Report: China Questioning 5 Oil Executives

BEIJING (AP) — Five more executives of Chinese oil companies are being questioned in a spreading anti-graft probe of the industry, a newspaper reported Monday. One of the companies rejected the report as inaccurate.

The investigation appears to be part of efforts by China's new leadership under President Xi Jinping to tighten control over state-owned energy companies. The government has said executives are suspected of unspecified "discipline violations," a term often used to refer to corruption.

In the latest move, the executives of China's biggest oil producer, state-owned China National Petroleum Corp.; its main subsidiary, PetroChina Ltd.; and other companies were taken in by investigators last week, China Business News said. Citing an unidentified industry source, the report said it was not clear whether they were suspects.

"Such reports are not true," said a PetroChina statement released through the Hong Kong stock exchange.

Two executives cited in the report — a vice president, Sun Longde, and a director, Wang Guoliang — "continue to perform their duties at the company as usual," the company said.

A former CNPC chairman, Jiang Jiemin, was fired last week as head of the Cabinet commission that oversees state-run companies. Four executives have been detained.

Another of the executives taken in for questioning last week works for SinoPetroleum, Ltd., a state-owned company that provides technology to oil producers, according to China Business News.

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