# Supreme leader's statements in the meeting of nurses and families of health martyrs - 12 /Dec/ 2021

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On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Zeinab al-Kubra (peace be upon her) and Nurse's Day

In The Name of Allah, The Compassionate, The Merciful.

And praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and prayer and peace be upon our Sayyid Muhammad, and his pure family, may the rest of God be on earth.

Congratulations on the birth of Zeinab al-Kubra (PBUH) and Nurse's Day to each and every one of you, dear people, brothers, sisters and honourable and proud workers in the field of medicine, treatment and health.

This meeting is a good opportunity to have some things said about protectors of health and dear nurses, to address some subject matters and facts, and I will talk about them; But before that, I consider it appropriate to extend our condolences to the great lady of Karbala, Hazrat Zainab al-Kubra (PBUH). About Zeinab al-Kubra, well, has been a lot of conversations, discussions, praises, bows and honours in statements and in words, which were very appropriate and valid, but nevertheless, there are two essential points in the life of this noblewoman, which I will now discuss both.

Firstly, and more importantly, is this point that I'm going to mention; And that is that Zeinab al-Kubra (peace be upon her) was able to show to all history and the whole world the great spiritual and intellectual capacity of women; It's a very important matter. In spite of those who, both at that time and in our current time, each have humiliated and continue to humiliate women in some way, Zeinab al-Kubra was able to show the greatness of women and the greatness of women's mental, intellectual and spiritual power; Which I will now briefly explain. When I said they are humiliating [women] in today's world is the fact that we will not discuss now; More than anyone else, are these westerners are severely humiliating women. This noblewoman Zeinab al-Kubra (PBUH), displayed two points: one point is that a woman can be a huge ocean of patience and endurance; Second, that a woman can be the peak of wisdom and prudence; These were practically shown by Zeinab al-Kubra (PBUH); Not only to those who were in Kufa and Sham; she showed them to history; she showed them to all the human race.

On patience and endurance, Zeinab al-Kubra's patience and Zeinab al-Kubra's tolerance of calamities are indescribable. First, patience in the face of martyrdom. In about half a day or an unfinished day, eighteen of her loved ones and relatives were martyred, one of whom was her great brother, the authority of God, Sayyid al-Shuhada (PBUH); They were martyred in front of her eyes; Her two children were also martyred; she endured. Mountains collapse in the face of such a tragedy; Zeinab al-Kubra was able to endure; She was patient and with the help of her spiritual strength was able to do what was next. If she was impatient, screaming, or showing signs of being overwhelmed, she could not make these speeches and this great measure and the like; So, patience in the face of martyrdom.

Patience in the face of insults, A lady who has lived with dignity from the beginning of her life, and whom everyone has seen as mighty from childhood to adulthood, is insulted in this way by the thugs of the Umayyad army, [but] she shows patience and does not break.

Patience in the face of the immense responsibility of collecting orphans and bereaved women; is a colossal task. She was able to bring together, manage and take care of these dozens of grieving, injured, and traumatized women and children on this difficult journey; These were Zeinab's work; patience. Zeinab really showed peace and patience as vast as the oceans; that's where women can get; they can reach this great point of spiritual power. In addition to what we have said, nursing Hojjat-Allah, nursing Hazrat Sajjad (PBUH) which also required patience, and was able to do it in the best way; [and] this was on her patience.

And now on the subject of wisdom, wise behaviour, and rational power and prudence. This behaviour of hers during captivity is truly amazing; My belief is we must study, reflect, write, talk about [and] create artworks from every piece of this behaviour; this is no joke.

[She is] also the symbol of spiritual authority and perseverance in the face of arrogant and imperious rulers. In Kufa, when Ibn al-Ziad speaks with the intent to ridicule [and for example says], "Ha! You saw what happened; you saw you failed." In response, she says, " ما رَأیتُ اِلّا جَمیلاً " All I saw was beauty; She in return, slapped that arrogant, evil, imperious man in the face. This was about her interaction with Ibn al-Ziad. When Yazid uttered those nonsense and absurd words and did those actions, her holiness made some statements and said this historical sentence: «کِد کَیدَکَ وَ اسعَ سَعیَکَ ... فَوَاللّهِ لا تَمحو ذِکرَنا»; In the contemporary language, to translates it, do whatever ill- hearted act that you can, do whatever you can, swear to God you will not be able to take our memory away from the horizons of people's minds. Who is she saying this to? To the arrogant, imperious, bloodthirsty tyrant Yazid; This shows the spiritual strength of a woman; What power is this? What greatness is this? [These] show prudence and wisdom. These words are expressed with thoughtfulness. But when she confronts the people, that is no place for expressing authority; it is a place of punishment, of specification, of admonishing people who do not know what they have done and what they should have done.

