**28th ANNIVERSARY OF EKITI STATE CREATION**

Being the Text of the 2024 Independence Day State Broadcast

by

**His Excellency,**

**Mr. Biodun Oyebanji**

Governor

of

Ekiti State, Nigeria

**Government House| Ado-Ekiti | Tuesday, October 1, 2024**

1. Ekiti kete, it gives me a great delight to address you on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the creation of our dear Ekiti State and the 64th Independence Day celebration of our great nation. This time last year, I gave my first State Broadcast on this occasion during which I reminisced on the historic struggle that gave birth to Ekiti State twenty-eight years ago.

1. It is therefore exciting to address you today to celebrate the birth of our dear Ekiti State and the Independence of our Country. For Nigeria, it is the celebration of freedom from colonial authority, for us in Ekiti, it is the celebration of the fulfillment of a promised land of self government and identity.
2. We will always be grateful to everyone that God used to give us this moment. I want to pay respect to the Founding Fathers especially our Royal Fathers who championed the struggles for the creation of Ekiti State through the Committee for the creation of Ekiti State under the chairmanship of Chief Deji Fasuan. I must also appreciate Aare Afe Babalola for his contribution towards the actualization of the Ekiti Project. I also want to pay obeisance to everyone who has had the opportunity of presiding over the affairs of this Great State before me either as a Military Administrator or democratically elected Governor, thank you all for your leadership roles and contributions to the development of our dear State.
3. It is difficult to believe that 28 solid years have thus passed since the State was created. While everything seems like yesterday, we have abundant reasons to thank God for the progress we have made so far. In terms of physical and economic development, our State has made significant strides. There is no doubt the creation of Ekiti State has accelerated the development of Ekitiland. Today, we are more than happy to affirm that Ekiti is now a trailblazer in every aspect of human development index, with those who started before us, now struggling to catch up with us in critical development indices.
4. For instance, in the recent data on education by the National Bureau of Statistics, Ekiti was adjudged the second most literate State after Lagos in the South West and one of the most literate in Nigeria. Similarly, the same Bureau also reported that Ekiti has the least out-of-school children in the South West.
5. We are very proud to say Ekiti is a front-liner in education, life expectancy, access to quality healthcare services, physical infrastructure development, access to water, peaceful co-existence, ease-of-doing business, gender equality, social inclusion among others. Gradually and assuredly, Ekiti is building a formidable profile of a progressive and development-oriented State that is poised for prosperity for all.

1. Ekiti kete, each generation is faced with different challenges, and the test of their place in history, is how well they are able to courageously confront the most pressing of their contemporary challenges. Nationally, we are battling with macroeconomic, security and infrastructural challenges. In Ekiti, we are confronted with the problem of low industrial presence which has made our State one with high graduate unemployment rate and a low revenue profile.

1. To respond to this, we came up with the Six Pillars of Administration with the primary objective of ensuring a shared prosperity for all. It is gratifying to note that our efforts are already yielding fruits across all sectors. We are not only meeting targets, we have surpassed targets in many instances.
2. We believe in inclusive growth and sustainable development without leaving anyone behind. As it can be seen in our efforts so far, our Government is very focused and strategic in our development drive. We want to ensure every policy and programme of Government is connected to the chains of Ekiti Development Master Plan and the Six Pillars of Administration to deliver the shared prosperity promise. We are also deliberate in our plan that every Government spending must lead to job creation, inclusive growth and sustainable development. In the last two years since we came on board, we are glad to report that we have made some giant strides in different aspects of administration in accordance with our social contract with Ekiti people**.**
3. Law and order is the primary responsibility of every government, Accordingly, we have made security of life and property our topmost priority. As a State, we have, like many other parts of the country, had to contend with occasional opportunistic attacks of ‘hit-and-run” kidnappers, I am glad that we have been able to bring them to book while we continue to do our best to prevent future recurrence.

1. Similarly, we have been able to end the frightful incidence of street hoodlums who troubled the city of Ado-Ekiti in recent months. We have arrested them and they are currently facing trial. I therefore want to assure you that we will continue to do our best to protect you while we also appeal to you to help the Government by providing helpful information that can assist the security agencies to prevent and fight crimes in our dear State.
2. Let me therefore use this opportunity to express my profound appreciation to all the security agencies in the State such as the Police, the Army, the DSS, the Civil Defence, the Amotekun, the Agro Marshal and other community based vigilante volunteers for their efforts and sacrifice.
3. In addition to the different security initiatives that our Government has adopted, we have also continued to pass laws in cooperation with the Ekiti State House of Assembly, for the progress of our State. These laws have come into effect and they have contributed to some of the rapid developments that our State is witnessing at the moment. We are also collaborating with the Local Governments/LCDAs to deepen service delivery at the grassroots level.
4. And to ensure that the engine of Government runs smoothly at all times, we have kept to our promise to always promptly attend to the welfare of our workers. At the wake of subsidy removal and its imperatives, Ekiti was one of the few states that introduced a wage award for all workers to ameliorate the impact of subsidy in addition to other interventions.

