

Basra – crucial test for Iraqi government

1 Basra: At least 40 people killed and 100 wounded as Iraqi security forces battle Shia militias for control of strategic oil hub ahead of upcoming provincial elections

Shia militias

Basra has fallen under control of three militias:

Muqtada

Al Sadr (right)

and his

Mahdi Army,

Iran-backed

Badr Brigades –

military arm of

Supreme Islamic Iraqi

Council, largest Shia party in

parliament – and local militias

associated with ***Fadila Party***

Prime Minister ***Nouri al-Maliki*** has deployed three Iraqi army brigades (15,000 troops) in bid to prove security forces can protect Iraq's second-largest city. Britain handed Basra over to Iraqi control last December



2 Baghdad: Rockets fired at fortified ***Green Zone*** – which houses Iraqi government offices and U.S. embassy – from Sadr City district

3 South Iraq: Fighting between Iraqi security forces and Mahdi militiamen spreads to cities of Hillah and Kut