Meeting teachers and education ministry officials - 7 /May/ 2015

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a meeting on Wednesday with the minister of education, Education Ministry officials and a large number of teachers from across the country elaborated on the unique position of education and the very important and influential role of teachers in training a pious, cognizant, insightful, self-confident, lively and hopeful generation.

Ayatollah Khamenei said the realization of such lofty objectives is tied to cohesive and full execution of a document drawn up for fundamental changes in the education system, saying: “Government officials, particularly economic officials, should pay special attention, beyond the attention paid to other organs, to the livelihoods of teachers and keep in mind that any spending in this sector would be tantamount to investment for the future and added value.”

He also referred to recent threats by US officials at a time when nuclear talks are underway between Iran and global powers, saying: “I don’t agree with negotiations under the specter of threat. Foreign policy officials and negotiators should respect the red lines and principles carefully and they should also defend the grandeur and splendor of the Iranian nation while they continue talks without bowing to any imposition, force, humiliation and threat.”

At the beginning of his speech, Ayatollah Khamenei honored Ayatollah Morteza Motahari, who was martyred following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, saying the late ayatollah was a teacher credited with purity and relentless efforts.

The supreme leader referred to the education system’s role in building the country’s future, saying: “In the education system, the teacher plays the most focal and the most influential role in developing the intellectual and mental character of pupils and the future generation of the country. It is such that even parents and the living atmosphere are not as influential on the pupils.”

“Given the position of the education system and teachers with regards to the country’s future, any spending in this sector is in fact investment,” said the supreme Leader.

Noting that such a view should be taken into consideration in economic policymaking for the education system, he highlighted the role of teachers in training high-profile and prominent figures. “Teachers are tasked with training a pious, cognizant, self-confident, hopeful, lively, insightful, determined and physically and mentally healthy generation,” he said.

“Teachers are in fact tasked with establishing a superior and better society. That is in continuation of the prophets’ task, i.e., education and purification,” said Ayatollah Khamenei.

He said that there are requirements for the teachers to be able to accomplish the mission assigned to them, adding: “One of these requirements is to pay attention to the issue of teachers’ livelihoods. Government officials, particularly economic officials, should pay special attention to the education system and teachers despite all restrictions and give the issue priority.”

Stressing that the enemies would exploit any negligence regarding teachers’ livelihood problems, Ayatollah Khamenei said: “Of course, teachers are pious, noble and smart people and they watch out for plots [hatched] by enemies and those bearing a grudge against the Islamic establishment, who intend to fabricate seditionist, factional and political slogans under the pretext of the teachers’ livelihoods and cause trouble to the [Islamic] establishment.”

The supreme leader said the issue of the establishment of a university for teachers is very important because that university would train teachers. “All procedures in this university, particularly the vetting of would-be teachers, curricula and the selection of professors and faculty members should be fair and compliant with the criteria set by Islam and the revolution,” he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei said veteran experts have endorsed a document for the education system to be revamped, adding: “For this document to be fruitful, it needs to be executed fully. If one section of this fundamental change document is implemented in the education system while another section is ignored, this document would not be influential and nothing would happen.”

The supreme leader underscored the need for making the education staff and teachers familiar with the requirements of this document, saying: “To that effect, publicity organs, particularly the IRIB (Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting) should help the education system.”

The supreme leader underlined the use of potentialities enshrined in the 6th Five-Year Economic Development Plan which, God willing, would be drawn up based on general policies in the future, and a special consideration for the education system's fundamental changes document in the national plan. Addressing Education Ministry officials, the supreme leader said: "Watch out for superficial and routine programs to not replace fundamental changes in the education system."

Ayatollah Khamenei said the conditions in the county are ready for fundamental changes in the education system. He said: "Hopefully, the country enjoys stability and security today and government officials are wholeheartedly working. Under such circumstances, the ground is prepared for boosting the quality of the education system and bringing it to the desired point."

Concluding the first part of his speech, the supreme leader heaped praise on teachers and said: "I hereby offer my salutations to all teachers across the country."

In the second part of his speech, the supreme leader focused on the US officials' recent treatment of the Iranian nation at a time when nuclear talks are underway.

Ayatollah Khamenei first referred to an undeniable fact, saying: "Over the past 35 years, the enemies of the Islamic establishment, despite their constant ranting, have always been aware of the greatness and splendor of the Iranian nation and the Islamic Republic establishment."

"This splendor and greatness are not illusionary and are genuine because the great country of Iran, with a population of over 70 million, enjoys a unique cultural, historic and deep-seated background adorned with courage and determination," he said.

