

IRAQ VOTERS BACK ALLIES OF CLERIC WHO FOUGHT U.S.

SADR COALITION LEADS

Calls Against Graft and Interference Bolster a Firebrand’s Hand

By MARGARET COKER and RICK GLADSTONE

BAGHDAD — Moktada al-Sadr, a firebrand militia leader whose forces once battled American troops in Iraq and were implicated in widespread atrocities against civilians, has emerged as the surprise front-runner in the Iraqi national elections, according to Iraqi election officials.

After American forces largely withdrew from Iraq in 2011, Mr. Sadr remained vocally anti-American, though he has also been strongly critical of Iran, the other foreign power with widespread influence here.

The victory of Mr. Sadr’s political coalition could complicate the American strategy in Iraq. The American military has been training, sharing intelligence and planning missions with former militias in the country, gambling that their military partnership can keep the Islamic State from making a comeback here.

Mr. Sadr has been highly critical of American airstrikes in the country against the Islamic State, though he has said little recently about his willingness to allow American troops to remain on Iraqi soil.

American officials are now uncertain — though not yet worried — about what the position of Iraq’s future government may be on the issue.

Some of Mr. Sadr’s political allies, even those who fought against American soldiers in the past, want the United States to stay and help shore up the country. His closest rivals in the election also support the Americans staying. And even Mr. Sadr’s representatives have said that he would abide by agreements between the United States and Iraq on training Iraqi security forces.

Mr. Sadr once led the Iraqi Shiite militia known as the Mahdi Army, which fought with Ameri-



Moktada al-Sadr, a Shiite cleric.

About-Face on Trade With China Stings White House Hard-Liners

This article is by Ana Swanson, Mark Landler and Keith Bradsher.

WASHINGTON — President Trump’s recent threat to impose tariffs on as much as \$150 billion worth of Chinese goods appeared to be the first volley in what looked like a full-scale trade war with the nation’s greatest economic adversary. Now, suddenly, Mr. Trump seems ready to make peace.

To alleviate trade tensions, Mr. Trump is considering easing up on a major Chinese telecommunications company, ZTE, in exchange for China agreeing to buy more American products and lifting its

Justices Nullify Law That Bans Sports Betting

New Jersey Case Opens Door for Other States

By ADAM LIPTAK and KEVIN DRAPER

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court struck down a 1992 federal law on Monday that effectively banned commercial sports betting in most states, opening the door to legalizing the estimated \$150 billion in illegal wagers on professional and amateur sports that Americans make every year.

The decision seems certain to result in profound changes to the nation’s relationship with sports wagering. Bettors will no longer be forced into the black market to use offshore wagering operations or illicit bookies. Placing bets will be done on mobile devices, fueled and endorsed by the lawmakers and sports officials who opposed it for so long. A trip to Las Vegas to wager on March Madness or the Super Bowl could soon seem quaint.

The law the decision overturned — the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act — prohibited states from authorizing sports gambling. Among its sponsors was Senator Bill Bradley, Democrat of New Jersey and a former college and professional basketball star. He said the law was needed to safeguard the integrity of sports.

But the court said the law was unconstitutional. “It is as if federal officers were installed in state legislative chambers and were armed with the authority to stop legislators from voting on any offending proposals,” Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. said, writing for the majority. “A more direct affront to state sovereignty is not easy to imagine.”

Across the country, state officials and representatives of the casino industry greeted the ruling with something like glee, nowhere more than in New Jersey, which anticipated the decision and had been prepared to quickly take advantage of it.

In 2011, the state’s voters passed a constitutional amendment in favor of legalizing sports betting, and three years later, the Legislature repealed its law against sports betting. Both were challenged in court. But now the Legislature only has to pass a law establishing the rules and regulations for sanctioned sports betting to begin at casinos and racetracks in the state.

A spokesman for Gov. Philip D. Murphy said his office sent a proposed bill to the Legislature weeks ago and has been negotiating behind the scenes in anticipation of a favorable ruling from the court. Stephen M. Sweeney, the State Senate president, said peo-

BETS ON HOLD After a Supreme Court ruling, now what? PAGE A15

ISRAELIS KILL DOZENS IN GAZA



Palestinian demonstrators running for cover along the Israel-Gaza border on Monday, against a backdrop of tear gas and smoke.



The U.S. sent Ivanka Trump and Steven Mnuchin to Jerusalem.

A Day of Defiance and Despair At a Border Fence Under Siege

By DECLAN WALSH

GAZA — He crawled along the bumpy ground, wire-cutters in hand. People around him were felled by bullets. He choked when Israeli jeeps sped past, peppering him with tear gas. A few yards away, a man was shot in the leg. Behind him, he said, a teenage boy was shot in the head, fatally.

By the end of the day, Ismail Khaas, a 23-year-old Palestinian protester, accomplished what he had set out to do: he touched the fence separating Gaza from Israel.

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Trump Aides Bristle as Pence Seizes Control of G.O.P. Races

This article is by Alexander Burns, Jonathan Martin and Maggie Haberman.