In Kufa, in the sermon of Hazrat Zainab, after the people started crying, Hazrat Zainab (peace be upon her) [said]: اَ تَبکون؟, Are you crying? اَلا فَلا رَقَأَتِ العَبرَةُ وَ لا هَدَأَتِ الزَّفرَة, Your crying will never stop; What are you crying about? Do you know what you did? نکاثاً اِثرَةً وُقِعدَبِ نِم هلَازلَغ تَضَقَد تی ًالِ لَثَمَکمُکُلَثَم ماً نِا You did something that ruined all your past efforts. This is how she speaks; I think it is very likely that one of the important factors of The Repentant movement that later in Kufa rose and revolted and started that great event was this statement and this very sermon of Hazrat Zainab. Therefore, this is the first point about the personality of Hazrat Zainab. To sum up, Zainab Kobra (peace be upon her) showed women's spiritual and intellectual capacity by her behaviour and statements. She speaks as if Amir al-Mu'minin is speaking; She stands as if the Prophet were standing against the infidels. This is the capacity of a woman.

Another important point in the life of this noble woman, which is also a sign of prudence, is that this noblewoman started the jihad of explanation, the jihad of narration; She did not allow the enemy's account of the incident to prevail; She made her narrative prevail over public opinion. Until today, the narration of Zainab al-Kubra (peace be upon her) about the incident of Ashura remains in history, [but] at the same time it had an impact in the Sham, in Kufa, in the series of years of Umayyad reign and led to the overthrow of the Umayyad reign. Look! This is the lesson; This is what I always say: you narrate the truths of your own society, your own country and your revolution. If you do not narrate, the enemy will narrate; If you do not narrate the revolution, the enemy will narrate; If you do not narrate the incident of The Holy Defence, the enemy narrates it; however, he wants; Justifies, lies [also] changes the truth; It changes the place of the oppressor and the oppressed. If you do not narrate the incident of capturing the spy nest - which, unfortunately, we did not narrate - the enemy will narrate it; and has narrated it with false narrations. This is what we have to do; It is the duty of our youth.

Well, now let's get to the subject of nurses. In the case of nurses, first of all, what I will say is to look at the values of nursing; This is one thing to mention, and I will say a few sentences in this regard. Next is a look at the hardships and bitterness of nursing that we must understand; the Iranian nation must understand what the nursing community is enduring by doing so. Another issue is the demands of nurses; They have demands. Well, thank God, the officials

are also present at the meeting. I will give a brief overview of the nurses' demands - but these are not all the demands.

But there is a central point about values, and that is to help the people in need; That is, a nurse is someone who helps a person who needs help in everything; He wants water, he wants food, he wants peace at night to sleep, he wants pain relief, he wants medicine, and the rest of the various needs that the nurse helps, like an angel of salvation, to this man who is ultimately in need. Well, helping the needy is of great value in all cultures; Let alone the neediest, that is sick. This is an important point that was made to help the needy. Let me also tell you that one of the commands of the people of manners and the people of monotheism and morality, and the like, who give instructions for the conduct of behaviour, is to help those who need help; This means that you, as a nurse, when you are engaged in your profession, you are carrying out and executing one of the important commands of monotheistic conduct. This is the importance of this job. This is of very high value. That's the first point.

The next value of nursing is that it is hard work; Hard work is more rewarding, more valuable. What is done with difficulty and requires more endurance has a higher value in the divine measure; Because this is associated with difficulty, we will later briefly discuss some of its difficulties; So, the value of nursing is on a higher level, more than other kinds of helpings; Because it's hard work.

Another valuable point is that this nursing movement is a source of security; Security for whom? First, the patient himself who is reassured; When there is a nurse with a patient, he feels reassured. Secondly, the patients' family and friends are relieved, knowing that the nurse is in the hospital next to their patient bed; If this nurse is not there, they will be anxious and worried. Third, all people; Well, all consciences are distressed and worried because of the hardship and suffering of those who suffer; If we know that there is not a nurse besides the patient who is in pain, suffering, hungry, thirsty, naturally our consciences get upset, we worry, but because we know the nurse is there, we are relieved. A nurse is a source of security; For the patient, the patients' family and friends, and the rest of the people, the nurses relieve us from being distressed. So, on this account, not only the patient is in debt to the nursing community, but also I am in debt to them; those who have nothing to do with the patient are in debt to them; Because it gives us a sense of security.

