

Split seen in Iraq's Baath Party

by UPI

BAGHDAD - Iraq's Baath Party is being split by an internal power struggle, U.S. and Iraqi officials said.

One side of the party is being influenced by Izzat Ibrahim, the highest-ranking member of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's inner circle to avoid capture, The Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday.

Ibrahim is viewed as a ringleader in the Sunni-led insurgency in Iraq. Forces led by Mohammed Yunis Ahmad, a former general in Saddam's army, are trying to oust Ibrahim, the newspaper said.

U.S. military officials are debating whether to embrace the power struggle or fear it, the Times reported.

The winner of the struggle could significantly influence the Sunni-led insurgency against Iraq's U.S.-supported government, military officials said.

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