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The 20th scientific conference of PhD students and young researchers opened on May 24, organized by the Ministry of Education.

Participants in the opening ceremony included deputy Minister of Education Jeyhun Bayramov, academicians, heads of higher education institutions, intelligentsia, PhD students and young researchers.

Held annually, the conference this time marked "The Year of Multiculturalism" in Azerbaijan.

In his remarks, deputy Minister of Education Jeyhun Bayramov said this year's conference occupied a special place in a series of events held under "The Year of Multiculturalism" and marking the 93rd anniversary of national leader Heydar Aliyev: "The conference creates good opportunities for youth to exchange their scientific ideas, which ensure sustainable development and prosperity of Azerbaijan. It also allows them to exchange views on theories and technologies that they introduced, and to enrich their scientific knowledge," he said.

The deputy Minister of Education said: "The role of science and education is rapidly growing today at a time when competition in the fields of politics, economy and information is strengthening, when natural resources are dramatically depleted and ecological balance is impaired. With human capital and intellectual resources lying at the heart of its development strategy, Azerbaijan is committed – as President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr Ilham Aliyev said – to turning oil capital into human capital," he noted.

Jeyhun Bayramov said education reforms conducted in Azerbaijan aimed "to raise a young generation with a new mindset and broad world view." "Wide opportunities were created for students to conduct researches, master advanced technologies and learn foreign languages."

He underlined the importance of expanding the role of science and education. "Strategic tasks and goals set by the State Strategy for Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan define development trends in Azerbaijan's education in accordance with the challenges of the 21st century. The average age of teaching and scientific staff at higher education institutions is high, and this prioritizes the training of young specialists," said Jeyhun Bayramov.

He highlighted the measures taken by the Ministry of Education to ensure development of science and education. The deputy Minister emphasized the necessity of building "such an education environment that will allow youth to fully realize their potential".

"Therefore the government pays special attention to highly intelligent young people, providing them with all the necessary opportunities so that they can fully realize their potential. In order to preserve the intellectual potential, the process of preparing highly qualified specialists is underway at leading higher education institutions both in the country and beyond."

Jeyhun Bayramov said: "Given the popularity of Thomson Reuters- indexed journals among the scientific community as well as in order to give Azerbaijani scientists and PhD students access to the company's citation index and get scientometric data on the activity of Azerbaijani scientists, the Ministry of Education signed an agreement on cooperation with Thomson Reuters. Under the agreement, 40 higher education institutions in Azerbaijan received access to products and services of Thomson Reuters, including Web of Science®, the most comprehensive and versatile research platform available. In order to ensure recognition of Azerbaijan's scientific achievements on an international scale and boost the research and publication activity of Azerbaijani scientists, the Ministry of Education plans to launch a competition to award authors whose papers are published in Thomson Reuters-indexed journals." "Happy future of our independent Azerbaijan depends on the level of youth's intelligence, and on their mastering national and universal values. Therefore, I wish all of you success in addressing these important challenges." The deputy Minister of Education also wished the conference success.

Other speakers noted the significance of involving youth in researches, and hailed work done on this front in recent years.

Twenty higher education institutions as well as Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences submitted a total of 656 theses to the two-day conference. Seventeen sections, including one on multiculturalism, headed by famous scientists were established to consider and discuss papers submitted by PhD students and young researchers.

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Materials of the conference will be published by Azerbaijan State University of Oil and Industry to be further circulated to participants.

Materials of the scientific conference of PhD students and young researchers are on the list (of the Higher Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan) of papers whose scientific results are recommended to be published.

After the plenary session, the conference featured panel sections.