Ayatollah Khamenei instructs authorities in charge of Article 44 drive - 19 /Feb/ 2007

Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei Monday instructed the authorities in charge of the execution of the Article 44 of the Constitution about the relevant discussions in a meeting in which he described efforts as such as a sort of jihad, adding that provided all the authorities practice diligence, in two or three years the drive will bear fruits.

Ayatollah Khamenei reviewed records and background of notificatin of the article's general policies once on May 22, 2003 and the other one on July 1, 2005 and expressed dissatisfaction over the pace of affairs.

"The problem is driven by either indifference towards how the Article 44 could produce a large economic upturn or absence of a common understanding in different bodies and institutions," Ayatollah Khamenei said, adding that the meeting was aimed to examine the significance enshrined in the issue and bring about a common concept of the theme.

Ayatollah Khamenei believed that to provide the ground for the execution of the Article 44 general policies, a change must come about in certain structures, regulations and assignments of the state bodies.

The Islamic Revolution Leader termed post-revolutionary economic developments not proportionate with socio-political turnaround in the period.

"Notable moves have taken place in economy. However, we were expected to offer a successful economic version to the world to further substantiate our national competence in economic progress and justice administration by making a tangible growth in per capita income and GDP, taking part in international economic competitions, removing poverty and impoverishment and administering justice."

Ayatollah Khamenei viewed national wealth and social justice as two major axes of the Islamic economy, adding that any methodology, instruction or prescription in economy which caters to the said axes is approved while no other discussion is of use for the country and people as long as it fails to consider expansion of national wealth and social justice.

Ayatollah Khamenei described generation of wealth as a must-have for poverty removal, adding that to expand national wealth, the path of capitalization and economic production must be paved for the entire people so that the overall young educated workforce and competent managers could implement giant, lucrative projects under the auspices of various bodies.

Ayatollah Khamenei hailed the Constitution as balanced, far-sighted and fair in its approach towards economy. The IR Leader examined how the Article 44 divides economic activities into the triple sectors of state-run, cooperatives and private-run and said that according to the terms and provisions of the Article, the division aims to enhance economic advance in the country and they must be regarded valid as long as they help materialize the goal.

Ayatollah Khamenei blamed the excessive expansion of state-run properties in the first decade after revolution on some reservations regarding the Imposed War (1980-88) as well as the extraordinary economic situation during the same spell.

Ayatollah Khamenei regretted that the trend failed to ebb away in the subsequent decades following an overexpansion in the number of state corporations as well as refusal to cede them to the public.

"As an outcome, state properties increasingly widened against the Article 44 of the Constitution and the revenues, expected to serve a healthy flow of wealth in the country, were in effect squandered to carry out wasteful and useless projects thereby inflicting damage on the national economy."

Ayatollah Khamenei underlined large ventures to materialize the objectives of the National Economic Vision, adding the drive was not an assignment to be assumed by the government whereas the government bears heavy responsibilities in securing strategic affairs and modern technology, an area not to be trespassed by the private sector.

Ayatollah Khamenei raised some issues of concerns regarding the administration of justice and absolved the incumbent administration in this regard.

"Some outsiders by open propaganda or diplomatic push try to present the serving government accountable in this regard whereas the problem has been built up over the past years because the approach towards the matter was wrong and the Constitutional Article 44 was let down," the IR Leader said.

Ayatollah Khamenei outlined the by-laws and aims of the Article 44 as freeing the administration from unnecessary economic activities, opening the path of venturing in national economy, promoting cooperatives sector and widening its supportive umbrella over feeble strata of society, assigning the administration to governing matters, policy making and leading role, clarifying where the revenues raised through ceding project are spent, and approving demands of the administration over the drive.

The IR Leader welcomed the "justice shares" initiative, recently offered by the serving administration, adding that the Article never meant to cut price national assets, rather it meant to make a small-benefit property turn into a burgeoning asset for the economy with the scheme being directed at underprivileged people.

"Islam welcomes generation of wealth through legal and legitimate ways bereft of corruption," the IR Leader said, adding that generation of wealth would translate into social wealth and a good dded as well provided it came along with honest intention and aiding impoverished people.

Ayatollah Khamenei underlined combat against corruption as complimenting wealth generation through legal ways and termed it instrumental to healthy economic competition under the Article 44 of the Constitution. In the same regard, the IR Leader called for bringing transparency to the relevant regulations and amending some laws, urging the three branches of government to abide by the undertaking.

"Some individuals out of opposition to economic flourish and progress of the Islamic System, oppose the policies. These people, principally linked to outsiders, try to hold back Iranian economy to press it by economic leverage in time of need," Ayatolah Khamenei said, referring to the dissenters of the Article 44 in home and abroad.

Concerning the dissenters towards the execution of the article, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "these individuals are mainly among those people whose interests or administrative power are affected by the execution of the policies."

Ayatollah Khamenei then turned to the duties of the three branches of power in this regard and urged the authorities for studying the dimensions of the drive, consulting with experts and avoiding haste.

"Nevertheless and in any regard, the pace of the execution of the general provisions of the Article 44 must be expedited and the authorities in charge of different governmental bodies must seriously pursue the drive through a

timetabled plan," the IR Leader said.

In drawing up the conditions needed to execute the Article 44, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed to ratification of necessary laws in the parliament, full judicial support for legal and legitimate ownership by establishment of expert courts to that effect, taking an all-embodied approach towards different provisions of the Article 44, informing people and private sector and giving transparency to relevant regulations to prevent any sort of abuse.

"Thank to diligence of the heads of three branches of power and the authorities as a whole, in the two or three years to come the drive will bear tangible fruits and everybody will become more hopeful about the prospects of the country," Ayatollah Khamenei concluded.