

Iran launches first cloud seeding in water year amid record low precipitation



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The head of the Organization for Development and Utilization of Modern Meteoric Water Technologies under the Ministry of Energy announced on Sunday that the first cloud fertiliza-

tion operation in the current water year was carried out in the Urmia Lake basin. Mohammad Mehdi Javadianzadeh was cited by IRNA as saying that the first operation of the cloud seeding project was conducted in the northwest

region of the country and the Urmia Lake basin. "Owing to the entry of a proper rainfall system to the country, the operation was carried out by sending an aircraft equipped with cloud fertilization equipment to the region," he said. "We

are trying to carry out the operation on all systems entering the country that are favorable for fertilization." Regarding the implementation of the project in Tehran Province, Javadianzadeh said, "There has not yet been a proper rainfall system for this operation in Tehran." Javadianzadeh added that, "There is a weak forecast for the arrival of precipitation systems on Monday in Tehran Province, but we are still not sure whether these systems are suitable for cloud seeding or not. However, we are monitoring and checking, and as soon as their suitability is confirmed, the cloud seeding operation will be carried out." In response to the question of how long cloud fertilization would continue, Javadianzadeh said, "This operation will continue until mid-May 2026, both with airplanes and drones, and if appropriate systems for this purpose exist in the country, it will continue until the end of May." The head of Organization for Development and Utilization of Modern Meteoric Water Technologies stressed that cloud seeding in the world has been proven as a cost-effective method for extracting water from meteoric water resources, and its impact on increas-

ing rainfall has been recognized. "Worldwide, cloud seeding is used not only to increase rainfall but also for various purposes such as hail suppression, fog removal, delaying and preventing precipitation, and increasing water behind dams to enhance the capacity of hydroelectric power plants," he added. Javadianzadeh's announcement comes as Iran's water resources have declined by over one-third in two decades, pushing the country into absolute water scarcity by the end of 2025. The renewable water resources have dropped from an average of 128 billion cubic meters annually to about 80 billion cubic meters, exacerbated by climate change, poor water management, and sanctions limiting technology access. Iran's agriculture consumes over 90% of water, mostly inefficiently, leading to severe groundwater depletion and land subsidence in many regions. Dams and reservoirs nationwide are nearly dry, and Tehran faces water rationing and potential evacuation if rains do not come. The country is experiencing its sixth consecutive year of drought, worsening the crisis and posing major risks to food security and social stability.

350 tons of saffron produced per year, 250 tons exported: Deputy minister



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Iran's deputy minister of agriculture reported on Sunday that 350 tons of saffron are produced across the country per annum, of which 250 tons are exported, with the value of the export estimated to be about 400 million dollars. "The level of saffron cultivation in the country is about 127,000 hectares and harvesting is now underway," Majid Anjafi said, adding, "The bulk of the country's saffron is unfortunately supplied under the brand of other countries, and it is necessary to pursue the export of this product with full added value." Anjafi stated that the value of saffron exports can reach more than \$800 million by improving processes and supporting farmers. Referring to the agricultural restrictions in the drought year, he said, "This year,

the distribution of inputs and fertilizers was carried out two months earlier and has increased by 27 percent." Meanwhile, the chairman of Iran's National Saffron Council (NSC) said the development of saffron exports requires a move towards standard packaging and scientific marketing. "The cultivation of saffron should be done with the national brand and an open operational model should be designed to move from production-oriented to innovative one," Mohsen Ehtsham said. "Paying attention to packaging with global standards and the use of new technologies is the key to the success of farmers and the stabilization of the position of Iranian saffron in the global market." Saffron cultivation in Iran flourishes mainly in the Khorasan Province, the country's and world's primary saffron-producing region, including cities like Torbat Heydariyeh, Gonabad, and Qaenat. Iran produces more than 70% of the global saffron supply due to its optimal climate regions characterized by low rainfall, light, sandy soil, and altitudes between 1000 and 2300 meters. The crop requires little water and is mostly hand-planted. Besides Khorasan, provinces such as Fars, Kerman, and Lorestan also cultivate saffron, benefiting from favorable climatic conditions. Saffron farming demands intense labor, including careful harvesting of the delicate stigmas, making it a valuable yet labor-intensive spice globally.

Veep hails Iran as best transit route for landlocked countries



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First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref praised Iran on Sunday as the best transit route for the landlocked countries across the region. Addressing a meeting of the National Border-to-Border Transit Headquarters in Tehran, Aref underlined that the transit sector for the Islamic Republic of Iran can have economic and trade benefits with the neighboring countries. "Iran is the best transit route for landlocked countries that do not

have access to the high seas," the first vice president said. Aref added that the issue of transit and geographical location of the country has been emphasized at the 7th Five-Year Socioeconomic and Cultural Development Plan. "Transit is effective in developing tourism, cultural, and scientific relations," he said. "Expanding and deepening transit relations is influential in increasing political and regional cooperation." The first vice president called on the responsible officials and organizations to establish very close cooperation and interaction with



First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (c) chairs a meeting of the National Border-to-Border Transit Headquarters in Tehran on November 16, 2025. IRNA

the current administration to optimally boost the status of transit in the country. Developing sustainable and maximal relations with the regional countries and neighbors in all sectors, including transit, is the strategy of President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration, Aref noted.

Iran's message at ...

4- Technology as right of nations
Our emphasis at the Baku conference is that the development of communications is a human right and should not be turned into a tool of pressure, sanctions, or domination. This view is not just a political position but our lived experience for other nations. Technological sanctions over the past years have attempted to limit Iran's industrial, educational, commercial, and

innovative capacities, however, the result has been a leap and independence for domestic power. Today, in line with technological diplomacy, the messages of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the world are that today Iran is an independent country in the field of communications development, has export capacity in the field of cloud networks and digital services, and has a proven indigenous model in the field of

cybersecurity. This message is an inspiring message for the nations and countries of the region and many independent countries.
5- Iran's new technology diplomacy
Nevertheless, technology diplomacy at the Baku WTDC-25 is not the end of a technical mission, rather the beginning of a new chapter and mutual cooperation

with other governments and nations in the fields of cybersecurity, the development of smart networks, the endogenous digital economy, and the digital transformation of countries. This year's event is an opportunity for Iran to consolidate the country's technology diplomacy. We arrived in Baku with a new narrative: The narrative of a country that stood firm in the most difficult cyber war in the region and is ready to share its

experience and be a partner in the development of global communications. Last but not least, this an invitation to all government and private agencies, companies, and institutions active in the country's technology field: Iran's future path is not only the path of domestic development, it is also the path of presence in international arenas and regional and global markets, and the ICT Ministry is set to facilitate this path.