

On the first day of the Iranian new year 1400 - 24 /Mar/ 2021

Supreme Leader of the Islamic revolution emphasises the significance of participation in the elections and explains the required attributes of a president, importance of high election participation and voting for a president who is resolute, anti-corruption, determined and hopeful for a mighty Iran.

On the first day of the Iranian new year, the leader of the Islamic Revolution addressed the honourable nation of Iran in a live television broadcast and explained the fundamental duties of the system and its people in order to realise the slogan of the year and to support production and remove obstacles from its path. He mentioned that a declaration policy related to the nuclear deal would require an end to sanctions and this would need to be verified before Iran returns to the accord. He considered the presidential elections in June 2021 as vital in both national and international fronts and pointed out the role of the extensive effort of the enemies to make the nation apathetic towards voting and stressed this point in saying, "The presidential position with its extensive powers, is the country's most important and effective administration and the people can defeat the enemy through rebuilding this executive position, by choosing a president with attributes such as popularity, competency, strength in management, faith, justness, anti-corruption, someone who is a revolutionary and strives, believes in the internal (abilities of the country), hopeful for the future and pays attention to and believes in the youth".

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution began his speech by contrasting the situation in Iran in the Islamic years 1300 and 1400: "The year 1300 saw the English coup at the hands of Reza Shah and the stabilisation of the reign of dictatorship but the year 1400 is the year of the elections, meaning rule based on freedom and the votes of people established on the reliance and trust of the soul of the nation".

He questioned why last year's slogan for a surge in production remained incomplete and said, "Of course there has been progress in the important sectors of production and in some cases we can also exonerate (those responsible for incompleteness) but we must continue with more vigour".

Ayatollah Khamenei spoke about lifting the obstacles for production such as importing goods without following due procedure, smuggling of goods and the lifting of redundant regulations and added, "The obstacles for production are much more than this and must be explained and broadcasted (through media) and with the help of the system and the people these (obstacles) can be lifted".

He called for the importation of raw materials or equipment needed for production: "Increasing the purchasing power of the people, cutting off intermediaries, fighting corruption and reforming the banking and customs system are other necessary measures to fulfil the slogan of the year, if these works are seriously pursued," he said. Certainly, this year there will be a change in the country's economy.

He added: "Using these capacities does not require a miracle, but requires strong management, a sense of responsibility, anti-corruption and a comprehensive economic plan."

Ayatollah Khamenei identified foreign propaganda by Iran's enemies and cyberattacks as part of a strategy to magnify the country's problems through abuse and negativity.

Referring to the acknowledgment by the World Bank experts that Iran has 18th rank out of approximately 200 countries in economics, Ayatollah Khamenei added: "These same experts believe that there is a lot of territorial and human potential in Iran, and if it is used, Iran's economic rank will reach number 12. Indeed it is very important."

In discussing Iran's capacities, the Supreme Leader of the Revolution referred to "the huge size of the country,

numerous neighbours, and being on the transit route from east to west and north to south." Iran has a "young, educated and active population" which when combined with abundant natural resources, God-given underground wealth and the vital infrastructure created in the last 30 years, can make it a developed country resistant to sanctions. He emphasised the role of popular charities, revolutionary institutions and trustees of active mosques in actualising this strategy.

On the subject of sanctions the Supreme Leader of the Revolution called the economic blockade and sanctions of nations and obstruction of access to medicine and food a real crime committed by the United States but added: "By the grace of God, the Iranian nation has survived while some nations cannot resist."

Explaining two possible ways of confronting sanctions, the Supreme Leader said that one way is to ask the boycotter to reduce or lift the sanctions, which of course puts his arrogant demands on the table and is the way of humiliation, degeneration and backwardness. But the second way is to use the capacities and internal forces to produce the sanctioned goods and reduce and neutralize the effects of the sanctions. This is the path that the Iranian nation has chosen and on which it continues today.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that the efforts of the Iranian people to turn sanctions into an opportunity had yielded admirable results such as providing sanitary facilities to deal with the coronavirus at home, increasing scientific capacity and boosting the country's defence capabilities.

In this regard, the Supreme Leader of the Revolution warned the current and upcoming officials of the country against tying the Iranian economy to sanctions and doing nothing based on the assumption that the sanctions will remain.

He said: "In the last few years, it has been said repeatedly that if sanctions are lifted or if foreign investment is made, it will be so and so " but these ifs and buts "will delay and confuse the country's economy and indecision will be a great loss to the economy."

The Supreme Leader of the Revolution addressed the upcoming presidential election and the council elections, referring to the "very importance of the elections both nationally and internationally" and said: "The elections are an internal renewal and a new breath for the executive branch."

Ayatollah Khamenei said that the participation of people in the elections will highlight the power of the nation to the world and demonstrate national authority and power. He cited the principle of popular participation as well as high turnout in the elections as the main factors influencing national power and authority. "Everyone, even those who may not accept the leadership, accepts that a strong Iran is the way to deal with hostilities", he said. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution emphasized that the spy apparatuses of some countries, and worst of all, the United States and the Zionist regime, are trying to destabilize the elections, and for this reason, they either accuse the organizers of electoral engineering, or accuse the Guardian Council of wrongdoings or they try to discourage the people by inducing the ineffectiveness of the people's vote in improving the situation.

