Ayatollah Khamenei meeting thousands of laborers on the verge on Labor Day - 28 /Apr/ 2016

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in a meeting with thousands of laborers on the verge of the Labor Day (marked on May 1) on Wednesday, heaped praise on the labor community for its loyalty and steadfastness with regard to the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic establishment, and underscored the need for the "resolution of the problems facing labor community," "strengthening domestic production," "necessity of serious fight against goods smuggling" and "banning import of [foreign-made] commodities which have Iranian counterparts." Highlighting the continuation of the United States' hostilities against the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khamenei added: "By insisting on various sanctions [to remain in force] against Iran, the unreliable Americans are practically trying to throw obstacles on the way of the country's economic interactions with outside [world] by spreading 'Iranophobia'."

Ayatollah Khamenei also referred to the next Friday's runoff vote for the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis), calling on all eligible voters to cast their ballots in the second stage of general elections.

Commending the labor community for its endeavors and efforts and appreciating laborers, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said that working and industriousness in the society are "values," adding: "Every person doing a job in the society, including officials, ministers, university professors, students, clerics, managers and others, are laborers in the general sense of the word and they are in fact 'generating value'."

Ayatollah Khamenei underlined the fact that from the viewpoint of Islam "joblessness, laziness and idleness" are anti-value, adding: "All those who are working in different fields must fulfill their obligations and dedicate themselves to their work in addition to boosting the quality of the work."

"Anyone who has accepted a responsibility in the country is obligated to devote all his time and energy to fulfilling that responsibility in the correct way," said the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei highlighted the loyalty and steadfastness of the labor community towards the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic establishment over the past 37 years, saying: "Despite livelihood problems, the laborers never paid attention to counterrevolutionary propaganda and never stood against the [Islamic] establishment and have always defended the Islamic establishment."

Extending his sincere gratitude to the labor community due to its loyalty and insight with regard to issues of the Islamic Revolution and the establishment, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution discussed the issue of the "duties of laborers, economic corporations and officials with regard to the implementation of the policies of the Economy of Resistance," saying: "The main message of 'the Economy of Resistance: Practical Steps and Action' is that officials must make plans for each and every clause in the general policies of the Economy of Resistance and put them into action genuinely."

Regarding the role and share of laborers in the implementation of the policies of the Economy of Resistance, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out: "The most important responsibility of the laborers in this sector is 'doing [their] job correctly, with [high] quality and with strength'."

Reiterating the need for boosting the quality of work, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Among the significant issues which are very influential in boosting the quality of laborers' work is to take seriously the issue of 'enhancing skills'

and increasing dexterity of laborers, which in this regard, the administration has specific responsibilities."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said another important issue that influences the quality of work is to guarantee job security for the laborers, adding: "Providing job security for laborers is up to officials as well as employers."

Ayatollah Khamenei described "shutdown of production workshops" as a big scourge, adding: "Sometimes, the closure of workshops results from such problems as shortage of liquidity and facilities or the dilapidation of equipment, which in such cases, the employer is not to blame and relevant officials in the industry and trade sector, [and] banks, [as well as] technology sector officials and knowledge-based companies should fulfill their responsibilities [in this regard]."

"Of course in some other cases, workshops are shut down due to abuses by certain employers and using loans and facilities [taken from banks] in other sectors, including construction, instead of manufacturing, which in such cases, the judiciary apparatus, the administration and intelligence organs must seriously follow up on the issue," added the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei reiterated: "Nobody is opposed to the generation of wealth, but this wealth generation should not take place at the cost of trampling upon the labor community and underprivileged strata."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said "promoting product of Iranian laborer," "workplace health" and "raising the share of wages in production costs" are among other influential factors in boosting the quality of laborers' work, noting: "For all these cases, we can make appropriate planning by using correct methods and [benefitting from] the experiences of other countries, so that, motivation and work quality of the laborers would increase without doing any harm to employers."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also went on to elucidate the employers' rights, noting: "In the logic of Islam, the employer and the laborer complement each other, not being hostile and enemy [towards each other]."

Ayatollah Khamenei commended the employers who spend their capital on production and entrepreneurship instead of simply depositing their money in the banks to get interest, saying: "'Sincere cooperation between laborers and employers', 'efforts by officials to facilitate investment in different sectors', and 'providing the ground for exports and defending the rights of exporters in foreign countries' are among the employers' rights that must be respected."

