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Prior to the Ceremony, Mikayil Jabbarov, Minister of Education, senior education workers and teachers, who were awarded with the Orders of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev, visited the Honorary Cemetery and paid tribute to the memory of national leader Heydar Aliyev and academician Zarifa Aliyeva, as well as laid flowers on their graves.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mikayil Jabbarov, Minister of Education, noted that this year, a group of education workers was awarded with the Orders of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev on the eve of the professional holiday. The Minister thanked the President on behalf of education workers, who were awarded honorary titles and medals for their contributions to the development of education in Azerbaijan.

Noting that the President highly appreciates the work of teachers and always respects education workers, Mikayil Jabbarov spoke about the achievements in the field of education. The Minister also underlined that the directives and recommendations, made by the President in his keynote speech in front of teachers and pupils of secondary school No. 148 in Baku on the Knowledge Day, related to upbringing the young generation and raising the youth in the spirit of national-moral values are one of the main duties of education workers.

According to the Minister, studies show that the number of people wishing to work as teachers has increased year by year: "2 years ago, the number of people who applied for the competition on the recruitment of teachers was 17.7 thousand people, but their number has increased by 41% and totaled 24 thousand people in the current year. It should be noted that the use of a transparent, impartial and flexible recruitment mechanism, which envisages the extensive use of ICT, directly affects the growth of interest in the teaching profession." According to the results of the competition, 3068 teachers have been employed and the level of taking up vacant positions has increased by 38%.

Noting that according to the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers, the incentive measures were applied to 1729 young specialists, who were employed by rural schools, Minister of Education also mentioned that this year, the number of those, who prefer rural schools, increased by 25 percent compared to previous school year and this was no coincidence. The Minister noted that the diagnostic assessment of knowledge and skills of more than 30 thousand teachers would be implemented in 3 cities and 9 regions of the country by the end of this year and their salaries would be increased since January 2016. Thus, a significant increase in the salaries of 40 percent of teachers in the country will be provided within a year.

Touching upon the purposeful measures implemented to improve the prestige of the teaching profession, Mikayil Jabbarov emphasized the importance of improving the level of professionalism among teachers in this regard: "Since 2014, a special project was launched for students, who have scored more than 500 points, in order to increase interest in the teaching profession. The Ministry of Education provides scholarships to 600 people. This year, the average score for students, who choose Teaching Specialties, increased and the number of prospective students, who have scored 500 and more than 500 points, was more than 37 percent compared to last year".

Expressing his views on improving the quality of education, the Minister said that 176 subject-oriented classes were opened in 4 directions in the 10th grades in 58 schools, which were selected as a pilot school, in order to allow pupils to better prepare for their chosen field of specialization: "Subject Olympiads and Knowledge Competitions play a key role in identifying talented pupils and developing their potential. This year, a record number of people - more than 222 thousand pupils attended the Republican Subject Olympiads. The achievements in general education led to the adoption of decision to not lower the minimum passing score, determined in the plan for admission to higher education institutions, for the first time in recent years.

At the end of his speech, Minister of Education congratulated the honorees - education workers and wished them success in their future activities.

Then, the awards were presented to the honorees - education workers and the commemorative photograph was taken.