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A solemn ceremony was held at Gulistan Palace on June 23 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University (AACU).

Prior to the event management and staff of the university visited the Alley of Honors to put flowers at the grave of national leader Heydar Aliyev.

Participants in the ceremony included state and government officials, parliamentarians, academicians, scientists from foreign countries, rectors of higher education institutions, and representatives of the diplomatic corps.

The ceremony started with the playing of Azerbaijan's state anthem. A film on the 40th anniversary of Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University was then screened.

Opening the ceremony, rector of AACU Gulchohra Mammadova thanked the President of Azerbaijan on behalf of the university staff for high state awards and titles.

The rector said the history of higher education in architecture and construction in Azerbaijan spanned 95 years. She highlighted the university's accomplishments throughout its history as well as its future plans. The rector hailed "an exceptional" role played by national leader Heydar Aliyev in founding and developing Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University. "The national leader always paid great attention to the university. Founded on the initiative of Heydar Aliyev in 1975, the university has made great strides since its establishment."

"Our university has now entered its new stage of development. Thanks to President Ilham Aliyev's attention state-of-the-art laboratories and centers have opened at the university in recent years," said Gulchohra Mammadova.

The rector drew the audience's attention to AACU's academic indicators, financial and technical capabilities and rich experience. "Our university has a total enrollment of around 7,000 students, who are served by nearly 550 professors, teachers and scientists. We have 700 foreign citizens representing 14 countries." "SABAH groups, which were initiated by the Ministry of Education with the aim of training highly-skilled competitive specialists for local and international markets, are successfully operating at our university," she added.

Deputy Prime Minister Abid Sharifov congratulated professors and teachers of AACU on the jubilee. He wished the staff of the university success in their "responsible and fruitful work to prepare highly-skilled specialists in different areas of the country's life".

Minister of Education Mikayil Jabbarov congratulated AACU's staff on the 40th anniversary. He highlighted the university's scientific and pedagogic activity, as well as the Azerbaijani government's attention to the development of science and education in the country. The Minister pointed to priorities and goals of education reforms, saying "the accomplishments in this area are continuous". "Globalizing higher education contributes to changing tools and cementing the ties between the education system and real economy. In today's environment, apart from fulfilling teaching and scientific functions, higher education institutions play the role of a driver of economic growth," he said.

Mikayil Jabbarov congratulated AACU staff on the jubilee and said the head of state signed an order conferring honorary titles upon them. The minister handed the awards to the university employees.

Parliamentarians, representatives of ministries and AACU's partner state and private companies congratulated the university's staff on the anniversary.

Some state and private companies were awarded certificates of merit by AACU management for their attention to higher education in the field of architecture and construction. A number of media representatives were also awarded for fruitful cooperation.

A letter of AACU management addressed to the President of Azerbaijan was read out.

The event then featured performance of AACU student ensemble and dance troupe.