There is a double value for nursing in Islamic Iran, and that is that the imperialistic enemies, the imperialists from all over the world, like the suffering of the Iranian nation! Do not you believe? The enemies like the suffering of the Iranian nation; What is the reason? The reason is the chemical bombings of The Holy Defence era; Thousands of young people got sick with incurable and painful diseases caused by chemical bombardment. Sometimes even their families, their children [got sick]. Yes, Saddam carried out these chemical bombings, but who gave him that bomb? Who gave that chemical material? Who allowed that to happen and witnessed it happening with consent? The possibility of the existence of chemical weapons in a country causes all of them to make a fuss, [but] it was bombed in front of everyone, and the United States, Britain, France, others were watching, admiring, helping! Well then, they like the suffering of the Iranian nation. Or the medical sanctions; God had mercy on us that our young scientists were able to produce the corona vaccine. They saw that if the door stays closed and the vaccine is not imported, then Iran will produce more. If our young people, our scientists, had not produced this vaccine, it would not have been clear how this vaccine would have reached the Iranian nation and the authorities; They enjoy the suffering of the Iranian nation.

Well, you as a nurse, if you can put a smile on the face of the patient and the patients' family and friends in such a situation, you have, in fact, made a move against imperialism. This is where nursing also means confronting imperialism. The nursing community has such status; it has many values. Now I have only mentioned a few points; a lot more about this matter can be said. This was about nursing values.

Hardships and bitterness; The nature of nursing work is challenging; it is bitter. To see the suffering of the sick, the pain of the sick, the moans of the sick, the insomnia of the sick, to see this constantly in front of their eyes, well, this

is bitter, this is very difficult, this is one of the most difficult things for a man. [That] to constantly observe these physical needs of patients in front of your own eyes and help them - not to just watch and pass - it hurts, to alleviate their pain; help them, when they are hungry or thirsty; or many other problems, to alleviate them; Take care of the patient day and night, these are the difficulties of nursing. Therefore, the nature of nursing work is a difficult one.

Sometimes this difficulty multiplies, such as during the Corona period, as well as during the holy defence period. It was the same in the period of the Holy Defense; Most of you are young, you do not remember; Those who were on the field at that time know; During the holy defence era, we had hospitals that were not far from the front line. I had seen these hospitals up close. There were doctors and nurses in these hospitals; Under bombardment! I was in one of these sanatoriums and hospitals when it was bombed; I was there myself; I saw the heavy bombardment that happened. The medics went to the heart of the fire and blood, so to say, this was also the case in the holy defence period, and it was even worse.

The Corona period was the same; During the Corona period, work genuinely became extremely difficult, working hours increased, and vacation days decreased. During the Nowruz holiday, the nurse could not attend to her family, her child, her husband, her parents; These mean a lot; these are very important. At a time when everyone is resting, everyone is busy living and enjoying life; this nurse in the hospital is facing bitterness, is facing illness, and is not going home; These are the difficulties. Then the witnessing of the dead; Well, how much does a human being have the strength to watch people die? During the Corona period, how many of these nurses witnessed human deaths in hospitals - old, young, female, male! These are hard; these are very difficult.

Besides, they [saw] the death of their own colleagues. How many of their own colleagues passed away? Until yesterday, the day before yesterday, their colleague was by their side, then he got infected with Corona and died. These are so hard! In my opinion, the Iranian nation should see these difficulties, understand them, and value the nursing community. Then, in addition to all these risks, there is a risk of the nurse getting a deadly disease. Well, they are constantly waiting for this danger; How many nurses were infected! Every nurse might be working healthily today, and tomorrow they might be sick; It is a very important danger. We have heard in the past that in pandemics like cholera and plague, and the like that came before, there were people who went to the sick, for example, to help, care for, treat, and they got infected themselves, and died; There were a few cases [like this]; We have seen these in large numbers in our own time.

There is a point here for me to make: We had non-nurse elements working with them, in addition to the nurses; Pupils, students, young people went to hospitals and learned a little [or helped] or did whatever they could; It was the same in the time of the Holy Defence, people who were not professionals came to the field to help the nurses, they felt responsible, they came to the hospital, they helped the medical community, including the nursing, as much as they could and in any way they could. In my opinion, this carries an important and brilliant truth in our dear country and for our dear nation: this shows the lively and vibrant identity and conscience of the Iranian nation; It shows that this movement is public in the Iranian nation, which, of course, has been seen in other public disasters as well; Now I [only mentioned] the nursing department. This is a continuous discipline; From before the revolution, from the struggles of the oppressive period to the events of the revolution to the events of the holy defence to the events after that to the Corona; In all of this, this committed and responsible identity of the Iranian nation has shown itself; As it was during the oppressive struggles, it was during the holy defence, it was in the later period, in the Corona and in the great scientific movement of the country, it is an important current that shows the [identity] of our nation...

