Supreme Leader's Speech in Meeting with Officials on National Day of Engineering - 26 /Feb/ 2015

The following is the full text of the speech delivered on January 26, 2015 by Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a meeting with officials of National Day of Engineering - coincident with the birthday anniversary of Khawaja Nasir al-Din al-Tusi.

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Welcome you officials in the engineering organizations of the country. Mohandes Bahonar raised interesting points. The scope of engineering work in the country is really vast. Of course, Mr. Bahonar extended it to humanities. He explained that the reason is the cultural engineering of the country. He used the word "engineering" in its definitional sense, not what the word connotes commonly. But what he explained is correct. The scope of engineering work in the country is really vast and the description that he presented is good. The suggestions that he put forward in his letter - I had read the letter before - are good suggestions and we agree with them.

However, he forgot one point about issues related to the engineers of the country. This point is the role of the young engineers of the country in revolutionary events. During the revolutionary era, our technical faculties throughout the country were among the leaders of revolutionary activities. After the victory of the Revolution too - particularly during the Sacred Defense Era - engineers were self-sacrificing soldiers who utilized all their capabilities, energy, talents and skills. We witnessed this in the war. It can be said that these talented youth displayed a new skill every day. They acted in the same way after the Sacred Defense Era. Nanotechnology, stem cells, biotechnology and other such fields of study that were referred to in this meeting are achievements which were made after the Sacred Defense Era. After the war too, our young engineers continued to work on these areas. Well, they have had important responsibilities until today. In the present time, when I take a look, I see that many of the heads of the country are thankfully engineers. This has become a source of complaint for some people. They say that engineers are constantly assigned to important tasks.

Primarily, what you should do is to show the people that the slogan of "we can" is true. Fortunately, this is a cherished slogan among all fair-minded individuals in the country. This is what Mr. Bahonar referred to in his letter. You should work on different areas so that unfinished tasks can be completed. In the present time, we witness that the engineering exports are mostly related to construction. You should do something to help the engineering products of the country play their role in exports. We should be able to present the products of our engineers in factories and different other areas - which are vast in scope - in international markets. This is an important task that can be carried out by you. In the present time, you have important positions. You are either in the administration or in the Majlis and therefore, you can make decisions.

Besides, you should try to reduce the pressure of imports on the country. This is really an important matter. Today, the pressure of imports is destroying the country. And there are various excuses for this. One is the issue of smuggling. The figures that are released these days about smuggling are astonishing and confusing. The amount that is smuggled is 20-plus billion. This is mind-boggling. Now, there is an idea which says, "We should open the path so that we can stop smuggling. This way, products enter the country through customs and we will make a profit". In my opinion, this is not reasonable.

You should do something to prevent the products of the country from being overwhelmed by imports. These are products that have been produced - in different areas - by our talented, religious, capable and very intelligent youth

and men. This is one point which, in my opinion, is very important.

Another issue is the economy of resistance which you spoke about. Well, since it was presented, officials have approved it perhaps a thousand times. Different officials in the administration, Majlis and other organizations and different economic and even political activists have constantly spoken about the economy of resistance. Well, this is good, but nothing happens if we only repeat this in words. No illness is cured if we only mention the name of drugs. Drugs should be consumed. You in the Majlis and administration should see what has been done - in the real sense of the word - for the economy of resistance and what should be done in the future. In my opinion, you should purse this in a serious way. This was the second issue.

The third issue is that, as I said, we should see what our shortcomings are in the engineering area. For example, we have progressed in the area of building technical pieces and components. Building different machines is good. We can witness certain innovations in different areas. Engineering in the area of designing and building factories are tasks that we should pursue in a serious way. If you manage to firmly establish the tradition of innovation in designing different things, this will be a blessed tradition for which God will bestow rewards on you as long it exists in the country. You should pursue those tasks which the country needs. In any case, I hope that God will help you to carry out these tasks.

As I said in the beginning of my speech, our engineers are thankfully many in different centers. You have many engineers in the Majlis, in the administration and in different other organizations. You should really pay attention to your responsibility by utilizing engineering. You should see what tasks should be carried out and then you should pursue them. I hope that God will bestow success on all of you.