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*Interview with Vicky Njoki
 Ngari-Wilson, Miss East
 Africa UK 2008*

Let's put systems
 into place for our
 children's welfare



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Kenyan-born Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson, is the Miss East Africa UK 2008. In an exclusive interview with Africa News, she reveals what she plans to do with this prestigious title and the qualities of her ideal man.

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Robin Rhode: Who Say Who



This autumn, The Hayward presents the first UK exhibition by South African artist Robin Rhode.

A recognised talent on the international art scene, Rhode has a growing reputation for brilliantly

inventive performances, photographs and drawings. Robin Rhode: Who Saw Who, is curated by Stephanie Rosenthal, the Chief Curator at The Hayward. Using simple materials such as chalk, spray paint and charcoal, Rhode turns the pavements, streets and walls of his environment into his paper, canvas and backdrop, creating his own reality in the heart of urban society. These two dimensional drawings are then brought to life by performance and captured on film or photograph, as the artist or a doppelganger tries to blow out a chalk candle, juggle with charcoal balls or ride a chalk bicycle.

Recently, he has moved towards more poetic abstract forms in paintings and drawings and has begun to make sculpture.

Rhode also creates site-specific works on Southbank Centre's site.

Visual Arts

23 September - 7 December
The Hayward, 10am-6pm (daily).
Late night Fridays until 10pm.

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www.southbankcentre.co.uk
£7.50

Mad Professor's Live Dub Show

This sonic dub genius creates cutting-edge reggae that unites Africa with Jamaica.

Mad Professor's live dub show is a journey into an onstage manipulation of samplers, mixers and effects processors that create a dense, shifting collage of sounds

and rhythms. Joining the Mad Professor are vocalists Aisha, Sister Audrey and steel pan virtuoso Panafricanist adding their own unique colours to the mix.

Music

Friday 5 September 2008
Time: 9.30pm
Southbank Centre
Box Office: 0871 663 2586
Address: Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX
Nearest stations: Waterloo, Embankment
www.southbankcentre.co.uk
£20



Lekan Babalola



Fela Kuti, Cassandra Wilson. Lekan Babalola and his band are joined by Indian master tabla player Pritam Singh for a world rhythm summit.

Music

Sunday 7 September 2008
Time: 5pm
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An evening of eclectic rhythms. Infectious grooves of Afrobeat, deep funk bass lines and reggae are united by Lekan Babalola, percussive rhythms of juju, jazz solos, and radiant rhythms of choice for the likes of

Tunday Akintan

London-based Akintan is the creator of yorubeat, an infectious fusion of Afrobeat, juju and fuji music, and Western contemporary styles.

Come and celebrate the launch of London African Music Festival and Friday Tonic's autumn season, by enjoying some of the most energetic live dance music around as Nigerian singer, songwriter and saxophonist Akintan brings his 12-piece Yorubeat All Stars to Southbank Centre. Featuring Aki Piavarinne (saxophones), Charly Richardson (tenor sax), Jerome Harper (trombone), Rowan Porteous (trumpet), U'mau Otuoko

and Nicole Airey (vocals), Daniel Cerejo (keyboards), Omri Shay (guitar), Bolaji Olajojo (bass), Tosin Ekolie (drums) and Godwin Awala (percussion).

Music

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Kanda Bongo Man



while the hands move to follow the hips, is a high-energy live performer who is driven by mesmerising guitar lines and bass grooves.

Music

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Classic Congolese rumba from one of Africa's greatest musical legends, the one and only Kanda Bongo Man. The creator of the 'kwassa kwassa' dance rhythm, where the hips move back and forth

Omar Puente's Cuba-Nigeria Project

In April this year Cuban violinist Omar Puente made his first visit to Lagos, Nigeria to perform at the Lagos International Jazz Festival.

From the late-night jam sessions, the Cuba-Nigeria Project was born. Leading the ten-strong Lagos contingent is Kunle Olasaju whose

virtuoso guitar riffs provide the pulse that re-unites Yoruba motherland rhythms with Afro-Cuban beats and makes this a true musical adventure.

Music

Saturday 6 September 2008
Time: 2pm
Southbank Centre
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Richard Dowden



Richard Dowden knows Africa like no other foreign correspondent, and he discusses his landmark book Africa: Altered States, Ordinary

Miracles in the light of this experience. Dowden first arrived in Africa to cover Idi Amin's Uganda in 1971, and has stayed for almost 40 years, patiently listening to the real stories and uncovering the real truths that much war reporting and economic analysis cannot convey. Join him as he talks about his fascinating experiences, and takes questions from the audience.

Literature & Spoken Word

Monday 22 September 2008,
Time: 7.45pm
Southbank Centre
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Marriage visa age raised from 18 to 21

The UK will increase the age for applying for a marriage visa from 18 to 21, the Home Office has said.

This is part of a move to fight forced marriages in the country. Statistics show that 30 per cent of the cases dealt with by the Government's Forced Marriage Unit involved victims aged between 18 and 21.

The Home Office announced five key proposals which include raising the age of sponsorship for a marriage visa from 18 to 21 and asking foreign spouses to enter into an agreement to learn English before they come to the UK.

The Home Office also proposes introducing a power to revoke leave to remain where there is evidence that the marriage route has been abused; requiring all sponsors to register their intention to marry overseas before they leave the UK; and ensuring through a code of practice that specialist teams can identify vulnerable people at risk of forced marriage.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said: "Forced marriage leads to victims suffering years of physical and mental abuse and - in extreme cases - unlawful imprisonment and rape. It has no place in our society. That is why the Government is determined to do everything it can to

stamp it out and to ensure that victims receive the help and support they need.

that a young person will know in advance that a marriage will take place overseas and who their

"Forced marriage leads to victims suffering years of physical and mental abuse and - in extreme cases - unlawful imprisonment and rape. It has no place in our society. That is why the Government is determined to do everything it can to stamp it out and to ensure that victims receive the help and support they need. That is why we are raising the age limit for visas, checking anyone entering into a marriage does so of their own free will, and demanding that those coming to the UK learn English."

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith

"That is why we are raising the age limit for visas, checking anyone entering into a marriage does so of their own free will, and demanding that those coming to the UK learn English."

Under the new rules, any British citizen applying to 'sponsor' someone to come to the UK as their spouse will have to declare their intention before they leave the UK and marry abroad. This will mean

prospective partner will be.

Practical guidance is also being introduced so the UK Border Agency staff can spot any risk of abuse or those who are vulnerable to forced marriage and prevent them from being coerced into marriage. In these cases we will make clear what the rights of victims are and how the marriage visa will be dealt with.

Tough new rules will mean that



Before they come to the UK, spouses will need to sign up to an agreement to learn English. Soon after their arrival, the UKBA will check they are fulfilling their promise. If they are not, their leave could be cancelled.

