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Parliament bloc seeks to 'oust' Larijani from Speakership

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In the continuing political posturing at various levels since Iran's June 12 presidential elections, some Principlist lawmakers have put out rumors of a bid to oust the Speaker of the Majlis as the majority leader.

Ali Larijani, the outgoing and highly influential speaker of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis), is considered a heavyweight principlist who heads the majority principlist bloc in the Majlis that, for the most part, backed President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election bid.

Before taking the helm at the Majlis, Larijani was the influential Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and Iran's chief nuclear negotiator.

Though a common critic of former opposition candidates, Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, Larijani has been regarded as 'too mild' by some of President Ahmadinejad's more ardent supporters.

The reported parliamentary measures against Larijani, however, are opposed by the minority Reformist bloc of the Majlis.

"With the removal of Larijani from the Speaker's chair, the pro-government faction pursues a Majlis which is (only) a formality," said the spokesman of the Reformist bloc, Dariush Qanbari, according to an October 4 report in 'Perlemannews,' a web news outlet reflecting the views of the minority, reformist bloc of the Majlis.

"Because of his independent position, the pro-government bloc is trying very hard to eliminate Larijani from the Majlis, Qanbari, a vocal Ahmadinejad critic, claims.

"If this occurs, then nothing will be left of the independence of the Majlis, and the assembly will fall into the hands of the government," he added.

From the other side of the Majlis, the influential Principlist Majlis Deputy Speaker, Mohammad Reza Bahonar explained: "It seems that the Principlist bloc feels that [it is better for] the Speaker to be different from the head of the Principlist' bloc."

"It is better and more expedient for him (Larijani) to continue to lead the Principlist bloc," added Bahonar, who has often criticized Ahmadinejad himself.

Bahonar claimed that Larijani was also reluctant to hold both positions simultaneously.

"The people's representatives make decisions in a way to increase unity among the Principlist bloc," he said.

Under Iranian constitution, the three arms of the state - executive, legislative and judiciary - are clearly separated.

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