

Trial of 15 former Saddam aides begins

by UPI

BAGHDAD -- The Iraqi High Tribunal on Tuesday began the trial of 15 of deposed dictator Saddam Hussein's aides in Baghdad for crimes against humanity dating to 1991. Among the senior military and Baath party officials on trial is Saddam's cousin, former Defense Minister Ali Hassan al-Majid, widely known as "Chemical Ali" based on allegations he used chemical weapons against Kurds and Shiites, the Alalam Satellite TV Network reported. Majid already faces the death sentence for genocide against Kurds in northern Iraq in 1988, and a nine-member court of appeals is reviewing his sentence, as well as similar ones against two other men who are also again on trial, the report said. If the execution sentences are upheld, Iraq law stipulates they must be executed within 30 days and their existing trials would end, the report said. Saddam was hanged Dec. 30 for ordering the executions of 148 Shiite boys and men in the town of Dujail after an attempt on his life there in 1982.

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