Speech by Gary Jones, BP regional president for Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, at the launch event of the 'Master of science in computer science and data analytics' project

12 March 2020

Dear Minister Bayramov,

Dear Rector Pashayev,

Your Excellency Ambassador Litzenberger,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Introduction

Good morning.

Minister Bayramov, this is my first visit to your office and I'm really pleased to be here.

The Ministry of Education and BP have a solid track record of a fruitful partnership.

We have undertaken a number of valuable projects together.

And they all have a common goal – to help enhance the national capability in Azerbaijan.

I'm doubly pleased that today we are launching yet another exciting initiative.

But first, let me congratulate our implementing partner – ADA University – with their 14th anniversary.

Despite its young age, today, ADA is a place where many aspire to study.

Rector Pashayev, you and the whole ADA team have been doing brilliant work in bringing up a new generation of experts - young

people who will play their part in sculpting the future of this country. Congratulations!

I'm glad that our new joint project will serve the very same goal.

Now, let me tell you why I believe this initiative is really exciting and equally important.

Why data science is important

Today, **data is everywhere**.

Its volumes are growing faster than ever before, doubling every two years. And changing the way we live.

According to a Forbes article, by the end of 2020, about 1.7 megabytes of new information will be created every second for every human being on the planet.

The big data industry is now worth $189 billion and is set to reach $247 billion by 2022.

This makes knowing at least the basics of computer science and data analytics extremely important.

After all, here is where our future lies.

Data is used to power much of the transformative technology we see today - artificial intelligence, automation and advanced, predictive analytics.

Just like oil used to power technological breakthroughs and industrial revolutions in the past.

And if **data is the new oil**, then **knowing how to refine** it into business insights and intelligence is the key to unleashing its potential.

We can witness more and more of stories when data analytics boosted business transformation.

Amazon, Netflix, Facebook are some perfect examples how big data and predictive analytics being used to their full potential can **transform businesses into front-runners** of a given industry.

We have some amazing examples at BP when **using big data fundamentally changed the way we worked**. I'll give you two.

The first - we have developed a cloud-hosted data platform called ARGUS that holds data on our 2,500 wells around the world, available to any relevant engineer, anytime.

With its predictive analytics capability, well reviews that used to take days of preparation can now be done live using ARGUS, using material that's just a click away.

The second example - an acoustic system that we use to mitigate sanding in the ACG field.

Each hour we record a terabyte of data using such systems. That is like downloading 1,000 films at the same time.

It's not a secret that big data is the challenge in many industries, including oil and gas.

Handling large volumes of data and information, much of it diverse, unstructured, and increasingly real-time is challenging.

But **harnessed properly, big data is a big opportunity**, offering enormous value through improved knowledge and decision-making.

And while data analytics is on the uphill, there is a **growing demand for data scientists and analysts**.

As people are now understanding the gist of it and what analytics can provide us with.

Project info

That's why I'm proud that BP, on behalf of its partners in ACG, SD, BTC and SCP, will help ADA University launch a new master's degree programme in computer science and data analytics.

For the first time in Azerbaijan, this dual programme will award a scientific degree in these two demanded fields.

For this, ADA University will join their expertise with one of the leading international universities – the George Washington University.

About three years ago, together with our coventurers we supported the establishment of a state-of-the-art Centre for Data Analytics Research at ADA University.

Then, we said it was just a starting point in turning ADA into the regional hub for big data research and analysis.

Now, building on that, we believe that the new programme will **boost capacity-building in data analytics** in the country.

And eventually, bring up a new cohort of data scientists and analysts.

This new school of experts will help **transform big data into big value to power digital advancements** in all sectors of the local economy.

Conclusion

BP and its partners support a wide range of social investment initiatives in Azerbaijan.

Education is one of our priority focus areas in this regard.

In fact, today's project is one with the highest value among our other investments in the educational sector in Azerbaijan.

I'd like to thank ADA University for their commitment and readiness to translate this initiative from a plan on a paper into action.

I thank the Ministry of Education for their continuous support.

The success of our joint endeavors to date is undeniable. And I'm sure this new project will share the same glory.

Thank you to our co-venturers for standing hand-in-hand with us as we aim to contribute to the nation's capability development.

And finally, I thank my colleagues at BP for their paramount work to turn this and many other amazing sustainable development projects into reality.

I'm looking forward to congratulating in several years the first graduates of this programme.

The trailblazers, who will launch a **pipeline of new digital era experts in Azerbaijan**.

And let me finish with a quote: "The twenty-first century is a digital encyclopedia, and only those who are able to read it will succeed.'

Thank you.

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