SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE, MALAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA, PhD, CON, AT THE 37TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY AWARD DINNER OF KATSINA STATE CREATION

Protocols

I am glad to stand before you today, to celebrate the 37th Anniversary of the creation of our beloved State. It is with gratitude to Allah that I wish to express my heartfelt congratulations to the people of Katsina State for witnessing this very historic day.

On the 23rd September, 1987 our State was created from the defunct Kaduna State, marking a new era of hope, growth, progress and self-determination.

As we commemorate this day, we must pay tribute to the former Military Head of State General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, whose visionary leadership made our state a reality. We must also honor the legacies of our founding fathers and our past leaders who paved the way for our progress.

On this historic day, we must reflect on our journey, rejoice our achievements and look forward to build a better future for our dear State. I called on every citizen of the state to continue to harness our collective strength, embrace innovations and work hard toward the progress of our state. Together by the grace of Allah (SWT) we will keep building a State that will be a proud for generations to come.

During the last 37 years, Katsina State has gone through SO many challenges which were transformed into opportunities for growth. Over the years, the State has made a lot of significant strides in different sectors including education, healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, etc.

As we celebrate this milestone, we recommit ourselves to fostering inclusiveness and social cohesion among our communities, as well as driving economic opportunities for all. We must also ensure the safety of lives and properties of our citizens.

We will continue to invest in critical infrastructure, support entrepreneurship and innovations, strengthen institutions and good governance. During the last fourteen months of our administration, we have positively changed the fortune of our State and that of our people. We have expanded access to quality education and improved the quality of teachers in revamping the education sector. In this regard, 7,325 teachers were recruited and trained, while a number of schools (both primary and secondary) were renovated and upgraded. We also procured and distributed teaching and learning materials to various schools. Recently, we sponsored 68 indigenes of the state to study Artificial Intelligence and Bio-economy at the People's Republic of

China. We have earlier this year awarded full scholarship to 41No. youths, from across the 34 Local Government Areas of the State to study Medicine (MBBS) in Egypt.

We have also improved healthcare service delivery. In our efforts to decongest general hospitals in the State, we awarded contracts for the upgrade of three Primary Healthcare Clinics to the status of full- pledged general hospitals at Faskari, Dandume and Charanchi, as well as completed those awarded by the previous administration at Kafur and Zango Local Governments. Also in an effort to provide access to healthcare services across the State, we renovated and equipped over 100 PHC clinics across the 34LGAS of the State. It is our intention to cover the whole State with at least one functional PHC clinic in each of the 361 Wards of the State.

In a bid to provide succor to patients with kidney problems, who hitherto travels outside the State to seek medical attention, we constructed a 26-bed capacity ultra-modern dialysis center. Work is also ongoing for the construction of Diagnostic Imaging Center which is to be equipped state-of-the-art equipment, all at General Amadi Rimi Specialists Hospital, Katsina. It is expected to be the best Imaging Center in the country and Katsina State is envisaged to be a health tourism center for patients from across the country.

My administration is committed to ensuring the safety of lives and properties in the State. Consequently, at the inception of my administration, we created a Ministry for Internal Security and Home Affairs. We also established and recruited 1,456 Community Watch Corps in the eight frontline Local Government Areas of the State, as well as equipped them with working tools to enhance their capabilities. Moreover, we are processing the recruitment of over 500 additional Community Watch Corps for ten vulnerable Local Governments. We have strengthened our collaboration with the security agencies and coordinate efforts to combat insecurity in the State. Agriculture which is the main stay of our economy receives much attention by this administration. We have invested heavily in this sector and arrangement is on the top gear for the transformation of agriculture in the State. We have established Irrigation Authority to support and guide our farmers effectively utilize their farms all season round. This year we procured over 40,000 bags of assorted fertilizer and sold to farmers at a subsidized price. The State Government also revived extension services, in which we trained and equipped over 300 Agricultural Extension workers to advise farmers on modern farming techniques.

Furthermore, to boost agricultural produce outputs, we intend to create Agric. Mechanization Center in all the 34 Local Government Areas of the State. During my recent working visit to China, we partner with a Chinese company to supply mechanized Agricultural equipment to the State. Approval has been granted for the procurement of tractors with implements, tillers, combined-harvesters and irrigation equipment at the cost of over N30billion of Naira.

Let me use this opportunity to call on people of Katsina State to unite and build a brighter future for the State, where everyone has access to quality education, healthcare and economic growth. Over the past three decades the State become a shining example for unity and innovation in Nigeria.

Our farmers, artisans, entrepreneurs, scholars and leaders contributed to the development of the State and ensured that we remain the cornerstone of Nigeria's rich history and a beacon of hope for future generations.

The State has produced great leaders who left indelible marks in the nation's political, economic and cultural landscape. Their legacies, hard work and loyalty have propelled our State to unprecedented development. From improved infrastructure to enhanced educational system, from health care reforms to agricultural advancements, we have much to celebrate and we are still counting.

Finally, I wish to, on behalf of my humble self, the Government and people of Katsina State, register our appreciating to the Special Guest of Honor, Prof Isa Ali Pantami for having shared with us his vast knowledge and wealth of experience. I must also thank all those who contributed and those that are Contributing to the development of our dear State. I wish you all safe journey back to your various destinations.

Katsina State, a beacon of hope, a land of hospitality, a land of greatness is worth celebrating! Happy 37th Anniversary, Katsina State.

Long live Katsina State

Long live Federal Republic of Nigeria.