Discussing this issue, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution told officials: "The flawlessness and [high] quality of exported commodities must be supervised, because exporting flawed and low-quality products will defame Iran and hurt the country's exports."

Ayatollah Khamenei laid high emphasis on the "value and significance of domestic production," adding: "Domestic production must be recognized as a sacred affair and supporting it must be considered as a 'duty'."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said it is "absolutely forbidden" to import products whose counterparts are being produced domestically, adding: "Certain stores are committed to selling nothing but domestic products, which such zealous people must be praised."

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "Of course, in some mostly big stores, which are sometimes run by state organs, all goods are foreign-made, which this wrong measure practically makes Iranian laborers jobless while improving conditions for foreign laborers."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution criticized the culture of purchasing foreign commodities and showing off products bearing foreign trademarks, saying: "We interact with the world, but in those fields in which we have

domestic production, importing and selling and consuming foreign commodities must be introduced and recognized as against values [of our society]."

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "Of course in this field, I do not favor going to extremes, but we have to act with wisdom and foresight."

Bringing an example, Ayatollah Khamenei singled out the issue of importing US-made cars, saying: "The Americans themselves are not willing to buy these cars due to their high [fuel] consumption and heaviness. Now, under such circumstances, shall we import cars from a certain American factory, which is close to bankruptcy?! This is a cause of big surprise."

"The esteemed managers and officials [must] stand against covert pressures that are being exerted in these fields and they [must] seriously prevent such measures from being taken," added the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei also criticized "billion-[dollar] imports of certain unnecessary items" and while highlighting the serious issue of smuggling commodities and products into the country, added: "I have frequently notified this issue to officials in different administrations and [in response] they say that if heavy tariffs are levied smuggling will shoot up. But this reason is not acceptable."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described smuggling as a big scourge and a poison for domestic production, and while strongly criticizing lack of seriousness in tackling this issue, said: "The most powerful persons must be assigned to this task and the administration, while strengthening relevant organs, must counter and deal with organized smuggling forcefully."

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "Of course, combating goods smuggling does not mean confronting weak couriers who import small items in certain [border] regions, but I mean top smugglers who smuggle contraband into the country in tens and hundreds of containers."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also highlighted a very significant issue regarding domestic production, saying: "Sometimes, an item can be produced domestically, but certain importers who pocket big profits [through imports] resort to different methods like 'big bribes, threat and even crime' in an attempt to block [domestic] production of that commodity."

Ayatollah Khamenei noted: "These issues are very important and related to security and should not be taken lightly."

Continuing the discussion on hurdles that prevent the growth of domestic production, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution criticized those who are practically clearing the way for the importation of foreign products under the pretext that the technology used to produce domestic products is obsolete.

Ayatollah Khamenei said: "When running short of argumentation, some supporters of importing foreign commodities say foreign technology is 'advanced' and domestic technology is 'outdated'. Alright! But why don't you resolve this problem with all this Iranian talent and creative minds [that exist in the country]?"

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution asked: "Is the Iranian mind, which can [guide a] missile to hit its target with an error of less than 10 meters after cruising a distance of 2,000 kilometers not able to resolve the problem of domestic technology [used] for certain sectors, including car [manufacturing] industry? So why don't you refer to such youths for the resolution of problems?"

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "Certain [instances of] progress in the country are confidential and they should not be spoken about [in public]; otherwise, everybody would be stunned by the talent of youths of this land."

Summing up this part of his speech, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: “I am optimistic about the labor community, employers and state officials, but the reality is that there is something wrong in certain places and certain causes and factors do not let efforts pay off. [Therefore,] officials must make efforts to identify and plug these voids in a bid to accelerate the country’s progress.”

Ayatollah Khamenei noted: “It is no slogan and exaggeration for Iran to conquer the lofty summit of Islamic civilization, but it is documented by realities, potentialities, characteristics and capacities [of Iran], which attention to them will prepare the ground for the realization of this goal.”

“Of course the enemy keeps showing enmity and causing obstacles and this enmity has America and Zionism at its top,” said the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei added: “The Americans sometimes complain from afar that why ‘you are pessimistic about us’? Well, we are witnessing issues that cause such pessimism and we cannot turn a blind eye to them.”