Referring to the maximum use of cyberspace by the enemies to discourage people and also the prosperity of elections, Ayatollah Khamenei criticized the way cyberspace is managed in the country and said: "All countries in the world manage cyberspace, but in our country, some officials are proud of being free in cyberspace, while they should not be proud of it at all." People should use cyberspace, which is a means of freedom, but this space should not be given to the enemy.

The enemies are trying to reduce the participation of the people in the elections with psychological methods, and we hope that the people will disappoint the enemies by rejecting them with their huge participation.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution emphasised the importance of the presidency. "The presidency is the most important and effective management of the country, and making false allegations such as whether the president lack enough authority or is just a co-ordinator is unrealistic and irresponsible," he said. It is due to ignorance or bigotry.

Emphasizing that the presidency is the busiest administration in the country, he added: "Almost all administrative centres and most of the government facilities are in the hands of the president, and compared to the presidential power, other sectors such as the judiciary and the military sectors are insignificant."

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "We must all realize the great and heavy responsibility that falls on the president when we cast our votes."

Addressing the people who want to stand as candidates in the elections, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "We expect you to realize the weight of the work and know what heavy responsibility you want to take on."

The leader of the Islamic Revolution emphasized that candidates must know the main problems of the country and have a plan and solutions for them, even if brief. They must understand the country's economy and its main priorities such as the growth of national production, investment growth, strengthening the national currency and inflation, the issue of national security, social ills, how to deal with complex world policies and the very important issue of culture.

Emphasizing on the people to be careful in their choice, he expressed the characteristics of a desirable president and said: "A desirable president must be competent, faithful, just and anti-corruption, have a revolutionary and dynamic performance, believe in internal capabilities, believe in the youth as the frontiers of the country's public movement and hope for the future.

Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized: "If such a person comes to power, he will bring the country to the desired point and the people must find a person with these characteristics, which of course may not be easy to find for the ordinary people and they should seek guidance from knowledgeable and reliable people."

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution pointed to the role of elections as a way of preserving national unity and cohesion: "Elections should be a symbol of national unity and not a symbol of division and splitting into two blocks," he said.

Emphasizing that the misplaced divisions of left and right should be put aside and only the future of the country and the Islamic system should be considered, he noted: "There is no problem in differences in taste, political vision, ethnicity and religion, but these issues should not disrupt national unity."

The final part of the speech of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution was dedicated to the issue of JCPOA and regional issues.

Referring to the failure of the US policy of maximum pressure, he said: "The former idiot designed and implemented maximum pressure to weaken Iran so that a weak Iran could be brought to the negotiating table and impose its arrogant demands." But amid scandal he stepped down and humiliated the United States, and the Islamic Republic still stands tall with power and dignity. "Maximum pressure has failed and if the new US administration wants to continue the same policy, they will also fail and Iran will become stronger day by day," he added.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution called Iran's stand on JCPOA a clear policy and reiterated that the United States must lift all sanctions. Only when the sanctions are really lifted will Iran return to its JCPOA obligations without any reservations.

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "The promise of the Americans is not acceptable that they want to lift the sanctions on paper, but in practice they keep them alive. They should lift the sanctions in a real sense and the Islamic Republic should verify it before returning to the JCPOA."

Referring to the statements of some American officials about the need to change the UN Security Council, he said: "Yes, the situation has changed compared to 1994, but this change should be in favour of Iran and not the United States." He described today's Iran as much stronger and more self-reliant, adding: "On the contrary, the United States has become weaker because a government came to power that humiliated the United States with its words and actions and its economic problems."

Therefore, in case of change, JCPOA must change in favour of Iran. "Of course, we have made the sanctions ineffective by the initiative of the youth and knowledge-based national companies, and we will continue to do so vigorously", he added.

Emphasizing that Iran is not in any hurry to accept the solution offered to return to the JCPOA, he said: "Some (politicians) say that opportunities should not be burned. That is true, but we should not rush."

Pointing out that in some cases haste is more harmful than squandering apparent opportunities, he said: "For example, in the case of JCPOA, there was haste and while we fulfilled all our obligations, the other parties did not fulfil their obligations."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution stressed that "Iran has a lot of patience and if they accept our announced policy, the work will be done and if they do not accept, the situation will continue in the same way."

Referring to the statements made by some politicians that there is no harm in taking the lead in fulfilling our commitments towards the deal, he said this is not acceptable due to the bad record of the Americans: "It is not a question of should return to the deal first, (but the question is who has violated the deal) We do not trust them anymore. because under Obama's administration, we trusted them and kept our commitments, but they did not live up to their commitments. While talking on paper about the lifting of sanctions, they and their agents scared away companies that wanted to work with Iran."

Ayatollah Khamenei criticised the US policies in dealing with Iran and regional issues, including supporting the Zionist regime, occupying Syria, joining the Saudi government in attacking the oppressed people of Yemen and on the Palestinian issue which he said "the Islamic Ummah will never forget". Referring to the recent peace deals between Israel and some Arab states the Supreme Leader called them completely worthless. It is wrong to try to normalize the relations of the occupying regime with a few cheap governments, he said.

Referring to the green light given by the Obama administration to the Saudi government to start the Yemeni war and support the bombing of the people, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "After six years, they could not make the Yemeni people surrender and today the Americans should be asked whether they know the quagmire in which they have trapped the Saudi government. Today it is harmful for them to get out of the war and just as problematic for them to continue it as well."

He cited Yemen and the helplessness of the Saudi government as an example of the result of putting trust in the United States. The Americans do not know the region and its nations and are constantly making mistakes.