

[Al-Sadr locked into 'zero-sum' game for Iraq dominance](#)

Wed, 2022-08-31 23:34

BAGHDAD: Iraqi Shiite cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr may have declared his “definitive retirement” from politics this week, but the violence that erupted after his announcement points to murkier intentions, analysts believe.

“Al-Sadr is looking to become the most powerful Shiite political player in Iraq,” Renad Mansour of British think tank Chatham House said.

“That is his agenda, and part of achieving that requires destabilizing not just the political system as such, but particularly the Shiite house and building it back up with him at the center of it.”



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

[UN observers warn of Houthi step-up in Hodeidah](#)

Wed, 2022-08-31 23:29

AL-MUKALLA: UN observers in Hodeidah have urged the Iran-backed Houthis to reduce their “significant” presence in the western Yemeni city, warning that any military action would threaten the UN-brokered ceasefire and Stockholm Agreement.

The UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement, or UNMHA, said that it has seen large deployments of Houthi fighters in the city, raising fears of military activity that could undermine a fragile truce in the country.



Main category:

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[UN: Failure to end Libya political crisis is growing threat](#)

Wed, 2022-08-31 01:38

UNITED NATIONS: The UN political chief warned Tuesday that failure to resolve Libya’s political crisis and hold delayed elections poses a growing threat in the country, pointing to violent clashes a few days ago that killed at least 42 people and injured 159 others according to Libyan authorities.



Main category:
[Middle-East](#)

[Egypt's jasmine farmers struggle through economic headwinds](#)

Tue, 2022-08-30 23:12

SHUBRA BELOULA, Egypt: The village of Shubra Beloula on the Nile Delta is at the heart of the jasmine industry in Egypt, which along with India is one of the world's top two producers.

The fragrant flower is the village's main economic activity and source of income, employing most of the population of about 15,000 during the harvesting season between June and September.

In fields outside the village, workers walk along rows of bushes in the relative cool of the night and early morning, using headtorches to pick flowers by hand into baskets.



Main category:
[Middle-East](#)

[South Sudan's ex-rebels set to join unified army](#)

Tue, 2022-08-30 23:03

JUBA: More than 50,000 fighters including former rebels from rival camps in South Sudan's civil war were set to be integrated into the country's army in a long-overdue graduation ceremony on Tuesday.

The unification of forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and his rival, Vice President Riek Machar, was a key condition of the 2018 peace deal that ended the brutal five-year conflict in which nearly 40,000 people died.



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