meeting with participants in the 17th Nationwide Prayers Conference - 19 /Nov/ 2008

Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei highlighted the role of worship to God in cleansing individual souls and society, saying that once the appearance and content of praying were attended to as taught by Islam it would prove a key element of training for individuals and the society as a whole.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks to an audience of officials in charge of prayers affairs and promotion of worship in society Wednesday morning.

The IR Leader called the practice of 'namaz' (Persian term for the Islam-taught method of worship to God) as a distinctive feature of Islam "which must be accentuated in different sectors of the Islamic community."

He said the salvation of mankind lied in pursuing sharia-based orders and avoiding whatever sharia forbids, adding that namaz stood out as the mainstay of sharia teachings by helping rein the rowdy side of human ego.

The Islamic Revolution Leader said whether human being may achieve salvation or run an otherwise destructive path depends on how he or she handles his or her ego, adding that human being may ascend to ultimate perfection once his or her rowdy ego is contained by means of 'zekr' or remembrance of God in a way that helps an individual to avoid any situation which may harm his or her soul.

"But if the rowdy ego is left unbridled nothing would come about but tyranny, vice, poverty or arrogance," Ayatollah Khamenei added.

Ayatollah Khamenei noted that the practice of namaz once intertwined with God remembrance could help human being avoid sins as the special Islamic practice, which must be conducted on several occasions every 24 hours, helps an individual to maintain the memory of God inside his or her soul.

Ayatollah Khamenei then urged the relevant bodies to help promote the practice within the society in true terms, adding that a whole-body namaz could improve mental being of society and enhance security.

Ayatollah Khamenei also termed the youth time as a rewarding period to train soul to conduct whole-body prayers.

The IR Leader then regretted that the number of mosques in populous areas of the country was inadequate and said that as a principle imperative, any large architectural project should also embed a mosque in its architectural plan. Ayatollah Khamenei urged the government to pursue his directive seriously.

Ayatollah Khamenei also urged relevant bodies to set aside a special area to build mosques in subway stations, train stations, inter-city bus stops, airports and large townships, adding that any internal and external air flights must be scheduled in a way that people have enough time to conduct their prayers.

"In flights where there is no such possibility, some space inside the airliners must be dedicated to the practice," the IR Leader directed.

Ayatollah Khamenei also promoted the case of congregational prayers in his speech, saying, "in such mega cities as Tehran, mosques must bloom with congregational prayers. 'Azan' (call to prayers) must reverberate in cities of the

Islamic country (Iran)."

Ayatollah Khamenei also directed that mass construction projects must have adequate room in their plans to build mosques and that the Municipality must not issue permit to plans which fail to observe the issue.

"Features of Islam must be present in society specially in architectural and constructional projects," the IR Leader added.

In the beginning of the meeting, Mohsen Qara'ati, a prominent Iranian Alim renowned for his efforts to promote prayers in the country, delivered a report on the latest schemes to promote namaz, adding that the appeal of prayers was improved within society.