

## Green Horizon honours Jigawa's 70's Music Star, Salmal Albasu

Dignitaries from all walks of life gathered to honour one of Jigawa State's celebrated daughters, Malama Salmal Albasu, and her singing group, bringing life to the normally silent community of Albasu in Sule Tankarkar Local Government Council of Jigawa State, Northern Nigeria.

The idea of recognising and honouring individuals who played a significant positive role in the development of society was conceived by Green Horizon as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Priority is given to such personalities to whom society has not accorded the recognition and appreciation they deserve. Green Horizon is committed to seeking out such individuals, giving them a token of appreciation so that they are remembered for what they have contributed to society, which should encourage others to do the same.



Salmal '*Mai wakar soriye*' and her group left a lasting impression on history through their music. Despite popular opposition in the 1970s, Salmal championed the course through her songs to get society to accept the value of education. Salmal gained popularity in northern Nigeria. She won awards for her singing in local contests and eventually showcased her talent in Nigeria's National Festival of Arts at that time. Her popularity spread beyond Nigeria. She even visited the nearby Niger Republic city of Damagaram on a musical tour.

Green Horizon made the decision to honour Salmal and her group as a follow-up to a 2019 BBC interview with Salmal in the hopes that this would serve as motivation for young people to work towards a just cause for the good of humanity. "When we stumbled on the BBC interview, we felt we needed to honour and appreciate her and also showcase her as an inspiration to youths that wherever you come from, whoever you are, you can be recognised and appreciated if you make positive contributions that will have an impact on the lives of average Nigerians," said Aisha Ado Abdullahi, the Managing Director of Green Horizon. She stated that the singer was honoured for her positive contributions to promoting child education more than 50 years ago, when there was intense societal opposition to western education in the northern part of Nigeria. The Green Horizon's Managing Director also emphasised Green Horizon's desire to recognise and honour more people, particularly from northern Nigeria, who have made significant contributions to society.

In his remarks, the Chairman of Green Horizon, Muhammad Tabi'u, a Professor of Law and a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), said those sent to school in response to Salmal's campaign have gone on to become important personalities in their chosen fields, especially in Jigawa and Kano States. Prof. Muhammad Tabi'u further stated that "50 years down the line, the issues she campaigned about are still with us. Is it education, unity, or the need to revive our traditions and culture in Hausa land? There are some of the issues whose relevance you could have thought would decline; but instead, their relevance has continued to increase.

Other notable dignitaries who attended the event included Dr. Lawan Yunusa, the Jigawa State Commissioner of Education, Science, and Technology, and Alhaji Ibrahim Yaya Aminu, the Makama of the Dutse Emirate, who spoke on behalf of the Dutse Emir. The Makama expressed gratitude to Green Horizon for honouring Salmi and recognising the crucial role she played in society. The singer's musical career was described by Alhaji Muhammad Adamu, the traditional Ward Head of Albasu, who had been in charge of the neighbourhood for more than 55 years. Salmi began as a neighbourhood performer and rose to national fame over time, according to him.

The awarding of a plaque, textile print materials, and ₦200,000 in cash to Malama Salmi by Prof. Tabi'u on behalf of Green Horizon was the high point of the ceremony. Her fellow singers also received ₦20,000 and textile print materials each. Jigawa State Government chipped in by naming a junior secondary school in the district after Salmi. According to the Jigawa State Commissioner of Education, the singer deserved the honour because of her contribution to the growth of education in not only the Gumel Emirate and the former Kano State but also of all of northern Nigeria. Salmi, who was overwhelmed, said receiving the honour was one of her happiest days. "I have never been this happy," she said. "I've received honours before, but not to this degree. I appreciate it."