Border and Immigration Minister Liam Byrne: "British citizens have the right to marry whoever they choose. But we want newcomers to succeed in our society and sign up to the standards we have in com-

anyone abusing the marriage visa system will be removed from the UK by the UKBA under a new power to revoke people's right to stay in the country.

The Government believes that those who stay in the UK must have a good grasp of English to ensure they integrate into British life.

mon. That means freedom, not being forced to marry someone, and it means newcomers quickly acquiring a command of English, with consequences for those who break the rules."

Female migrant workers risk being paid less than minimum wage

Female migrant workers in the UK are more likely than any other group to be paid less than the national minimum wage (NMW), a new TUC research reveals.

Reports of the abuse of migrant workers have become increasingly common. The research - commissioned by the TUC's Commission on Vulnerable Employment and carried out by the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford - aimed to investigate the available information to uncover the reality of working life for migrant workers.

The report found that migrant workers were much more likely to experience problems at work, and highlighted a number of worrying trends: Recent migrants work lon-

ger hours per week than most other workers - for example 55 per cent of recent migrants work 31-48 hours per week, and 15.4 per cent work more than 48 hours per week, compared to 48.3 per cent and 13 per cent of workers generally. Migrant workers are more likely to be working as temps or in insecure work (for example not having a written contract) than any other workers.

Recent migrant workers are more than twice as likely as other workers to be earning less than the appropriate NMW for their age. Women who are recent migrants to the UK are 1.5 times more likely than male migrant workers to be paid less than the NMW. Women who migrate to work in the UK therefore face a disproportionate risk of being

illegally underpaid - with around 35,000 denied the NMW.

TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber said: "The rogue employers who underpay the NMW deserve zero tolerance. The NMW is making a real difference to the lives of many low paid migrant workers, and we must continue to crack down on those mean bosses not paying their staff the legal wage to which they are entitled.

"The TUC's Commission on Vulnerable Employment heard many complaints from migrant workers, including excessively long hours, no contract and a complete lack of health and safety training.

"Belonging to a trade union is the best form of defence a worker can have against

exploitative bosses. UK unions are stepping up their efforts to organise migrant workers to stop employers from using a poor grasp of English or ignorance of UK employment law as an excuse to treat people badly."

COMPAS reviewed the pay, working hours, type of work and accommodation of recent migrant workers who have been living and working in the UK for less than 10 years, in the West Midlands and in the East of England/East Midlands (both areas where there has been high levels of recent migration). National information about migrant workers, such as the Government's Labour Force Survey (LFS), was also included in the report.



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Foreigners who commit serious offences face automatic deportation

Foreigners who want to stay in the UK and become British citizens will have to obey the law and speak English, the new draft Immigration and Citizenship Bill states.

Under the new Bill, foreigners who commit serious offences will face automatic consideration for deportation, and even minor offences will delay access to citizenship by up to three years.

The reform is aimed at ensuring that foreign nationals wishing to become British citizens earn the right to stay.

A new Home Office polling shows there is public support for the new proposals. A Mori poll carried out for the Home Office revealed that: 70 per cent of the public think that newcomers should earn the right to stay in Britain while 83 per cent think that immigrants in Britain should be made to learn English. The poll also shows that 69 per cent agree that newcomers should be penalised on the path to citizenship if they don't obey Britain's laws.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith



said: "In recent months we have listened to people across Britain and the message is clear - they want those who want to make Britain their home to speak English, to work hard, and to earn the right to stay here.

"We are making the biggest changes to our immigration system for a generation, and part of that is

making sure those who stay in the UK make a positive impact on their local community."

Under the Bill, UK Border Agency officers at foreign ports and airports will have new powers to cancel visas. It also strengthens civil penalties for those who bring passengers without the right papers and clandestine entrants to the UK.

The Bill proposes selective migration, and puts a clear legal duty on migrants to ensure they have permission to be in the UK, for example under our new points system.

It also introduces a single, streamlined power of expulsion for those without permission.

The Bill introduces automatic bans on returns with new powers to exclude offenders and powers to require those who are expelled to repay costs to taxpayers if allowed to come back.

It also confirms tough measures to prevent organised illegal immigration by attacking illegal working with civil penalties for employers

who do not make the necessary checks.

Under the Bill, citizens and permanent residents will have full access to benefits, but migrants will have to contribute a little extra to the cost of local services.

The Home Office confirmed that newcomers will have to pay a little extra before they become citizens to create a fund of tens of millions of pounds a year to help police, schools, councils and local health services to use the money to deal with the short-term pressures of migration in their areas.

Border and Immigration Minister Liam Byrne said: "Britain is not anti-foreigner, we're a welcoming, tolerant place. But we do expect newcomers to sign up to a deal if they want to stay and build a life in Britain.

"The public overwhelmingly supports the idea of newcomers earning their right to stay. Today we show how we'll make these ideas law, hand in hand with our new points system for selective migration, like the one that's worked so well in Australia."

Careless drivers who kill face five years in prison

Motorists who kill in the UK whilst avoidably distracted at the wheel now face prison under new careless driving laws which come into force on 18th August.

The new offences will, for the first time, allow courts to imprison drivers who cause deaths by not paying due care to the road, or to other road users.

Avoidable distractions which courts will consider when sentencing motorists who have killed include: using a mobile phone (calling or texting), drinking and eating, applying make-up, anything else which takes their attention away from the road and which a court judges to have been an avoidable distraction.

The new laws will also penalise uninsured, disqualified or unlicensed drivers who kill. The new offences will carry custodial sentences of up to five years for causing death by careless driving, and up to two years for causing death by driving while unlicensed, disqualified or uninsured.

Prior to the introduction of these new

laws, the maximum sentence for those convicted of causing death by careless, uninsured or unlicensed driving was a maximum £5000 fine and penalty licence points.

Justice Minister Maria Eagle said: "Drivers who kill through carelessness will no longer be able to walk away from court with just a fine. Neither should uninsured or unlicensed drivers who deliberately flout the law.

"Driving requires full concentration at all times. A moment's distraction can make the difference between life and death."

Road Safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick said: "The Government is committed to continually improving safety on Britain's roads. Under the Road Safety Act we have already brought in tougher penalties for drivers who use hand-held mobile phones at the wheel." He said the introduction of these new offences is the latest step to tackle bad driving and further improve safety on our roads.

"Last year the number of people killed fell below 3,000 for the first time since records began in 1926 but eight people are still dying on the roads each day. Where carelessness - or an uninsured, disqualified or unlicensed driver - causes a death it is right that the driver should face tough penalties," Fitzpatrick said.

ACPO spokesman on roads policing and Deputy Chief Constable Gwent Police Mick Giannasi said: "Careless drivers put themselves and others at risk every time they get behind the wheel of a car. Despite good progress in recent years to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the UK's roads, more can be done to prevent the unnecessary loss of life. The introduction of this legislation will hit home the message that driving is a hazardous activity that requires total concentration."

