Supreme Leader Meets with Poets and Panegyrists - 1 /May/ 2013

Ayatollah Khamenei the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, met this Wednesday with a number of poets and panegyrists of the Holy Prophet's (s.w.a.) household. Speaking at the meeting, which was held on the occasion of Fatima Zahra's (s.a.) birthday anniversary, His Eminence congratulated the people of Iran on the birthday anniversary of Fatima Zahra (a.s.) and the coincidence of this day with the birthday anniversary of Imam Khomeini (r.a.).

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution described eulogy as an artistic method for increasing knowledge, creating hope and engendering feelings in the hearts of people.

Criticizing the western outlook on the issue of women, His Eminence said: "The Islamic and Quranic outlook on the individual and social rights of men and women is the most reasonable, the most dignified and the most practical outlook."

Ayatollah Khamenei described the outstanding capacities and enthusiastic hearts of young and experienced panegyrists as a great blessing and a valuable opportunity to promote love and respect for the Holy Prophet's (s.w.a.) household, further adding: "This is the role of a panegyrist. He inspires feelings and then he puts these feelings at the service of thinking. The role of a panegyrist and a eulogist - a profession which is thankfully popular in our country today - is that he should promote knowledge and understanding among the people through artistic methods and means of expression."

He reiterated: "The poetry and tone that you choose and the way you speak with the people should be orientated towards increasing people's knowledge and deepening their understanding of religion and life."

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated that reciting a ghazal or qasida in a good way can play a significant role in conveying religious knowledge and understanding. He stressed: "This is an opportunity. You should use this opportunity. This opportunity should not be wasted. A poem which does not have content will waste this opportunity. If it contains a point that is poor or wrong, this opportunity will be wasted. If your performance is delivered in a way that it oversteps the boundaries of sharia, then this opportunity will be wasted. If it ignores the fundamental things which the people need to know today, this opportunity will be wasted."

Ayatollah Khamenei stated: "Imagine that during the Sacred Defense Era when the country was in need of enthusiastic valor in jihad and in practical arenas, somebody attends a meeting and he recites a poem in a good way in the presence of youth and fathers and mothers, but if he does not mention the needs of the time, he has wasted the opportunity."

His Eminence stated that putting such a God-given talent at the service of creating discord and provoking sectarian conflicts is another way of wasting this opportunity.

He said that sectarian conflicts may be provoked by using different means of communication in the wrong way, reiterating: "Today creating discord and provoking sectarian conflict are wrong moves and they are not to the benefit of our country. Neither today nor during the time of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) were they proper moves. The Imams (a.s.) prevented these moves."

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution described provoking domestic conflicts as another way of wasting opportunities, further adding: "The current year has been named 'The Year of Political and Economic Valor'. Valor is reinforced with wisdom, guidance and faith and it should originate from the heart. It cannot be ordered and imposed from above."

Ayatollah Khamenei said that strengthening the spirit of hope and optimism about the bright prospects of the country is a necessary condition for valor, reiterating: "Valor is not achieved by raising doubts in the minds of the people, injecting despair into their hearts and guiding them towards isolation, laziness and inaction."

His Eminence stated: "Continuous jihad is what everybody needs. All the achievements and developments in civilizations are because of continuous jihad. Continuous jihad does not mean suffering. Jihad causes excitement. Jihad engenders happiness and enthusiasm. In this regard, poets and panegyrists play a very outstanding role in increasing knowledge and understanding and sowing the seeds of acumen, hope and firm beliefs."

He mentioned that the people pay attention to the behavior and morality of panegyrists as well as their poems and their performance. He reiterated: "If you win praise from the people by behaving in a moral, religious and modest way, all the things that I spoke about will deeply influence the people. But if, God forbid, the opposite happens, if the people witness signs of moral instability, moral backwardness and, God forbid, immorality and other such things,

then the effect of the art and the beauties which exist in your work will be minimized."

The second point that the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution discussed was the necessity of appreciating the position of women.

Criticizing western policies on the issue of women, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "The great sin that western civilization has committed against women cannot be wiped out or made up for any time soon, nor can it be easily put into words."

His Eminence stated that the role of women in western civilization is to put themselves on display and prepare the ground for men to indulge in pleasure. He said that the west refers to this as freedom and it refers to the opposite behavior as restriction.

He stressed that such an outlook will result in the destruction of the family, adding: "When the family is undermined and destroyed in a society, corruption will be established in that society. The problems that exist in the west today and the dim-witted and malevolent laws that they pass on sexual issues will push them off the precipice. This fall is not preventable. They are condemned to destruction. Whether it likes it or not, western civilization cannot prevent this fall. "

His Eminence said that the fall of civilizations as well as their rise happens gradually. He stated that western civilization is beginning to fall.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated that the Quranic and Islamic outlook on the position of women is the most reasonable and practical outlook, further reiterating: "Allah the Exalted makes no distinction between men and women in terms of their spiritual, social and individual rights. Of course, in specific cases, women have been given certain privileges and in a number of other cases, men have been given certain privileges. This is based on the nature of men and women."

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to a number of exclusive privileges granted to women such as housekeeping, giving

birth, safeguarding the family environment, preserving love in the family and raising children, further stressing: "Housekeeping and giving birth to children are great feminine efforts which are accompanied by patience, emotion and feelings. If these efforts receive attention, the progress of a country will be guaranteed."

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution highlighted the necessity of respecting and appreciating the value of women, adding: "It is necessary to behave towards women in a respectful, loving, noble and moral way."