

Report: New al-Qaida leaders emerge

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A new generation of al-Qaida leaders has formed under Osama bin Laden to consolidate control over the terror network's operations, The New York Times said. Citing U.S. intelligence and counterterrorism officials, the newspaper said the new leaders rose within the ranks of al-Qaida following the death or capture of operatives who built the organization before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The emergence of the new leaders is being seen as evidence of al-Qaida's ability to rebound from a U.S.-led offensive, the newspaper said. U.S. officials have been monitoring al-Qaida training camps in Pakistan's remote mountains, and American, European and Pakistani authorities have been developing information on the new leadership, the Times reported. Although the core leadership of al-Qaida was weakened in the counterterrorism campaign that followed the Sept. 11 attacks, intelligence officials now say the campaign was not as crippling as previously thought, the newspaper said. The appearance of new leaders has reinforced officials' belief that dismantling al-Qaida's infrastructure in Pakistan could disrupt possible terrorist plots that may already be under way.

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