Representative Jeb Hensarling of Texas needed a favor: Before retiring, he wanted to anoint a local activist as his successor. Mr. Hensarling, a veteran conservative, reached out to President Trump for help, but the White House hesitated to intervene, according to a person familiar with the overture.

Instead, Mr. Hensarling found a willing ally at Mr. Trump’s right hand: Vice President Mike Pence. Mr. Pence backed the congressman’s favorite, Bunni Pounds, last

month in a tweet that blindsided key White House aides.

The eager assistance Mr. Pence provided a senior lawmaker reflected the outside political portfolio that the vice president and his aides have seized for themselves as the 2018 elections approach. While Mr. Trump remains an overpowering personality in Republican politics, he is mostly uninterested in the mechanics of managing a political party. His team of advisers is riven with personal divisions, and the White House has not yet crafted a strategy for the midterms. So Mr.

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U.S. Embassy Opens in Jerusalem, but Peace Is as Distant as Ever

By DAVID M. HALBFINGER

JERUSALEM — Across the Gaza Strip on Monday morning, loudspeakers on minarets urged Palestinians to rush the fence bordering Israel, where they were met by army snipers. At least 58 were killed and thousands injured, local officials said — the worst day of carnage there since Israel invaded Gaza in 2014.

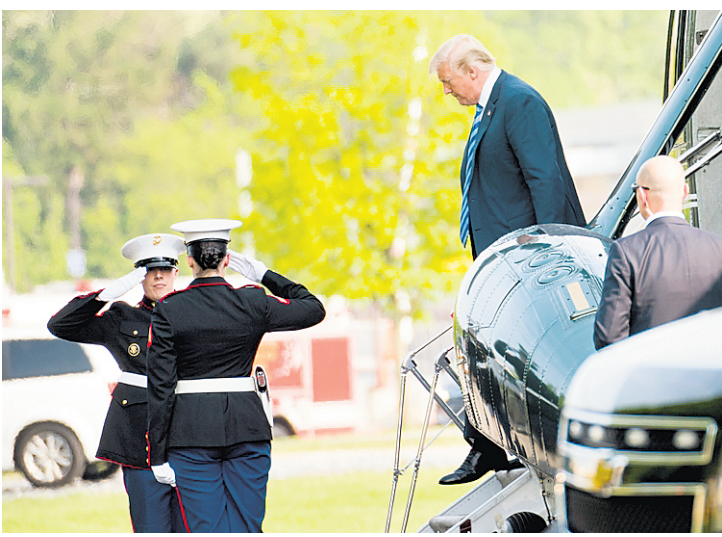
Hours later, a beaming Ivanka Trump helped unveil a stone marker etched with her father’s name on the new American Embassy in Jerusalem, keeping his campaign promise to officially acknowledge Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. An audience of 800 religious conservatives and right-wing politicians from both countries sang “Hallelujah.”

“What a glorious day,” exulted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The two scenes, only an hour’s drive apart, illustrated the chasm dividing Israelis and Palestinians more than at any moment in recent history.

For generations, both sides of the conflict have been locked in competing, mutually negating narratives, with only sporadic flickers of hope for peace despite

A COMPLEX PEACE A Trump promise is met, while prospects for peace are set back. PAGE A10



Visiting the First Lady  
President Trump traveled to visit Melania Trump in the hospital on Monday after she was treated for a kidney ailment. Page A16.



WELCOME AT THE WHITE HOUSE  
David Brody, correspondent for the Christian Broadcasting Network, has wide access to the president. PAGE A12

PUERTO RICO BRACES FOR MORE  
Emergency managers say they have revamped plans, as a new hurricane season begins June 1. PAGE A18

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Sergei V. Skripal met secretly with European intelligence officers in the years before he was poisoned. PAGE A5

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Two district attorneys are said to be considering a bold repudiation of marijuana prosecutions. PAGE A20

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Margot Kidder, who rocketed to fame playing Lois Lane in “Superman” and its three sequels, was 69. PAGE A23



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Geneticists sound the alarm about the genetic tinkering carried out in garages and living rooms. PAGE D1

For Healing, a Food Chain  
A clinical trial will test whether daily nutritious meals can improve the well-being of chronically ill people. PAGE D3

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Unlike Facebook and Instagram, WhatsApp has received little attention for its sway on voters. But in one Indian state, the service has been crucial. PAGE B1

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Four British women, armed with newly published data on the salary gap, push to change their industries. PAGE B6

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Yankees Mourn With the Police  
The team sends flowers to the families and colleagues of officers killed on duty anywhere in the country. PAGE B8

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Picasso Painting Is Damaged  
“Le Marin” (“The Sailor”), valued at \$70 million, was withdrawn from an art sale at Christie’s. PAGE C5

Psychedelic Flashbacks  
In “How to Change Your Mind,” Michael Pollan writes about the history, science and lessons of LSD. PAGE C1

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Margaret Renkl PAGE A25

