Myanmar Embassy in Colombo yesterday. Scores of Buddhist monks have been arrested in Myanmar for leading rallies.

AP / ERANGA JAYAWARDENA

Payouts to Station victims contested

Lawyers for two foam manufacturers assert a law aimed at facilitating pretrial settlements in cases with 25 or more deaths "is unconstitutional and invalid."

BY TRACY BRETON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — A month ago, lawyers for those who lost loved ones or suffered injuries in The Station nightclub fire told a federal judge that some of the parties they'd sued had tentatively agreed to pay \$13.5 million to settle the victims' claims. They asked the court to allow them to hire a special master who would decide how the settlement money would be divvied up.

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Extra: For our full report on the Station fire and its aftermath, go to projo.com/stationfire

But lawyers for two foam manufacturers who are being sued by the fire victims — General Foam and Foamex — are now objecting to the court's appointment of a special master. And in a move that may further delay any money getting to the victims, they say in newly filed court papers that they intend to object to the proposed settlements and challenge a law, enacted last year by the General Assembly, that is

pointment of a special master. And in a move that may further delay any money getting to the victims, they say in newly filed court papers that they intend to object to the proposed settlements and challenge a law, enacted last year by the General Assembly, that is

SEE **STATION, A6**

Plan to picket disaster drill draws fire

BY AMANDA MILKOVITS
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — A real disaster is facing Sunday's mock disaster drill for the state, now that firefighters from 10 communities have dropped out because the Providence firefighters union is planning to picket.

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Your turn: Are the firefighters justified in picketing a major statewide drill? To respond, go to projo.com

Whether the drill can be saved intact — or drastically scaled down or canceled — will be determined today, after behind-the-scenes discussions yesterday among the Providence fire chief, the Providence union leaders, and the state Association of Fire Fighters.

The \$50,000 homeland security drill of a terrorist attack on the Rhode Island Convention Center is intended to train hundreds of firefighters, police officers, medical workers, and military officials on how to save lives after a chemical explosion at a

SEE **DRILL, B3**

Injured worker gets day in court

Edgar Velásquez's case against his former employer, Billy G's Tree Care, moves ahead after he's allowed back in the United States.

BY KAREN LEE ZINER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Edgar Velásquez bowed before the judge yesterday, as is customary in his culture. Then got his wish: to pursue a claim against his former employer for a chain-saw injury that flayed Velásquez's face open to the bone.

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Extra: For the latest news on this story, and for more of our occasional series examining how immigration — both legal and illegal — has affected the state and its institutions, go to projo.com/immigration

Here on humanitarian parole from Mexico, Velásquez spoke at a pretrial hearing against William J. Gorman Jr., owner of Billy G's Tree Care in Warwick, for whom Velásquez was working when he injured himself last year.

Though Velásquez attempted to sue Gorman last year in

SEE **WORKER, A6**

Tactics used by snipers in Iraq questioned

Bogus "evidence" is sometimes planted by the body of a victim to legitimize the killing and attract new targets.

BY JOSH WHITE
and **ANN SCOTT TYSON**
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — Specialist Jorge Sandoval lay face down in the grass, staring through his sniper rifle scope at the Iraqi man holding a rusted sickle. The man had crouched down; only his head was visible. Sandoval's spotter, Staff Sgt. Michael Hensley, passed the order to kill.

On April 27, in dangerous terrain south of Baghdad, Sandoval pulled the trigger to fire a bullet hundreds of yards into the man's skull, killing him instantly. Moments earlier, the man, according to testimony and court documents, had been fleeing an attack

SEE **SNIPERS, A4**

SCARING UP NEW MATERIAL

Director Corrente wants to hear your horror stories

The moviemaker invites area screenwriters to pitch a horror-movie script — and he'll turn the 10 best into feature films.

BY DANIEL BARBARISI
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Sally Mendzela is nervous. Scared, even.

Tomorrow, she and hundreds of others will try to send a chill down the spine of local director Michael Corrente, who is offering unknown screen-

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Your turn: What would you pitch for a horror movie in Rhode Island? To respond, go to projo.com

writers the chance to pitch him a horror-movie script. Corrente promises that he will make the best 10 scripts into full-length movies, filmed entirely in Rhode Island, with A-listers as stars and a budget of \$1 million each.

Menzela, a Cranston resident and film school graduate, has been studying up on films like *The Shining* to prepare for her big pitch tomorrow, but her mind occasionally wanders to fantasies of her script



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BILL MURPHY

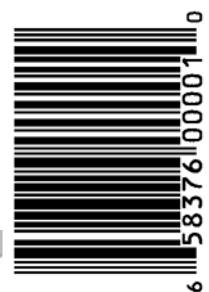
Director Michael Corrente — whose films include *American Buffalo* and *Outside Providence* — talks about his plans for an innovative project to make 10 horror films in Rhode Island. Tomorrow, his *Screamwriting* competition opens at the Peerless Building.

getting picked up and her movie made — and then the big scene, the climactic red-carpet premiere, where her work debuts before millions. "I'm really focused on this pitch. I'm dreaming, I'm getting up, I'm

looking out the window at night," she said.

Corrente, the director of such films as *American Buffalo* and *Out-*

SEE **FILMS, B3**



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ENDING AIRPORT DELAYS

Saying that "endless hours sitting in an airplane on a runway with no communication between a pilot and the airport is just not right," President Bush tells his top transportation officials to find ways to alleviate airport delays, especially in New York City. **A3**

EXTENDING CHILD HEALTH CARE

Defying a veto threat by President Bush, the Senate joins the House in approving a major expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program. **A3**



2 AND COUNTING

Even with Josh Beckett, left, on the mound, Boston's magic number to clinch the American League East remains stuck at two, the same as its margin over New York, as the Sox fall to the Twins, 5-4, while the Yankees beat the Devil Rays, 3-1. **C1**