

Iran replaces oil minister

by UPI

TEHRAN -- Iran has replaced two Cabinet ministers in a move aimed at attracting more investment to the oil-rich, gasoline-poor country, it was reported. Gholam Hossein Nozari, head of the National Iranian Oil Company, has replaced Kazem Vaziri Hamaneh as minister of oil while Ali Akbar Mehrabianh has become acting minister of industry after the resignation of Ali Reza Tahmasebi, Alalam Satellite TV reported Monday. Iran is OPEC's second-largest producer of oil and the world's fourth-largest producer. Major foreign investment and industry expertise is needed to boost Iran's production above its roughly 4 million barrels a day, Alalam reported. Nozari is considered a savvy industry expert who can help stabilize the government's energy program. His first duties will include overseeing a gasoline rationing program that drew protests throughout Iran when it was announced in June.

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