

Al-Arabiya sees al-Qaida power struggle

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DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Dec. 1 (UPI) -- There is a power struggle in al-Qaida with its current leader behind some strange coincidences, al-Arabiya claims.

Al-Arabiya, in a television documentary, said the actions of key al-Qaida figures like Ayman al-Zawahiri reveal a "complex power struggle" within the terrorist organization.

Rohan Gunaratna in his book "Inside al-Qaida" reveals that Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden met in Pakistan in 1985 after Zawahiri was acquitted for the 1981 assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Zawahiri, Gunaratna writes, "provided the crucial, practical know-how" that bin Laden lacked in terms of terrorist activity.

Al-Arabiya notes that each time Zawahiri ascended to a higher position in al-Qaida's hierarchy, one of the cabal's leaders was killed.

Zawahiri assumed the leadership of al-Qaida after bin Laden was killed by U.S. Navy SEALs in a raid at his compound in Pakistan.

The Arab broadcaster alleges that Zawahiri sent someone to bin Laden's compound in Pakistan who was known to be trailed by the CIA. Zawahiri, sources familiar with al-Qaida's leaders told al-Arabiya, sent this individual to the compound twice before bin Laden was killed.

Zawahiri, an Egyptian, praised bin Laden in his most recent message, describing the slain leader as a man who was "very loyal to his brothers and he was intent on remembering them in virtue and praising their way."

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