Ayatollah Khamenei cited “conducting banking transactions with a lot of difficulty and sluggishness and disruption of banking transactions by the Americans” as a clear example of grounds for pessimism toward the United States, saying: “Now, [Iranian] officials are also acknowledging the issue of disruption in banking transactions, but why aren’t big banks in the world ready to cooperate with Iran?”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: “The reason why big banks in the world refuse to cooperate with Iran is the [wave of] ‘Iranophobia’ that the Americans have created and are propagating.”

“I have said time and again that the Americans cannot be trusted and now the reason for this issue is becoming clear,” added the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei said they write on the paper and say that “banks can deal with Iran” but in practice, they act differently so as to foster “Iranophobia,” adding: “The Americans say Iran is a country that is sponsoring terrorism and sanctions may be imposed on it because of supporting terrorism.”

Ayatollah Khamenei added: “What is the message conveyed to foreign banks and parties by this remark? The message conveyed by this remark is that they should not take action to deal with Iran as a result of which, foreign banks and investors will be practically scared of interacting with Iran.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: “Of course, on the issue of terrorism, the Americans are worse than all terrorists and based on available information they are still abetting infamous terrorists.”

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to another method of “Iranophobia” used by the US government in order to stymie practical cooperation with Iran on the part of foreign banks and investors, saying: “They claim that the reason for foreign countries not cooperating [with Iran] is Iran’s domestic conditions while there is no country safer than Iran in the region and domestic conditions in Iran are safer than America itself, where several people are killed every day, and are even safer than European countries, and Iran’s domestic conditions are very good to the dismay of the enemies.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said the US officials’ frequent emphasis on the need to maintain the structure and regime of sanctions imposed on Iran is another clear method of “Iranophobia aimed at preventing presence of foreign investors” in Iran, noting: “We are facing such an enemy, and for every activity we intend to do, we have to take into account the presence of this enemy.”

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the Islamic Republic of Iran’s progress over the past 37 years despite the US’

enmity, emphasizing: “If this enmity continues for a hundred more years, we will continue to progress for another hundred years to their dismay.”

“America is the enemy; [therefore,] whether we say it to its face, or we don’t say it to its face, and whether we say it out loud, or don’t say it out loud, these enmities will never be over,” added the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei recommended heads of the three branches of government, revolutionary organs and institutions and people from all walks of life to know the value and strength of the country and its capabilities, adding: “We are as oppressed as Amir al-Mo’menin Ali (Peace be Upon Him, the first Shia Imam), but we are also as strong [as he was] and if we use our capabilities and potentialities in the best, most human and the most Islamic way, we will definitely overcome all obstacles.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution stressed: “Our path is not smooth, but is not rugged either, and if we rely on our own power, we will definitely achieve more success and progress.”

Concluding his remarks, Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the second round of elections for the Islamic Consultative Assembly, which has been scheduled for Friday, April 29, in some Iranian cities, adding: “The second round of elections is no less important than the first round and all eligible voters should take part in elections.”

Ayatollah Khamenei added: “Taking part in elections is [a] determining [factor], because if we do not take part in voting, this willingness and inclination and identity will not be transferred to the [ballot] box.”

Prior to Ayatollah Khamenei’s remarks, Minister of Cooperative, Labor and Social Welfare Ali Rabiei commemorated Labor Day and pointed out the problems of laborers and retirees, saying: “Over the past two years, thanks to the atmosphere of empathy and rapport that has taken shape between laborers and employers, the gap between inflation and wages has been narrowed.”

Stressing the necessity of developing small and medium enterprises for the institutionalization of the discourse of employment-oriented poverty eradication, Mr. Rabiei said: “’Bolstering various types of insurance and insuring 10 million citizens with no health insurance’, ‘fighting poverty and corruption’, ‘improving conditions of child workers’, ‘expansion of cooperatives’, ‘extension of healthcare to underprivileged regions [of the country], ‘empowerment with emphasis on technical and vocational development’, ‘drafting a bill for supporting people with disability and creating jobs and providing housing for them’, ‘implementing insurance for female breadwinners’, ‘dealing with social maladies’ and ‘insistence on safeguarding the personality of laborers’ have been among the most important plans and activities of the Ministry of Cooperative, Labor and Social Welfare.”