

---

Speaking at the opening of the event, Education Minister Misir Mardanov noted that the competition was held according to the Decree of President Ilham Aliyev of 1 June 2010 on celebration of 150th anniversary of the birth of Mirza Alakbar Sabir. He said that based on the Presidential Decree and order of the Ministry of Education the action plan was developed and heads of educational establishments were instructed to organize scientific, theoretical and practical events. Noting the organizational measures were taken over the past period of time, the Minister talked about conferences, seminars, round tables, art evenings and competitions held at education institutions of the country and devoted to the jubilee of the great poet. He underlined that the main event organized due to the birth anniversary of the great poet was the two-round writing competition among pupils of IX and XI classes of secondary schools. Noting that thousands of pupils took part in the district (city) round of the contest, the Minister highlighted the selection and submission of 95 essays to the Ministry of Education. According to him, Special Commission has checked essays and determined the winners of whom 5 pupils were awarded the first, 10 – second and 20 pupils – third level diplomas. Moreover, 21 pupils were awarded certificates of honour.

Mr. Mardanov underlined that the tradition of celebrating jubilees of great personalities, who have contributed much to the development of literature, art and culture of Azerbaijan, was launched by the nationwide leader Heydar Aliyev, and today it is continued under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev. He praised the Presidential Decree on celebration of 150th anniversary of the birth of Mirza Alakbar Sabir as another manifestation of the infinite love and respect to our historical past and the memory of greatest representatives of classical art. Noting M. A. Sabir was one of the best known literary figures of 20th Century Azerbaijan literature, the Minister talked about his life and activity, as well as innovations made by him in our literature. At the end of his speech, the Minister congratulated the winners and expressed his belief that they will become decent citizens of independent Azerbaijan.

A close relative of M. A. Sabir, associate professor of Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University Zemfira Tahirli underlined the importance of Presidential Decree and thanked the organizers of the competition devoted to the study of Sabir's heritage.

MP Nizami Jafarov, staff of Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University, Professor Zahida Khalil, Associate professor Fuzuli Asgarli gave a speech highlighting the importance of writing competition in terms of promotion and study of life and activity of great poet, and his contributions to the development of Azerbaijan satirical literature.

At the end, winners of competition were presented diplomas, certificates of honour and gifts.