In a meeting with teachers and educators from all over the country, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution explained - 2 /May/ 2023

This morning, in a meeting with a large number of teachers and educators from all over the country, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution called teachers the nurturers of the precious gem of the ‘teenage and young generation’ and architects of the country’s future. By explaining the important dos and don’ts of the education system, he said: In the face of its expectations from teachers, the system must truly feel responsible for its various problems.

Ayatollah Khamenei considered the teaching community one of the country's best and most noble groups. He expressed gratitude towards these “patient, hardworking, and committed” warriors in all cities and villages across the country and added: The value and importance of raising a generation that is aware, knowledgeable, thoughtful and logical, faithful, with willpower and “possessing of Islamic morals and national commitments” for building the country’s future cannot be overstated and is incomparable to anything else.

The Leader of the Revolution, commemorating the memory of Martyr Motahari as an example of a “true and complete teacher” and advising the teachers to study and learn from his works, considered the approximately 5,000 martyr teachers as a manifestation of the dignity of the teaching community in various challenges of the last 45 years and added: Dear teachers, raise the children of the nation as you would your own, with the goal of raising them to be happy, proud, wise, literate, and possessing respectful behaviour, which will be achieved not only by teaching but also by the behaviour and conduct of teachers.

During his address, Ayatollah Khamenei highlighted the importance of teachers encouraging their students to attend religious gatherings such as mosques and worship services, noting that such experiences offer blessings beyond what can be achieved through virtual learning. He also acknowledged the negative impact of civil unrest, including the COVID-19 pandemic, on education.

The Leader of the Revolution considered reviving the sense of “Irano-Islamic identity and national personality” in intelligent teenagers and young people in the country as an essential duty and said: In this process, the issue of the Persian language, the country’s flag, and the sense of pride and honour in being Iranian is essential, although achieving these goals requires more than just advice and talk; it requires teaching students about the true cultural, scientific, and historical achievements and records of the nation.

After discussing his expectations for teachers, he emphasized the government's comprehensive responsibility towards the teaching community as an absolute necessity, stating that teachers' livelihood is crucial, but their needs go beyond financial concerns. These needs include training in professional development, experience, and attention to the University of Teachers (Farhangian University).

The Leader of the Revolution, regarding the main issues concerning education, considered it impossible to go through the rugged passes of the country’s comprehensive progress without the help and role of education and emphasizing the importance of understanding the significant position of this sector in the country’s management system, added: The strategic mistake of some past officials was that they, unfortunately, did not know the value, greatness, and influential power of education and looked at this sector as a nuisance and a useless consumer of the budget.

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the agreement of many experts and specialists on the centrality of the education system in solving the country’s problems. He added: As these experts have said, if we had paid attention to the issue of education 20 years ago, many of today’s problems would not exist. Therefore, the solution lies in proper planning and serious efforts to reform the education system. All officials, decision-makers, and the people must understand the vital importance of the education system.

The Leader of the Revolution, criticizing the instability in the management of education, said: The system of this magnitude is damaged by the constant change of ministers, especially since the change of minister sometimes brings about the change of deputies, middle managers, and even school principals.

“The necessity of adapting the structure, content, and curriculum of education to the needs of the country” was another important point that the Leader of the Revolution emphasized and said: The country needs skilled labour as much as it needs thoughtful and knowledgeable forces, but is there now a balanced relationship between education in high schools and vocational and technical education? And are the pathways for transitioning from high school to university and the distribution of human resources across different country regions appropriate?

Ayatollah Khamenei urged the officials to reflect on and reconsider the current direction of education and evaluate its productivity for the country and added: The central policy of education should be to teach practical science that fulfils the present and future needs of the nation.

“The Fundamental Education Transformation Document” was another fundamental issue that the Leader of the Revolution made five recommendations to officials: “First, the transformation document should be continuously completed and updated." “Second, support the transformation document firmly and assist with its implementation." “Third, do not create a rival for the transformation document, which is a precise and good document.” “Fourth, prepare an accurate roadmap for implementing the transformation document from headquarters to schools and support it in government and parliament” and “Fifth, in the roadmap, measurable indicators should be determined based on which the progress of implementing the document is constantly monitored.”

Another main issue related to the education system that Ayatollah Khamenei addressed was the crucial matter of “teacher recruitment”.

Referring to the shortage of teachers due to the lack of proper foresight in the past, he said: Many teachers across the country are sacrificing their lives, but we still face a shortage of committed and efficient teachers, the solution to which is more effort and investment in strengthening infrastructures and capacities of teacher training institutions, especially the university of teachers, as well as using experienced, faithful and old teachers.

The Leader of the Revolution considered it necessary to observe teachers' professional and general competencies during their service and not to be content solely with the initial selections. It said: Selection criteria should continue to be a significant factor.

“The composition of attractive, up-to-date and innovative textbooks” was another necessity that Ayatollah Khamenei spoke about: Textbooks in all fields should be such that learning them excites the young generation.

He mentioned “incorporating Islamic concepts and introducing Islamic and Iranian figures and leaders of knowledge and scientific discoveries in Iranian history” as one of the necessary tasks in updating textbooks to be in line with the changing times, and reminded: Some people believe that “changing times” is the same as changing principles, while principles such as justice, fairness, and love never change, but Superstructures such as writing and expression styles are changeable.

The final recommendation of the Leader of the Revolution in this meeting was to pay attention to educational affairs in schools. While appreciating the attention paid to this issue in the Education Department, he said: Of course, attention to educational matters should also be extended to schools, but now its effect is not much observed. Many schools do not have life skills teachers. Of course, life skills education should also be attractive enough not to make children run away.

Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized the need to determine the fate of education management as soon as possible to promote decisive and better affairs in this organization and said: We are hopeful for the future of education and the great work of respected teachers.

At the beginning of this meeting, Mr Sahraei, the acting Minister of Education, reported on the past year's activities and the ministry's future plans.

The implementation of the transformation document, the completion of the implementation stages of the ranking law, the improvement of textbooks and the expansion of practical education, updating the educational system for the identity and lifestyle of students, determining the fate of those left behind from education, improving the quality of public schools, specialized teacher training entrance exam and also establishing a dedicated campus for training “life skills teachers” were among the main topics of the report of the head of the Ministry of Education.