Noting that the Iranian nation has always defended its identity and character, the supreme Leader said: "During the eight years of Sacred Defense (1980-1988 Iraqi imposed war) all world powers tried to bring this nation to its knees, but they failed. Therefore, this greatness and splendor should be safeguarded."

"Many political officials from different countries have overtly and covertly acknowledged that if the current sanctions and pressure [imposed] on the Iranian nation had been imposed on any other country, that country would have imploded, but the Islamic Republic of Iran stands firm and steadfast," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

"These issues are not minor subjects, but global propaganda campaigns have always sought to keep people of different countries unaware of Iran's realities; however, many nations are aware of these realities and the world's political officials are well aware of these facts although they may not express openly and [prefer to] speak otherwise."

Addressing foreign policy officials and elite in Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Know that if a nation fails to defend its greatness and identity in the face of enemies, it will definitely buckle under pressure. Therefore, the identity and character of the nation should be appreciated."

Referring to recent military threats against Iran by two US officials simultaneous with the start of the nuclear talks, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Negotiations under the specter of threat is meaningless and the Iranian nation does not tolerate negotiations under the shadow of threat."

He touched on remarks by US officials that the US would launch a military campaign against Iran if need be, saying: "First of all, how dare you! Secondly, as I said during the tenure of the former US president, gone is the hit-and-run era and the Iranian nation would not let anyone planning to invade it alone."

The supreme Leader said all officials, particularly nuclear negotiators, should take this issue into consideration, adding: "Nuclear negotiators should always take the red lines and the principles into account and, God willing, they will not overstep these lines."

"It is not acceptable [to see] that the opposite party is constantly threatening [us] simultaneous with the negotiations," he said.

"The Americans' need for nuclear talks is not less than Iran's, if not more. We would like to see the negotiations come to a conclusion and the sanctions lifted, but it does not mean that if the sanctions are not lifted we cannot run the country," he added.

"Now, it has been proven to everyone inside the country that the settlement of economic problems does not depend on the removal of the sanctions, but the economic problems should be resolved with prudence, determination and our own capabilities, whether the sanctions remain in place or not," said Ayatollah Khamenei.

"Of course if the sanctions are not in effect, the settlement of economic problems might be easier, but even if the

sanctions continue [to remain in place], the problems would be still resolvable," he added.
With regard to the US's need for negotiation with Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "In order to register a key point in their track record, they desperately need to say that 'we brought Iran to the negotiating table and imposed some issues on it.'!"
"I do not agree with negotiations under the specter of threats," the supreme Leader said.
Addressing the Iranian nuclear negotiators, he said: "Go ahead with the negotiations within the main lines. If you reach an agreement within this framework that would be ok, but don'bow to imposition, force, humiliation and threat, whatsoever."
Ayatollah Khamenei said the US government is the most disgraced government in the world, adding that one reason is the US's open support for Al Saud's crimes in Yemen.
"Without any justification and only under the pretext of Yemeni people's rejection of a given person for the presidency, the Al Saud government is busy massacring innocent people and women and children in Yemen and the Americans are supporting these big crimes," the supreme leader said.
Emphasizing that the US has no position among the nations in the region, he said: "The Americans are shamelessly supporting the carnage of Yemeni people, but they accuse Iran, which is trying to deliver medication and foodstuff aid to Yemeni people, of interfering in this country and shipping arms."
"The combatant and revolutionary nation of Yemen does not need weapons because it controls all military centers and barracks. It needs humanitarian aid due to the medical, alimentary and energy blockade which you have imposed, but you do not even allow the [Iranian] Red Crescent [Society] in," Ayatollah Khamenei said.
Noting that the path chosen by the Iranian nation is a humble and strong one which augurs well, he said: "Thanks to divine support and to the dismay of enemies, this path will lead to its desired results and everyone will see that the enemies will fail to realize their ominous objectives against the Iranian nation."
Before Ayatollah Khamenei's speech, Minister of Education Ali Asghar Fani commemorated martyrs Mohammad-Ali Rajaei, Mohammad-Javad Bahonar and Ayatollah Motahari as well as Teacher's Week, saying: "The establishment of an executive committee and the compilation of a roadmap for fundamental changes in the education system, organization of more student visits [to former warzones], promotion of the holy Koran at schools, organization of more training trips for pupils to learn the Iranian-Islamic lifestyle, organization of sports Olympiads at schools with focus on the three principles of education, purification and sports, special attention to schoolchildren in impoverished areas, revision of curricula to comply with demographic policies and the economy of resistance, more contribution of benefactors to school building and boosting the capabilities of teachers have been among the measures taken by the Ministry of Education recently."