

*The introduction of innovations in Uzbekistan is possible currently mainly thanks to machinery and equipment from abroad. However, within a short psna of time the situation can radically change.*

Khabibulla Murodkhujaev, head of the department for statistics of social sphere and sustainable development at the State Statistics Committee, has agreed to tell us more about the development of innovation-related activities in the country.

- About 2,000 innovations by more than 900 organizations and enterprises of our country were introduced during 2016. At the same time, most innovations implemented, that is, 1,816 of them, were aimed at modernizing enterprises using new efficient technologies. This means that the introduction of innovations in our country is mainly due to the import of machinery and equipment from abroad.

In addition, the number of employees engaged in scientific research and experimental development in the country has not changed significantly over the past 16 years.

To date, in Uzbekistan, the assignments for research and development, which is one of the most important indicators that assess the country's innovative activity, is 0.2% of GDP.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2013 the allocations for research and development in the Republic of Korea was 4.2% of GDP, in Japan this figure was 3.5%, in Germany - 2.9%, in the United States - 2.8%, in France - 2.2%, in China - 2.1%, in Great Britain and Canada - 1.6%, in the Russian Federation - 1.1%. In developing countries, this trend is relatively small.

The number of researchers, per million people, also shows that developed countries are much ahead of developing ones. In particular, in the Republic of Korea there are 6,533 researchers per million people, in Japan it is 5,195, while 4,494 in Canada, 4,355 in Germany, 4,125 in France, 4,108 in the UK, 3,984 in the United States of America, 3,085 in Russia, 1,071 in China, 581 in Egypt and 495 in Uzbekistan.

In particular, in the Strategy of Actions along Five Priority Areas for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021, special attention is paid to stimulating research and innovation activities, creating effective mechanisms for introducing scientific and innovative achievements into practice, education at higher educational institutions and research centers of scientific and experimental specialized laboratories, centers of high technology and technology parks.

Along with this, in the course of a direct dialogue with the people in the regions of the republic, the President of our country sets specific tasks for the revival of scientific potential in all regions and the effective use of intellectual potential in the integrated development of territories, the active involvement of young people in research activities. In the solution of these problems, it is very important to mobilize scientific research to solve real problems in the social and economic sphere, to ensure close integration of science and production, and, in turn, to create mechanisms for increasing the efficiency of the use of scientific and technological developments by scientists.

In order to further strengthen the role of academic science in the innovative development of the economy, the President of the country signed 17 February 2017 a resolution on measures to further improve the activities of the Academy of Sciences, organization, management and financing of research activities. The document provides for a wide range of concrete measures.

Also, in accordance with the Decree of the President, signed 30 June 2017, on measures to radically improve the conditions for the development of the information technology industry in the country, in order to create favorable conditions for the formation and active development of high-tech industries based on the use of ICT, further deepen the integration of science, education and production in the industry through the provision of additional benefits and preferences for developers and customers of information technology products, increasing exports that of ICT products, as well as stimulating the attraction of domestic and foreign investments, the Innovation Center for the Support of Development and Implementation of Information Technologies, Mirzo Ulugbek Innovation Center, was established.

At the same time, in order to ensure the accelerated innovative development of all sectors of the economy and social sphere on the basis of advanced foreign experience, modern achievements of world science, innovative ideas, developments and technologies, the Ministry of Innovation Development was established by the Presidential Decree of November 29, 2017. Three major new tasks are set for the new department:

- creation of a strategic planning system that allows to form future models of innovative development of priority spheres and industries on the basis of long-term scenarios of increasing the country's intellectual and technological potential;
- introduction of innovative forms of public administration that ensure the optimization and simplification of procedures for the provision of public services, increasing the effectiveness of public administration; comprehensive support and stimulation of research and innovation activities, especially creative ideas and developments of the younger generation, as well as the creation of favorable conditions for the active participation of talented youth in this activity;
- expansion of cooperation with leading foreign (international) organizations in the field of innovative activity, including through their involvement in the domestic market of know-how, nanotechnology and high-tech products (works, services) and a number of other similar tasks.

In turn, it will not be an exaggeration to say that the announcement by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2018 as the Year of Support for Active Entrepreneurship, Innovative Ideas and Technologies has become an important step on the path of innovative development of our country.

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