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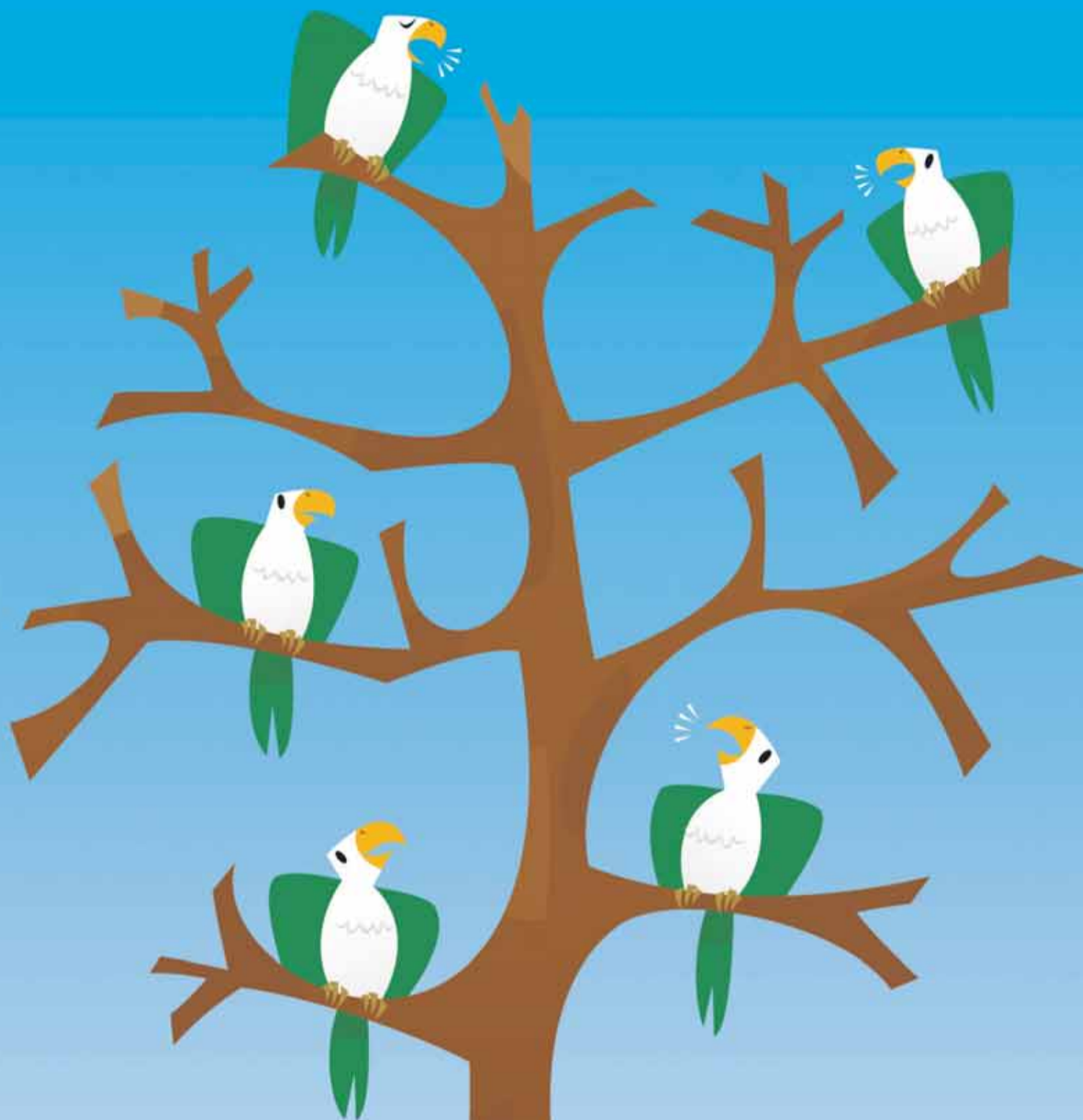
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Netherlands offers improved protection for abandoned women

The Government of Netherlands has taken a move that will save many abandoned immigrant women and those who are victims of domestic violence.

In a recent letter to the Dutch Lower House of Parliament, Justice Minister Ernst Hirsch Ballin and Justice State Secretary Nebahat Albayrak revealed that immigrant women who have legally resided less than three years in the Netherlands but fell victim to domestic violence or have been left behind in the country of origin against their will, will be eligible for continued residence permits more quickly.

The arrangement is intended to provide better protection to these women and their children.

Women who are forced to stay behind in their country of origin by their spouse often have to face very difficult circumstances. If they still want to be eligible for residence in the Netherlands, there must be compelling humanitarian grounds. The members of the Government are proposing a number of measures to provide more clarity on the cir-

cumstances leading up to the decision. From now on, factors that are taken into account are: the extent to which the woman is rooted in Dutch society, any help from family in the country of origin, the risk she runs of a forced marriage, the possibility of getting a divorce in the country of origin, the situation in which her children in the country of origin actually are, how long the child has gone to school in the Netherlands, if the child in the country of origin has access to education and the question of whether the child has Dutch nationality.



Ministers also said that foreign partners who fall victim to domestic violence in the first three years of their stay in the

Netherlands and who leave their partner for this very reason, will no longer have to report all their cases to the police. Reporting the act of violence to the police may also be a reason to grant continued residence, provided that the victim has sufficiently demonstrated that the violence actually took place.

In addition to a medical statement from a doctor, other information will in the future be accepted as proof, such as a statement from the women's shelter, or statements from relevant care workers, social workers, mental health care institutions, local organisations for domestic violence or the domestic violence advice and support centre.

The Government has also decided that it will no longer be necessary for the victim to have broken up the relationship herself.

People in the Netherlands who are faced with domestic violence - victims, onlookers as well as perpetrators are encouraged to call the national domestic violence helpline (0900 126 26 26) and or visit the www.steunpunthuiselijkgeweld.nl

EU advised to give priority to introduction of Blue Card

Bruegel Paper: Blue Card could make Europe more attractive in competition for talent

By Stephen Ogongo

European Union has been advised not to regard blanket harmonisation of legal immigration or integration policies as an urgent priority. A new policy brief from Bruegel suggests that the only exception to this rule should be high-skilled immigration.

Mr. Jakob von Weizsäcker, a researcher at the Bruegel and the author of the "New priorities for European immigration policy" notes that preferences among member states are generally well aligned when it comes to high-skilled immigration. He argues that a common European solution could make Europe much more attractive in the global competition for talent.

One of the main policy recommendations of the Paper is that the EU Blue Card draft directive should be strengthened for the EU to participate successfully in the global competition for talent.

"In particular, the Blue Card needs to become more readily transferable so that it genuinely offers access to the entire EU labour market. At the same time, concerns about brain drain should be taken seriously, not least by offering developing countries an opt out clause," Mr. Von Weizsäcker writes.

