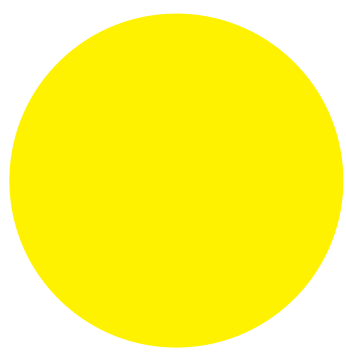


Agriculture Ministry  
should overhaul crop  
planning, spending  
discipline: *Pezeshkian*

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## Larijani: Strategic Iran-Iraq cooperation must become more tangible

Senior Iraqi cleric says 12-day war enhanced Iran's power in region

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### Iran's military power shifting from dependency to self-sufficiency

By Shadab Asgari  
Military affairs expert

#### OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Today, Iran has reached an advanced level of technology in producing military equipment and weaponry, achieving both self-sufficiency and deterrence in defense capabilities. This stands in sharp contrast to the period before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, when, despite possessing modern weapons and the strongest army in the region, the country's military power was entirely imported and dependent on Western powers. One of the most frequently cited phrases circulating online and exploited in hostile media narratives against the Islamic Republic is a remark attributed to Imam Khomeini, the late founder of the Republic. In an interview in early 1978, when asked about arms purchases in exchange for oil revenues owed to Iran, he stated, "We do not need scrap iron."

Over the years, this statement has been repeatedly taken out of context to stir up controversy. Critics have claimed that Imam Khomeini failed to appreciate the undeniable importance of weapons and equipment used by the army during the eight-year war imposed by Iraq (1980-88). They turned the phrase into a tool to cast doubt on his judgement and to chip away at the credibility of the Islamic Republic, particularly among younger generations in Iran and across the region. Yet such interpretations miss the point. Imam Khomeini's remark was aimed at exposing the Pahlavi regime's misuse of oil revenues. Under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, oil was effectively sold off cheaply to the United States in exchange for weapons, assembly-line industries or overpriced aircraft and equipment of limited value. One example was the purchase of decommissioned Boeing 747 jumbo jets from the American company TWA, intended for conversion into cargo and refueling aircraft.

General Shapour Azarbarzin, the last deputy commander of the Imperial Air Force, later confirmed this. He recalled, "The Shah said that 11 jumbo jets had been purchased from TWA." Upon inspection, the planes were found to be retired and parked in the airline's scrapyard. "They were entirely unflyable," Azarbarzin noted, adding that the Shah insisted Boeing would refurbish them, but that never happened. On May 10, 1975, one of the converted 747s took off from Tehran with a full crew and nine departing US advisers on board. Over Madrid, the controls failed and the aircraft crashed. Investigations later revealed that the absence of anti-magnetic wiring in the wings had allowed a lightning strike to ignite the fuel tanks – despite Boeing's supposed commitment to a full overhaul. Lufthansa representatives even urged the Iranian Air Force to join in a complaint against Boeing, citing a similar incident with one of their planes.

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## Bolivarian wrath unshackled



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Two Venezuelan F-16 fighter jets overfly US warship

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