

POWER STRUGGLE IN IRAN



RAFSANJANI TO LEAD KEY IRAN BODY

Former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has been elected speaker of a powerful clerical body responsible for supervising Iran's Supreme Leader.

The Assembly of Experts has the power to dismiss the Islamic state's highest authority, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Mr Rafsanjani will succeed Ayatollah Ali Meshkini, who died in July.

Correspondents say the appointment further consolidates the authority of Mr Rafsanjani, who is already a powerful figure in Iranian politics.

Considered a "pragmatic conservative", Mr Rafsanjani's victory will also be seen as a blow to Iran's hard-line president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

The BBC's Jon Leyne in Tehran says there is now a clear divide in Iranian politics between supporters of Mr Rafsanjani and those of Mr Ahmadinejad, and a complex power struggle is being carried out behind the scenes.

Read full story> http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6977451.stm