The paper argues in favour of EU coordination of irregular migration, noting that immigration pressures are set to increase in the coming years.

When it comes to Asylum, the Paper observes that EU policies to coordinate asy-

lum policies have been successful at reducing the number of asylum application. It, however, questions to what extent Europe still does justice to its ambition to provide shelter to people who are in need of protection.

The Paper notes that "perhaps the time has come to acknowledge that asylum policy which upholds European values is a European public good that should to a larger extent be provided through joint financing so that the burden of generous countries like Sweden is shared better within the EU."

There must be a balance in the EU's efforts to fight irregular immigration, the Paper argues. The tighter controls currently being applied will only slow the inflow of irregular migrants but not solve the problem, the Paper says. "Tighter controls should be

combined with better and common humanitarian standards and an agreement on continuous 'earned regularisation' as an alternative to denial-induced sporadic mass regularisations."

The Paper proposes the creation of a 'new Nansen' scheme to effectively help refugees. Under this scheme, 25,000 humanitarian immigration slots per year should be created, the funding and allocation of which are to be organised at European level.

Bruegel is a Brussels-based think tank devoted to international economics. It was created in Brussels in early 2005 with the intention of bringing a new voice into Europe's economic policy discussions.

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PUBLISHER: Stranieri in Italia,
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PRINTING PRESS: Harmsworth Printing
Nothcliffe House, Meadow Road, Derby DE1 2DW.

Gifty Naa D.K., a woman of many talents

By Solange Moffi

It wouldn't be wrong to say that Chaka Khan's "I'm Every Woman" is the most appropriate of titles for Gifty Naa DK's life. The Ghanaian artist who defines herself as an all-round performer and multi-instrumentalist is quite an amazing woman.

Gifty set foot in Britain in 1979, as part of the Bokoor ("cool") band, touring and performing nationally to teach drumming around the country. In the early 1990s, she decided to make it on her own, releasing two albums, including the very soulful and pleasant "Etome" in 1998.

A woman of many talents, Gifty also developed a career as a hairstylist, opening her first salon, "It Will Grow Back" in East London in the early 2000s.

She was a hair design pioneer, with "the tree hairstyle", which owed her commissions by the Hackney Museum and the organisers of the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002.

"It Will Grow Back" specialises in braiding, from conrows to corkscrew to twists, and although Gifty had relocated the business in North London, she is now operating and runs all her activities from her home in Old Street.

And this is not all. About four years ago, Gifty turned herself into an arts & crafts dealer, and founder of Boko Arts, which sees her ship the finest Ghanaian arts and crafts to London. Her selection of crafts includes masks, drums, mural friezes/fresques, human size statues, which she sells at very affordable prices, starting at £10.



Gifty displaying a wooden Zulu warrior

She will be hosting a showroom and sale from Friday 26th September to Sunday 28th September.

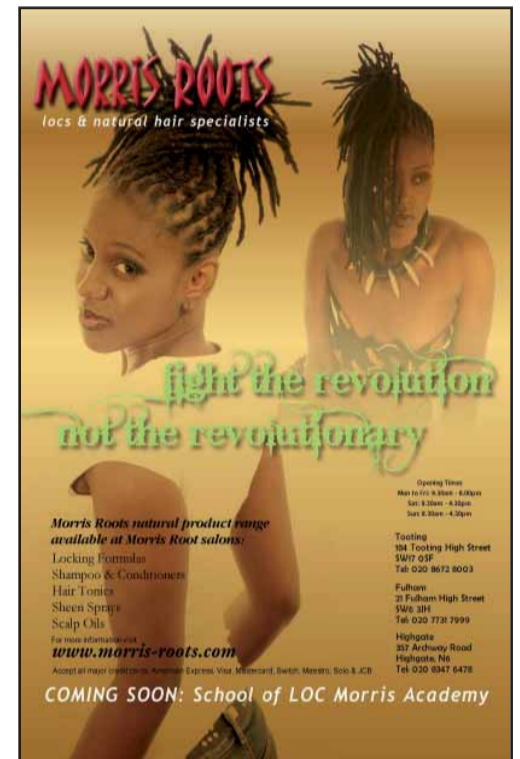
But which of these many caps does she prefer wearing? Without hesitation Gifty clearly states: "Music is my walking stick! I feel safe with music around: it gives me confidence" So, after performing across the country and in the capital, notably at the Ghanaian Embassy and the Africa Centre in

Covent Garden, why hasn't she been seen on stage much lately? Gifty confesses that she's been the victim of "many ill-intentioned people in the business" and that a lot of her music has been leaked and uncredited to her. While after all the years in the industry, one might find such experience disheartening, Gifty doesn't and is still on the lookout for a suitable manager, who could help her resurface and share her talents to the largest numbers.

In the meantime, she still finds enjoyment in teaching her skills, that are drumming, singing, hairstyling and dancing, to the younger generation.

And only God knows how much there is to learn from, excuse the obvious play on words, this gifted lady!

For more information about Gifty Naa DK, to buy her records or learn more about her next showroom, please visit <http://bokoarts.com>



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First ever Mr. East Africa UK and Miss East Africa UK 2008 crowned in London

Poor East African children have two new voices to speak for them

Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson is this year's Miss East Africa UK while Alan Semugabi has become the first ever Mr. East Africa UK. The two were crowned on 26th July 2008 in London's Bloomsbury theatre.

The historical event was organised by the founder Pauline Long and her dedicated team. The beauty contest was attended not only by East Africans but guests from other parts of Africa, Canada, US and France.

Vicky, who already holds the title of Miss Kenya UK, was overwhelmed with joy when she also became the favourite of a team of 12 high profile judges to become the winner of the coveted title of Miss East Africa UK.

When asked what she will do with her titles, Vicky said, "The two titles are bigger than me. I am so overwhelmed and excited of which way it might go. This year something

has to happen, something big for the children. This is a gift from God. He has given me the key to open the doors of the entire East Africa and beyond."

As Miss Kenya UK, Vicky will be working closely with the organisers of Miss Kenya UK- SACOMA (Sahara Community Abroad).

The Ugandan born Alan could not believe his ears when he was announced the winner of the first ever Mr. East Africa UK title.

When asked what he thought of his win Alan said, "I thought I didn't have the chance to win. When you come from Europe to visit Africa, people think you are special and rich but I want to show the children that we are all equal and I want them to know that we acknowledge them. I will do my best to help make changes for underprivileged children."

the night was the display of the different traditional attires from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia. Each of the 40 beautiful female and handsome contestants modelled their creation in front of a very cheerful crowd.

The uniform wear was designed and made by Pauline with an excellent choreography that left the crowd amazed at how much preparation had been put



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www.jollofcuisine.co.uk



"This year something has to happen, something big for the children. This is a gift from God. He has given me the key to open the doors of the entire East Africa and beyond."

Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson, Miss East Africa UK 2008

Among the judges were BBC Presenter Brian Ndebele, Confidence models director Nana Tamakloe and The Voice entertainment editor Janelle Oswald.

The sold out show raised funds for Kenyan children's charities.

The highlight of

in the contest.

It was a beauty pageant with a twist. The evening wear section had a variety of classic designs ranging from gowns designed by Corset Art and men's shirts designed by Tamara Johnson.

Both Mr and Miss East Africa UK 2008 Alan and Vicky are set to

visit Kenya soon to deliver goods and funds to Rafiki Children's

Home and Hope for the Child. Proceeds of the show will also go to Forever Angels Baby Home of Tanzania and One Open Eye of Uganda. Mr and Miss East Africa UK 2008 are also set to make histo-

Africa and in the Diaspora. Asked why there was a need for such a campaign, she replied, "It is time to give the African children back their voices, we are going to do so by knocking on doors and working closely with Africans, African leaders and not Bono or Angelina Jolie to implement a system that will ensure no African child goes to bed without food."

The pageant would like to officially thank everyone that helped make this day a success, the team, the hosts, the sponsors, the performers and all the contestants of Mr and Miss East Africa UK 2008.

"I will do my best to help make changes for underprivileged children."

Alan Semugabi, the first ever Mr. East Africa UK



ry by being the first faces of The Shout Campaign. This is a campaign that is going to relieve African children off poverty in the beautiful continent.

The campaign established by Pauline will involve Africans in

For more information on how to get involved with the East African charities visit:

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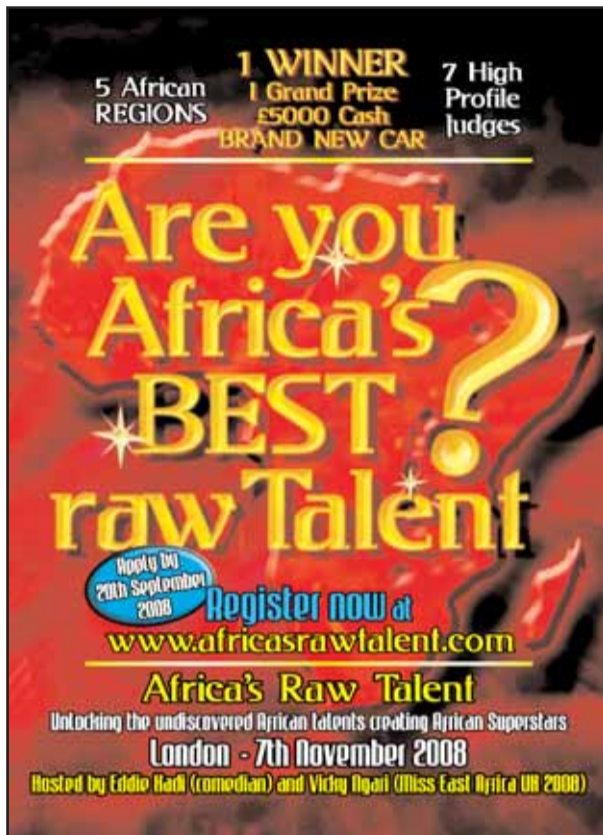
Africa's Raw Talent show to discover new talents and create superstars

A new African talent show is set to give talented Africans a platform to showcase their talent ranging from singing, creative writing, fashion design, poetry, playing African instruments, painting, acting, comedy and many more.

The show named "Africa's Raw Talent" is the ultimate show that helps unlock the undiscovered African talent and creates African superstars. The show is destined to become a major TV series in Africa, Europe and USA with the first event held in London on 7th November 2008.

Africa's Raw Talent has been founded by a team of ambitious Africans who want to inspire and recognise the forgotten talents from the beautiful continent with a winning prize tag of a BRAND NEW CAR and £5000 IN CASH. The show will help give African talented individuals exposure and help launch them into the world of Showbiz and entertainment. Seven high profile judges from all regions of Africa are yet to be named.

"We acknowledge that Africa has great people with extraordinary talents that don't get recognition; we have decided to start the show in



the Diaspora, spread it throughout USA, UK but most importantly Africa. It is a very exciting project which will bring together Africans from different parts of the continent

with the aim of unity and exchange of culture. Whether you are a singer/songwriter, a poet, acrobat, comedian, painter/artist, model, designer or posses other unique talent, Africa's Raw Talent will give you a chance to prove yourself", explained Pauline Long, one of the founders.

The show will be hosted by the popular award winning comedian Eddie Kadi and double title holder of Miss East Africa

UK and Miss Kenya UK 2008 Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson.

For more information and how to enter the competition visit: www.africasrawtalent.com

Introducing the Official Miss West Africa 2008

The official and the first ever Miss West Africa is set to hit London' elegant Porchester Hall on 8th November with a line up of top guests including celebrity guests, high commissioners and beauty queens from Africa and UK.

Top celebrity designer Yemi Osunkoya is set to showcase his collection at this prestigious event amongst other designers.

Miss West Africa 2008 is set to be the largest beauty pageant of 2008 celebrating all West African women all around the world by combining beauty, brains and philanthropy. The pageant was founded to promote a positive image of West Africa by creating awareness of the social, cultural, wealth and the beauty within West Africa.

The prestigious show will be hosted by award winning comedian Eddie Kadi with a line up of talented musicians, African cultural dancers and an exclusive fashion show courtesy of Confidence Models Management and Miss East Africa UK beauty pageant.

Miss West Africa beauty pageant aims to create positive role models, future world leaders and

goodwill ambassadors. The winner will walk away with cash prize amongst other gifts and will act as the spokes person, advocate and most importantly an ambassador



for various West African charities. Contestants are from the following countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Gambia, Togo, Niger, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Cote d' Ivoire, Liberia and Benin. Please visit www.misswestafrica.com to register as contestants.



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Interview with Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson, Miss East Africa UK 2008

Let's put systems into place for our children's welfare

By Stephen Ogongo

Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson, is the Miss East Africa UK 2008. She was born in Nairobi, Kenya on 30th September 1986. She moved to the UK in 1995 and lives in London. She is a student in Creative writing, and is just starting out as a freelance writer. She is in fact a correspondent of *Africa News* in London. Vicky works as a fashion stylist and assistant in Fashion. She is filming her documentary which will inspire a lot of people. In this interview with *Africa News* she reveals what she plans to do with this prestigious title.

How does it feel to be considered the most beautiful East African girl in the UK?

Wow, I haven't really thought about it that way. I feel very honoured and proud to represent the East African beauty and sometimes I feel shy! Lol. To win Miss Kenya UK was enough and then to be crowned Miss East Africa UK as well feels like being overfed with blessings and like God was telling me you are more than worth it. All I could communicate to God was Thank you and I was very baffled. Now I understand I have been given a mission and this is the most important part of my journey.

What would you like to achieve with this title?