1. We not only pay salaries as and when due, we have cleared some outstanding salaries, leave bonuses and monetary benefits of previous promotion exercises. In addition, we have committed ourselves to an accelerated liquidation of outstanding gratuity to our pensioners. Because of our commitment to honour our responsibility to our workers at all times, the State has continue to enjoy peaceful industrial atmosphere.
2. Education remains the bedrock of all human development. It is the springboard through which new ideas, innovation and creativity sprout. It is also a grooming and nurturing industry through which knowledge, culture and aspiration of a people are transferred from one generation to another.
3. In today’s world of innovation and creativity, the knowledge economy is the most forceful and dominant, as it is at the roots of all technological advancements. Therefore, we are very committed to ensuring that our education sector is not only modern and relevant but that it continues to produce competitive outcomes and global players.
4. As you can all bear witness, our schools both at primary and secondary levels have witnessed a lot of tremendous improvement in both physical and pedagogical infrastructure. We have invested in continuous recruitment and training of teachers as well as retooling of instructional materials. Our technical colleges as well as schools for special education have witnessed remarkable turnaround.

1. Our vision for the Ekiti Knowledge Zone as an innovation city has received a boost and efforts are on top gear to see the vision through. We are committed to the creation of opportunity for our youths in the knowledge ecosystem. We are convinced that the future of job, career and prosperity will ultimately be decided by the level of investment in science, technology and innovation. We are therefore positioning our youths for this future through the knowledge zone and other initiatives. As a precursor to its eventual emergence, an innovation Startup Garage has been inaugurated by this administration to serve as a convergent point for ideation, innovation and creativity.
2. We believe that the pathway to wealth creation is productivity, to achieve this, we must have a healthy and vibrant population and this can only be actualized through the provision of accessible, affordable and quality health care. Accordingly, all our health centres, general hospitals as well as the Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital (EKSUTH) are all going through different levels of renovation and retooling. We have also improved the condition of service of our health practitioners.
3. Ekiti kete, I hardly have to tell you about our numerous infrastructural development interventions across the State. Such infrastructure include: roads, bridges, rural electrification, water, power, urban renewal projects and others. While some of the projects have been completed and commissioned, a good number of them will also be commissioned during our second year anniversary while some are still ongoing. We are also supporting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the provision of cheaper funds for business owners in collaboration with the Bank of Industry (BOI) and other relevant financial institutions. This is with a view to achieving wealth creation and improving the State’s economy.
4. Some of our signature projects such as the Ado-Ekiti fly-over, the first phase of the Ring Road, the Ifaki-Iworoko-Ado-Ekiti road among others are nearing completion. Similarly, we have brought electricity supply to many communities which had not had electricity in decades, just as we continue to expand access to clean water across the State. The Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP) is now effective with the award of contracts for some rural roads, while others are being processed for award.
5. Our Government has demonstrated more than enough commitment in agriculture and food security development. As part of our policy to ensure abundant food production, our government has helped farmers to clear and plough thousands of hectares of land. Government also supplied subsidized fertilizer, seedlings and chemicals where necessary. Even though the rains came late in the year, we are confident that food prices will respond positively to these interventions at the end of the farming season. It is gratifying to note that 913 youths of the State are involved in the ‘Bring Back the Youth into Agric Programme’. I spent the greater part of last Saturday to inspect their farms at Oke-Ako, Iyemero and Igede Farm Settlements and I was impressed with what I saw. I also intend to visit other locations at Emure, Ise and Aramoko in due course. I am using this opportunity to appeal to the LG/LCDA chairpersons that are yet to enlist in this programme to do so immediately.
6. Ekiti kete, as you know our administration will be two years on October 16, 2024, just about two weeks away, I will be addressing you more comprehensively during my **State of the State Address** during which I am legally obligated to give details of our stewardship to Ekiti people at the House of Assembly Complex.
7. Before I end this address however, I want to express my profound appreciation to His Excellency, the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, *GCFR* for his strong support to our State. We are deeply grateful for his numerous interventions and approval of critical federal infrastructure in our State. We are grateful for his support for us, especially in tackling security challenges that confronted us early in the year. His intervention has provided us with the right atmosphere for the growth of our State. I am also grateful to Ekiti State National Assembly Caucus under the leadership of Senator Michael Opeyemi Bamidele, the Rt. Hon. Speaker and members of the Ekiti State House of Assembly, Exco members and other political appointees for their support and encouragement which has resulted in the rapid development of the State.
8. I also want to express my sincere appreciation to all our party leaders, my predecessors, leaders of thought, traditional rulers, religious leaders, labour movement, the Honourable Minister of Solid Mineral Development and other stakeholders for their support and abiding faith in our administration.

1. As I end this address I want to assure you that we remain committed to our social contract with you and that your welfare and well-being remain our sole pursuit. Thank you for trusting our leadership.
2. Thank you for listening and God bless.
3. Once again, happy anniversary!

Long Live Nigeria

Long Live Ekiti State.

**Biodun Oyebanji**

Governor, Ekiti State, Nigeria