This shows the identity of our nation; This movement builds an identity for the nation; This is what heroes like Martyr Soleimani, like Martyr Fakhrizadeh, like Martyr Shahriari, come out of this identity; This is a truth that shows itself in various forms and in various manifestations: the identity of the Iranian nation; These identity-making facts and signs of identity; It is both a sign of identity and it itself strengthens the identity and builds the identity of the Iranian nation. This was about the difficulties.

Let me address our artists here. We have a shortcoming in the artistic narrative of these events; These hospital events, the ones I just said. These hardships of nurses and the difficulties they face are artistic motifs; According to the common foreign interpretation of the language of the artists, these have dramatic themes and can be used to create compelling art programs. Bring them in the field with any form of art, whether performing arts, visual arts, poetry, or literature. Bring these [in artwork]. These are huge cultural assets; Everyone should use them, and the ones who can cash in on these investments are our artists. Praise be to God; we have a lot of committed and responsible artists; Let them enter the field. Well, this was also about the hardships and bitterness that we said in a few sentences. Of course, there is more than this, and a lot more can be said.

But about the demands. The main demand of the nursing community is to strengthen the nursing community. To summarize in a word, the nursing community expects all of us, and especially the responsible agencies - including the honourable minister who is present here - to strengthen the nursing community. Now, if we do not strengthen the nursing community, we will be hit hard, as the Corona case made this clear; We will be hit where we are in need. The nursing community needs to be strengthened for a rainy day. A man may not always feel the need - but we do, of course; Because we have a problem right now with the number [of forces] that I will say later on and a lot of other things - but if we assume we don't have a problem right now if we don't strengthen, we'll be hit in situations like the Corona case.

Specifically, one of these demands is the pricing of the nursing services, which of course, is a major demand; I said the same thing last year; I also emphasized that, unfortunately, those who should have done something did not do it! The pricing Law was drafted in 1386 when the by-laws were not written until the last days of the previous government; That is, it is almost fourteen years that this law exists, without its by-laws being prepared and produced! Why is that? I insist the Ministry of Health take the issue of pricing seriously in this government. This is an important request of nurses; It is a real demand.

Another demand is the shortage of nurses; we do not have enough. Now in the statistics they show us, it is a comparison with the world average; I am not talking about that; The world average may be right, it may be wrong; I am talking about the need. We do not have as many nurses as our hospital beds need today. Now some say one hundred thousand [people], some say less, some say [more]; I do not specify a number because I do not know exactly, but I know we have a shortage of nurses. There should be enough nurses according to what is needed; It is too low. Of course, this is not something that can be done in a month or two; It takes some time, but it should be done at the right time, God willing.

Another requirement is the issue of job security. It has happened in the past years; it also happened in the period of Corona, that they called for those who are ready to come to work; They came and signed short-term contracts, then when their needs were met, they said, "get out!" So, with what encouragement does this person who does not have job security come to work and become a nurse? Therefore, job security is one of the various issues. Do not look at the nurse as a seasonal worker to call today, and say the next day that you are not needed, leave; No, job security! Of course, these have mechanisms that experts are aware of. Of course, there are other demands, but the time is over now; I will not continue. Friends, especially in the Ministry of Health, should follow these.

I would like to make two points related to health issues but unrelated to the issue of nurses, which are also important. One thing is about the country's health network that I have already relied on this health network. At one point in the 1360s and almost early 1370s, the reliance of the government and institutions was on health, on prevention, which had great effects; We have to pursue this; this is important. Prevention is better than cure; Treatment is necessary, not to neglect treatment but not to neglect prevention. It is required to rebuild this health network, which was established before and had many blessings, which had a lot of benefits; It still exists, [but] it is weak, it is not relevant; [Should] be strengthened, rebuilt. If the health network is really active, it can do great things at a lower cost.

The second issue is the issue of equitable distribution of doctors; fair distribution. Now [whether] we have a shortage of doctors, or we do not have a shortage, I do not enter into these discussions, the experts themselves know whether we have a shortage or not; But what I do know is that the distribution of doctors is not fair. In some parts of the country - in remote places - there are shortcomings; The fair distribution of the doctors should be considered. These were my statements.

Ask God Almighty for help, rely on God Almighty; In all the affairs of the country, in all the affairs of life, one should ask, ask, supplicate and trust in God; هُسبَحَ وُهَفِ اللّه یَلَع لَّ کَوَتَین َمَو Whoever trusts in God, God will suffice him; Know this. Of course, trusting in God does not mean not working; It is obvious; That is, let us work with confidence in the divine promise that if you work, God will bless you; Trust in God's promise.

We hope, God willing that your tomorrow will be better than your present and your future will be better than your past; And God willing, the people of Iran will benefit from your efforts and services, and may God Almighty reward all of you, reward the nurses; And to make the Iranian nation victorious and proud in the arena of confrontation with the enemies - in all arenas of confrontation - God willing.

May peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.