I would like to see plans that no child in Africa is going without basics. I would like to be part of a group of Africans that brought the beauty of Africa in the Media limelight. Maybe then the world would see why it needs more than just regular Aid. I would like to see systems being put into place for our children's welfare.

What's your advice to African governments as far as welfare of children is concerned?

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The most beautiful girl from East Africa in the UK this year, Vicky Njoki Ngari-Wilson

I am not politically mature to give any advice to the governments but what I can say is that unfortunately we all don't live forever. Therefore, we need to be investing in our future and a leader can be hidden in the darkest corners (Jesus was born in a manger). It is in our fathers' and mothers' hands to give them basics to develop and believe at the least.

What are your future plans?

I plan to be utilising my creativity to stay in the media eye because we need a lot of attention to enable the welfare of

deprived children back home to get attention.

What are your hobbies?

Writing, Exercise, Black African History, being around Family and Friends and babysitting!

One thing you like most about yourself?

I'm diplomatic.

One thing you hate most about yourself?

I hate doubting myself.

What are the qualities of your ideal man?

Hmmmm lol I don't think there's enough space on this page for the list! I'm joking. The most important quality is he has to love and want a lot of children. Someone who is ambitious, successful, he also has to have a balance between being able to be very sensitive to my feelings and masculine enough to take the lead and tell me correctly when I am wrong as I know I like to push boundaries!

How can our readers support your charity activities?

If you go onto www.misseast-africa.co.uk all our details and information is there. You can also go onto the websites of the

goals. Draw up a plan and stick it up. If you are ever uncomfortable in the slightest with even just the sound of any job you are asked to do, you're probably right to be. I tell my mum everything because she needs to know how I am being influenced, so find somebody you trust: parent, guardian or just someone you fully trust and knows who you are to help you dissect information before you make any decisions. Oh I have so many things I would love to say to aspiring young girls.

Since becoming Miss EA UK, what has been the most rewarding experience so far?

To see my mum's face looking so proud. She was looking at me like she was saying 'thank you for delivering what I have worked for and thank you for proving to many people that as a very young single mother from poverty, I could still give my child the best in order for her to achieve.'

Any advice to Africans abroad?

Let's stand proud and together to do something great. Don't forget about home; take your skills, talents and time for home. Mama Africa will repay you back, she is rich in creativity.

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MYOWNCALLS

How to regularise your stay in UK

A firm of Solicitors specialising in Immigration Law will be providing you with up to date information on Immigration Law. Greenfield Solicitors are located in North London and the Principal Solicitor, Raheela Hussain, is a Senior Immigration Accredited Specialist with over 7 years experience in Immigration Law. Greenfields Solicitors specialise in Immigration, Nationality and Human Rights Law and are able to offer a wide range of services including helping clients who have overstayed, entered the UK illegally, have had an application refused and need to appeal and those who are trying to obtain a visa to enter the UK.

Immigration Law is a hot topic at present and the Government has recently enacted new measures to try and tighten Immigration control on people already in the UK as well as those outside the UK who wish to enter the UK. New measures include penalising employers who hire illegal migrants with heavy fines as well as prison sentences for up to 2 years. The migrant worker may also be removed from the UK by the Immigration authorities. If you or somebody you know has Immigration problems they should obtain legal advice from an accredited Immigration solicitor who can advise them on what they can do to regularise their stay in the UK. If you have over stayed your visa, read on for all you need to know about how to regularise your stay in the UK.

Overstaying- the facts:

What is over staying?

When you have obtained an entry clearance visa from the British High Commission in your home country to enter the UK, the visa will have a valid from and expiry date. You or somebody you know may have

obtained a visit, student, marriage, fiancée, dependent visa or any other visa which allows you or them to come to the UK for a certain period of time. However, if for whatever reason you decide not to go back to your home country once your visa has expired and instead chose to remain in the UK, then this means that you have overstayed your visa and therefore no longer have any legal right to remain in the UK.

In the UK there are thousands of people who have overstayed their visas for a number of reasons. These may include wanting to work and study in the UK, they may have met somebody whom they would like to be with or marry, they may have financial difficulties, require medical treatment or an undesirable life to return to back in their home country or simply, because they want to spend more time in the UK. Many people go undetected by Immigration Authorities but if they come to the attention of the Immigration Authorities, others may be subject to temporary admission which means they have to sign on as part of their bail conditions. However at the same time, anyone who has overstayed their visa is subject to removal from the UK and this can happen unexpectedly and without warning.

The New Law

Recently, the Government have introduced new laws to tighten up Immigration control within the UK. Realising that the Government cannot quantify the number of illegals / overstayers in the UK, on 1st April 2008, the Immigration Rules changed to prevent anyone who has previously broken UK Immigration law (these include people who have been by working illegally, overstayed for more than 28 days, come here illegally, or used deception in visa or other applications) from coming to the UK for a period of up to 10 years. This means that if you are removed or deported, you cannot apply for a visa for a maximum of 10 years as you will be automatically refused.

Q. I have been in the UK for 14 years and am illegal. What can I do to get legal status?

Current law states that if you have been here illegally for 14 years or more, then you should qualify for indefinite leave to remain. You will need to prove that you have been in the UK continuously for 14 years in addition to this the Home Office will consider your personal history in the UK before deciding to grant you Indefinite Leave to Remain.

Q. I have been in the UK for 10 years and have heard that I can apply for Indefinite leave to Remain in the UK, is this correct?

In order to apply for Indefinite Leave to remain in the UK after 10 years (but before 14 years), you must have been in the UK LEGALLY for the entirety of the 10 years. This means you must have held a visa for legal status throughout and never had a break in your visa(s) throughout the 10 years you have been in the UK.

Q. I have overstayed my visa but have since met a

British person and we want to get married. How do I get a marriage visa?

A. If you satisfy the marriage visa requirements, then you may wish to consider taking advantage of the concession currently in place (as described above) which is available until 1st October 2008. For further advice, you should contact an accredited firm of Immigration solicitors, who can provide you with accurate advice on your case and the chances of you being successful depending on the facts of your case.

Q. My case has been refused by the Home Office and they won't allow me to stay in the UK. But I do not want to go back to my country. Is there anything I can do try stay here? Is there another application I can try?

A. You may wish to consider making an application for Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK and argue that returning you to your home country, would violate your Human Rights. Your case will determine which Human Right you want to argue, commonly, Article 8 of

the Human Rights Act 1998 which states that individuals have the right to private and family life without interference from the authorities, including the Immigration authorities.

You may also wish to consider making a claim for asylum. It is possible to make a claim for asylum where you have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of your nationality and owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. You may be eligible to apply for legal aid when making an asylum claim so you should firstly try to find a firm of solicitors who offer legal aid in Immigration law to assist you.

Please note that the above article does not relate to nationals of the European Union.

