

## Divided Lebanon battles over presidency

*by UPI*

BEIRUT, Lebanon - Lebanon's political parties appear deadlocked on how to move forward from the 2005 slaying of former Prime Minister Raffia Hariri.

The deeply divisive issue has taken center stage in the upcoming Lebanese presidential election set for September, the country's Daily Star newspaper reported Monday.

It would be the first presidential election since Hariri was assassinated by a bomb in 2005 and Syrian troops left Lebanon.

Pro-government candidates want the United Nations to create a tribunal that would try Hariri's suspected killers. Opposition forces have refused to participate in a parliamentary vote to ratify the court, the newspaper said.

The United Nation's top legal adviser, Nicolas Michel, is expected to issue a report on the situation that may influence the deadlock, the newspaper said. No date has been given for the report's release.

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