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The opening ceremony of the International Steam Azerbaijan Festival 2023 was held on December 4 at the Baku Expo Centre with the support of the Ministry of Science and Education.

The opening ceremony was attended by officials from government agencies, members of the National Assembly, rectors, directors of research institutes under the Ministry of Science and Education, well-known members of the public, and other guests.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Minister of Science and Education Emin Amrullayev welcomed the guests and noted that the festival, traditionally held for the third time, is a prestigious and significant event in the field of education. The minister said that in the new science and education standards to be written in 2025, it is envisaged that some elements of STEAM will become part of the national curriculum. So, in the new standards, some elements of 3D robotics will be included in the content of the technology discipline. The Minister emphasized that the future goal is to ensure the all-round development of the next generation, rather than dividing it into humanitarian or technical aspects.

At the end of his speech, the minister thanked everyone who contributed to the organization of the festival and wished the participants success.

In his speech at the festival, the head of the project "Steam Azerbaijan," Igor Nazarov, spoke in detail about the project and the festival. Igor Nazarov said that now the Steam project covers 396 schools and more than 150,000 students all over the country, and 25 Steam centers are functioning. He noted that by 2026, the number of students in the project is planned to reach 280,000.

It was noted that teams from 11 countries would compete at the final stage of the festival. A total of 868 domestic and 159 foreign participants will compete at the final stage.

The jury of 96 people representing countries such as England, Norway, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Turkey, and Azerbaijan will participate in various competition categories at the SAF 2023—International STEAM Azerbaijan Festival, which will last until December 8.

It was noted that SAF 2023, organized at the international level, is held in the format of 12 competitions and 1 exhibition of innovative projects.

The purpose of the festival is to support STEAM-based education, nurture 21st-century skills among students, identify and network creative, digitally savvy students, and research international experience in innovation and digitalization.