The above article is meant to be relied upon as an informative article and in no way constitutes legal advice. For legal advice regarding your case, please contact Greenfields Solicitors for a Consultation with a Solicitor.

However, the Government has also introduced a concession for people who have overstayed their visas and want to return home and then re-enter the UK. This concession means that these people will not be banned from re-entering the UK and can apply to enter so long as they satisfy the usual Immigration rules for the visa for which they are applying. So for example, if somebody entered the UK in 2000 on a visitor's visa and overstayed the visa or tried to get a visa whilst in the UK but were refused a visa by the Home Office, then depending on their circumstances, they can return to their home country and re-apply for entry to the UK, perhaps as the partner, husband/wife of somebody with whom they have formed a relationship with in the UK. Once you have been granted a marriage visa by the British High Commission to re-enter, you will be granted a 2-year probationary visa and during this time, you can work and live legally in the UK. At the end of the two years, you can apply for indefinite leave to remain in the UK and after a further 3 years, you can apply to become a British citizen.

However, the concession is available until the 1st October 2008 so overstayers must voluntarily return home at their own expense before this date to benefit from the concession. They can apply to return to the UK any time before or after this date.

If you decide you do not want to return to home for whatever reason, then you can still make an application to the Home Office to remain in the UK. The application may be made on Discretionary Grounds and as well as Human Rights grounds. The Home Office will consider a number of factors in deciding whether they will allow an application, such as your length of residence in the UK,



Raheela Hussain,
a Senior Immigration Accredited Specialist from Greenfields Solicitors

strength of connections within the UK, personal history including character, conduct and employment record, previous criminal record, compassionate circumstances and any representations received on that person's behalf.

The Home Office may take some time to make a decision on the application as they currently have a backlog of applications to deal with. You will normally be allowed to remain in the UK until a decision on your application is made by the Home office, which could take several months if not more. If the Home Office accept your application for Discretionary Leave, you will be issued with a letter confirming how long Discretionary Leave will be granted for. If however, the Home Office decide to refuse your application, you may be granted a right of appeal and you can then argue your case before an Immigration Judge at an Asylum and Immigration Court in the UK who will decide whether the Home Office should grant you Discretionary Leave to remain in the UK.



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CONSUMER RIGHTS

The main legislation covering your rights as a consumer is Sale of Goods Act 1979 (as amended By The Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994 and The Sale and Supply of Goods to Consumers Regulations 2002)

The Act states that you are entitled to expect that any goods you buy from a trader are of satisfactory quality, fit for any particular purpose made known to the seller at the time of purchase and are correctly described by the seller.

Your rights under this Act are against the person who sold you the goods and not the manufacturer unless you buy directly from him. Remember that you do not have any grounds for complaint if you were told about the defect beforehand, if you examined the item when you bought it and should have seen the defect, bought the item knowing it was not fit for the purpose you wanted it for or if you damaged the goods yourself, made a mistake when buying them or if you simply changed your mind.

Many shops will help you out of goodwill if you have a proof of purchase but they are not legally obliged to do so.

What is meant by satisfactory quality?

Goods of satisfactory quality are goods

which an ordinary reasonable person would regard as satisfactory taking into account description of the goods, the price of the goods and other relevant circumstances. The goods should be free from any defects unless the defect has been pointed out to you by the seller or the goods were advertised as defective i.e. factory rejects. They should also have satisfactory appearance and be safe and durable.

What does fit for purpose mean?

It simply meant fit to do a job intended for them. This includes any particular purpose mentioned by you to the seller at the time of purchase for example if you asked the seller for a pair of headphones to be used with Sony radio he must not give you a pair that cannot be used on this particular machine.

The goods should also be fit for all purposes for which goods of that kind are commonly supplied.

What does the requirement that the goods must be correctly described mean?

The goods purchased must be the same as described on the package, a sign in the shop or as advertised by the seller. For example if you are buying a shirt which is described as 100% cotton then it should not turn out to

have been made of some other material.

If you buy goods based on the sample they must match the sample.

So what should I do if the goods turn out to be faulty?

The Sale and Supply of Goods to Consumers Regulations 2002 state that if a product that was faulty at the time of sale is returned to the retailer, you can ask for a full refund, a reasonable amount of compensation or a repair or replacement.

When am I entitled to a refund?

You can claim your money back if the goods you have purchased were faulty or they were of unsatisfactory quality, not fit for the purpose or are not as described. You should tell the seller as soon as possible because you will be deemed to have accepted the goods if you have kept them beyond a reasonable time without communicating to the seller your intention to reject.

You must be able to prove that the fault was present when the goods were sold. The burden of proof rests with you the consumer.

What if I used the goods for some time before discovering the defect. Can I still get a refund?

Yes you could still be entitled to a refund. However, if you have had some use from the goods, the seller may make a reduction from the original price when refunding the money.

You may also have to accept an offer to put the goods right or the cost of a repair. If the fault cannot be repaired or the costs of repairs are unreasonable you may be able to claim compensation but you would have to keep this claim to a reasonable minimum.

You could also be entitled to a refund if you have not had a reasonable opportunity to check the goods at the time of purchase and you complain later.

Can I have my goods repaired or replaced?

Since 31st March 2003, the Sale and Supply of Goods to Consumers Regulations gives you a right to ask for replacement or repair instead of refund. Goods which do not conform to the contract within the six months after they were delivered are presumed to have been faulty when you got them.

Moreover you do not have to prove the fault was present when the goods were sold. Instead, the trader must prove that the fault was not present when the goods were sold. In this case the burden of proof is on the trader.

The repair should be carried out within reasonable amount of time. If a repair or replacement is not available or is unsuitable, you could then ask for a refund.

REMEMBER: You are only entitled to full refund if you return the goods soon after purchase. If not you are entitled to following remedies in the order given (depending on their suitability and your circumstances): repair, replacement, price reduction and partial refund taking into account the time you have enjoyed the goods.

When can I reject faulty goods?

You can reject faulty goods if soon after the purchase you tell the seller that the goods are faulty and you do not want them. You

should then be able to get your money back. You cannot reject faulty goods if you are deemed to have legally accepted them.

You can accept the goods by for example keeping them after you had a reasonable time to examine them and see that they are faulty and without informing the seller that you want to return them.

The reasonable time is not fixed and depends on the circumstances. You should therefore inform the seller as soon as possible that you wish to reject the goods. Remember that in most circumstances you will still have a right to reject the goods even after you have signed an acceptance note for them.

Do I have the same rights if I purchased goods at a sale?

YES. You have the same rights when you buy goods in a sale as at any other time. The seller cannot say there are no refunds on sale goods.

What happens if I lose the receipt?

Your rights will still apply but you must remember that a receipt is an important evidence of when and where you bought the goods. You may have to provide an alternative proof of purchase such as bank statement. Even a word of the seller who sold the goods to you is enough as a proof.

What if I receive a present which proves to be faulty?

