Ayatollah Khamenei meets with the Imams of Tehran Province mosques - 21 /Aug/ 2016

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, in a meeting on Sunday with mass prayers leaders of mosques of Tehran Province, described mosques as the base for "gathering, consultation, resistance, planning as well as social and cultural move". Referring to the necessity for people to strengthen their religious faith as the main bulwark of the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic establishment, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "In order to know how to behave vis-à-vis current affairs, one has to analyze and scrutinize the general drive of the society with a macroscopic and cultural view."

Recalling the philosophy behind International Mosque Day, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "This basically revolutionary day was approved by the [former] Organization of the Islamic Conference (currently known as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) upon the push and demand of the Islamic Republic in reaction to the torching of al-Aqsa Mosque by Zionists and with the objective of the Islamic Ummah's struggle against the Zionist regime, and it must be taken into consideration with the same view."

Ayatollah Khamenei said construction of mosques was initiated by Islam to host gatherings and facilitate people's communications based on "Dhikr (a form of devotion in which the worshipper is absorbed in the rhythmic repetition of the name of God or His attributes), prayers and attention to God", adding: "In the history of Islam, mosques have served as centers for consultation, cooperation and making decisions on important political, social and military affairs."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution seized on the moment to underscore the significance of prayers, saying: "Prayers must be of high quality and incorporate profound attention to Almighty God and kept away from such plagues as negligence and hypocrisy and mass prayers leaders play a very important role in elucidating and promoting the issue of prayers, as an attractive and enthusiasm-inspiring reality, both practically and verbally."

Ayatollah Khamenei said mosques were bases for all good deeds, adding: "Mosques must be the bases for 'training mankind, rejuvenation of hearts and the world, countering the enemy, boosting insight and preparing the ground for the creation of Islamic civilization'. Therefore, in addition to leading prayers, mass prayers leaders are tasked with 'introducing righteousness and justice, elucidating religion and instructing religious orders'."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described imams as the "pivots of mosques" and said: "Serving as a mosque's imam is an important and fundamental job and mosques should not be withheld any favor under a view which marginalizes this important mission. Rather, obligations vis-à-vis mosques must be fulfilled by 'regular presence and serenity of mind, performing prayers of high quality, communicating with people and forming instructive circles and responding to the youth's questions'."

Ayatollah Khamenei said granting a pivotal role to mosques was among initiatives of the late great leader Imam Khomeini since the very early days of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, adding: "Mosques are the 'bases for a variety of social activities' and they are instrumental in intellectually strengthening people and encouraging them to get involved in diverse social activities."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described mosques as the "core of resistance" particularly cultural resistance and noted: "Without cultural fence and embankment, everything will be lost."

Ayatollah Khamenei said enemies are making more complicated and diverse efforts than in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution for cultural infiltration into Iran, adding: "People's religious faith is at the receiving end of this continuous and multi-layer drive; this is the same factor which led to the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described the Islamic Revolution as a strong quake that rocked the pillars of the hegemonic system, adding: "Under the aegis of 'revolutionary Islam' and the 'Islamic Revolution', the main objective of global bullying powers i.e. dominance over the region has failed and the US has practically been pinned down in the West Asia region."

Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Were it not for the nation's faith and its faithfulness to Islam, Iran would go under the US and non-US umbrellas like others and that is why they hold a deep-seated and never-ending hostility against people's faith."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said the youth was a main target of the enemies' attempts for cultural infiltration and undermining people's faith and beliefs, adding: "Despite all these deceptive schemes, the massive population of faithful youth, which is a big miracle of the Revolution, has placed today's younger generation at a more progressive standing than that of the youth in the first days of the Revolution."

Ayatollah Khamenei gave an important assessment of the role of mosques in enhancing resistance and strengthening cultural fences, adding: "Mosques are the big bases of mobilization and cultural move."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution advised the imams on further applying correct methods in mosques and cited an example. "Face-to-face meetings with people are more effective than other promotional methods used in different media."

Elucidating an important point, Ayatollah Khamenei referred to "culture and cultural insight" as the basis for real political activity and noted: "In its real sense, politics does not mean supporting such or such person; rather it means holding a macroscopic view towards and being able to analyze the general drive of the society."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "In the real political view, by studying the general drive of the society, answers to several questions must be specified: "Which direction is our current lifestyle driving us to? Are we headed to social justice, real independence and formation of Islamic civilization or are we moving towards dependence on the US and being influenced by Western innovations and findings?"

"Of course, through this macroscopic view and studying the currents, one could specify his stance regarding people, parties and groups," said Ayatollah Khamenei.
Citing an example to underline the importance of macroscopic view and analysis, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "At the beginning of sedition (2009 post-election riots), I told one of the sedition leaders 'You are apparently with the [Islamic] establishment and in your own words you are protesting the election tally, but be sure that the management of this move will fall into the hands of foreigners and they will take advantage of your drive and will target the very principle of the establishment'."

"[But] they did not understand me – of course if we look at the matter with optimism – and jumped to the fray and everyone saw how the election became a pretext for attacking and negating the basis of the establishment," added Ayatollah Khamenei.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "Some say someone said something at that time and now we should forget about it. But we must note that if something is said in support of someone which is in contrast with his words and positions that person must announce his opposition; otherwise they [those words] would be considered as his

own [stance]."

Ayatollah Khamenei continued his remarks to the gathering of mass prayers leaders of Tehran Province by expressing several other points.

"Performing mass prayers three times a day" and "openness of mosques for people to go and perform their prayers throughout the day" were among these points.

Ayatollah Khamenei criticized a standpoint that limits prayer leadership at mosques to the prayers, adding: "This unjust view is in fact a secular view which limits religion to an individual act and prevents it from involvement in socio-political issues."

To that effect, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Secular Islam confined by prayers, whether individual or collective, is not opposed by hegemonic powers even if it has many supporters. What global bullying powers are hostile to is 'strong Islam' which forms the socio-political establishment and leads nations towards real happiness in the world and in the afterworld."

"Special attention to the youth and considering a special standing for the younger generation" was another point highlighted by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in his address to the imams.

Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Attract the youth wholeheartedly to mosques through sincere attraction i.e. 'words and deeds endowed with genuine spirituality and mysticism' so that the country and the society will benefit from the abundant blessings of the presence of the youth at mosques."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also called for documenting the history of mosques in the form of books, photos or music videos for the knowledge of the youth at present and in the future.

Concluding his remarks, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "In spite of all the widespread, vivid, covert and complicated enmities of oppressive and bullying powers, the pure term of 'Islamic Republic' is getting stronger and more powerful day by day and those plots will continue to fail under the aegis of peoples' faith and unity."

Prior to Ayatollah Khamenei's remarks, Hojjatoleslam Haj Ali Akbari, head of the Center for Regulation of Mosques' Affairs, commemorated World Mosque Day and submitted a report. He said: "Mosques prepare the ground for boosting the level of people's insight and serve as a center for training combatants and pious people to match the criteria of the Islamic Revolution."

Mr. Haj Ali Akbari said more than 97% of martyrs in the country have been groomed at mosques, adding: "'Determination of a vision plan', 'culture building', 'cooperation between mass prayers leaders', 'formation of a common and united front for building discourses', 'benefiting from the capacity of the elite and the youth', 'running mosques with people's contribution' and 'using the capacity of mosques for constructing a pious society' are among the objectives and plans pursued by mosques."