

---

"SABAH Graduate" ceremony was held at Heydar Aliyev Center on June 4.

Participants in the event included Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva, Minister of Education Mikayil Jabbarov, members of parliament, state officials, representatives of private organizations, rectors of higher education institutions, education experts, teachers and students.

The ceremony participants first viewed "I'm SABAH" exhibition.

The event started with the playing of the state anthem of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The participants then watched a promotional video on SABAH groups.

First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mehriban Aliyeva's message to SABAH graduates was read out. In her message, Mehriban Aliyeva described SABAH project as one of the important initiatives implemented as part of "The State Strategy on the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan", which was approved by the President in 2013.

First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva wished first SABAH graduates success. She said educated youth have an important role to play in ensuring Azerbaijan's integration into the globalizing world. Mehriban Aliyeva also hailed SABAH volunteers' contribution to the organization of large-scale international events in the country.

SABAH graduates — student at Baku State University Gunay Imanzade and student at Azerbaijan Technical University Shahin Khalilov — highlighted study process in SABAH groups. They said the opportunities created by SABAH and knowledge and experience they got under the project will play an exceptional role in their future career.

Minister of Education Mikayil Jabbarov said it is symbolic that the first graduation ceremony of SABAH groups is held at the center named after national leader Heydar Aliyev. "Educated, skilled and well-prepared youth represent the future of our country. This is why an enriched and more exacting academic program has been introduced."

Mikayil Jabbarov said that taken under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, the measures to develop education play an invaluable role in raising young people as educated, competitive and worthy citizens. The minister described the First Vice-President's message as a sign of attention to education and youth.

Mikayil Jabbarov highlighted the opportunities created by SABAH groups, saying the project aims to improve quality of education, build a new and different environment, and prepare specialists in accordance with requirements of the labour market. The minister congratulated SABAH graduates and wished them success.

The ceremony ended with the playing of SABAH groups' anthem and the taking of a group photo.

SABAH groups were established in 34 specializations in 7 state higher education institutions in 2014-2015 academic year. SABAH groups now enroll more than 2300 students in 46 specializations in 11 higher education institutions.

A total of 722 SABAH students graduated in 2016-2017 academic year.

SABAH Volunteer project aims to ensure effective extra-curricular activity of SABAH students.

SABAH groups have a nearly 650-strong staff of teachers and professors, including selected university teachers, native speakers invited from Canada and the United Kingdom, and professionals employed by local and foreign companies in Azerbaijan.