In this case you may have to ask the person who bought them for you to give you a proof of purchase or to complain for you.

Do I have to send back faulty goods to the seller at my own expense?

No. You are not legally obliged to return such goods at your own expense unless you agreed to do so with the seller beforehand. If the item is expensive to return ask the seller to collect it.

This right does not apply if you only complain about goods long time after "legally accepting" them or if the goods were a present and the person purchasing the item told the seller that it is intended to be a gift.

What happens if I am injured by the goods provided by the seller?

The seller is committing an offence if he supplies you with goods which are not safe. It does not matter whether the goods are new or second-hand. The rules do not apply to antiques and to goods needing repair or reconditioning if you were clearly informed of this fact before the purchase.

If new goods prove to be defective you could make a legal claim against the manufacturer.

If you suffered injuries as a result of using unsafe goods provided you should contact a personal injury solicitor.

By Simpson Millar LLP

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Please send us your legal questions. Our solicitors will answer them in the next issue of Africa News. Address all your questions to africanews@etnomedia.org

Dispelling Myths

Sometimes I have an uphill struggle convincing people that I know what I'm talking about. Years of belief that the world works in one particular way leads to much scepticism when a different version is presented. This is despite the fact that they've approached me in the first place for a definitive legal answer. Still, it's always good when I can dispel a few myths and help steer an earnest enquirer in the right direction.

No Ring, No Rights

Take for example the frequently used expression 'common law husband or wife'. Common law marriages have not existed in England since 1753 yet according to a survey in 2004, 61% of the population mistakenly believe that living together gives you the same rights as if they were married.

They are wrong. Cohabitees miss out on a whole range of rights such as:

- no right to claim maintenance upon separation
- no automatic right of inheritance if their partner dies
- no automatic entitlement to "Bereavement damages" if their partner dies in an accident and there is a claim for damages
- no widow's or widower's benefit
- no tax concessions (for example, no exemption from paying inheritance tax)
- no usual right to their partner's pension in the event of death
- no claim to any property owned by their partner (unless he or she is able to prove ownership of a share in the property)

The number of cohabiting couples has increased by 65% in the last decade and the predictions are that by 2014, married couples will account for less than half of British families.

So what is the solution to this lack of legal protection? Well, marriage obviously or for the more circumspect amongst us; placing property and assets in joint names, nominating a beneficiary under your pension scheme, making a Will and considering a cohabitation agreement.

Rights in property can also be regulated by drawing up a Declaration of Trust. James and Tina came to see me recently as they had decided to buy a house together. Both were selling their current homes but for significantly different amounts of profit. James planned to use £90,000 toward the deposit on the new place while Tina had only £20,000 to put down.

They both wanted to protect their investments and agreed to pay equally towards their mortgage. I drafted a Declaration for them to ensure if they ever sold or separated they would get back a return on their initial investments and divide any remaining equity equally. The Declaration not only set out how they owned the house but what would happen if one of them was temporarily out of work, decided to leave, failed to pay their share of

the mortgage or if Tina became pregnant.

The Declaration gave them both a comprehensive plan for all eventualities and so



provided them with peace of mind and much less chance of any dispute arising in the future.

To Have and To Hold On To

Other misconceptions surround rights of married couples or those in civil partnerships. I'm often asked by divorcing clients whether they will have to give their spouse half of everything. More pessimistic clients worry that they'll be left homeless and penniless.

None of these scenarios are true. There is neither an automatic 50:50 split on divorce nor any preset bias towards one party or the other. The overriding rule is that any division should be 'fair and reasonable'. The law provides a list of factors to be taken into account when working this out and this includes such details as the length of marriage, the age of any children and both parties' needs and resources.

Another common assumption is that there is a financial penalty against the party at fault for the marriage breakdown. Adultery or other types of morally frowned upon behaviour do not carry an automatic fine. Only in exceptional circumstances does one person's behaviour have an effect on the financial outcome of divorce and usually that behaviour is financial in nature such as intentionally giving up work or spending significant amounts of family savings.

Where there's a Will

70% of the population do not have a Will and 1300 people die intestate every day in

Britain. Just as cohabitees sometimes think they will receive all their partner's wealth and fortune when they die, so too do married couples and civil partners.

Well again, this simply isn't right. A lot of assets pass outside of any Will or Intestacy rules. For example jointly owned property or bank accounts pass to the survivor and Pension funds are often nominated direct to a beneficiary.

For assets owned in your sole name it is better to make a Will to regulate what happens on your death. Without a Will the rules of Intestacy apply and these do not always have the expected or fair outcome.

If you are married with children then your spouse inherits the first £125,000 of your estate. Your children receive half the rest and your spouse

then has a life interest (right to receive the income) in the remaining estate which eventually passes to your children on your spouse's death.

This situation cropped up when Maureen's husband died. He had no Will and the family home bought in the 1970s was in his sole name and was now worth £530,000. Their bank accounts and savings were in their joint names and Maureen automatically received these. Maureen has two children and all of them were unaware there was going to be a problem with the house. They naturally thought that Maureen would inherit it.

But Maureen's name could not easily be put on the house. Once they understood the Intestacy rules, they all agreed they wanted to change these so that Maureen could stay put with the added security of owning her home. So we prepared a Deed of Variation - giving the property to Maureen and her children were happy to wait a while longer for their inheritance.

If everyone involved gets on well then an agreement can quickly be reached but even so this put Maureen and her family through some legal hoops that they could have done without.

If you are married without children the position can get even trickier. Your spouse inherits the first £200,000 (an improvement on the first formu-

la) and a life interest in half the remaining estate with the next nearest relatives getting half the remainder now and the rest on the spouse's death. Those relatives may not be so amenable to changing the Intestacy rules and prolonged legal disputes can arise.

For unmarried couples their children will inherit unless a Will says otherwise. If you have no children then the Intestacy rules provide a list of which relatives have next priority:

- Your parents
- Brother and sisters or their issue
- Grandparents
- Uncles and aunts or their issue

And of course if you have no relatives then the Government gets the lot.

These rules can produce interesting results and often involve a lot of time and research tracking down missing beneficiaries.

Harry was 81 when he died last year. His neighbour used to visit him but he had no close relatives. The neighbour was able to give me the name and possible address of a niece and on contact it transpired that Harry was one of 7 brothers and sisters. So the search was on. The niece did most of the work as there simply wasn't enough money in the estate to merit expensive tracing agents or legal fees.

All 14 beneficiaries were found and each will receive just short of £2000. The moral of the tale of course is that it would have been so much simpler, quicker and cheaper if Harry had made a Will and his modest estate could have gone to people he knew and cared about.

Things are not always as we think they should be. With this in mind I try to provide enquirers with more clarity and less confusion and hopefully dispel a few legal myths along the way.

Written by Sian Thompson, Solicitor at Simpson Millar LLP
Contact her on 0844 858 3200

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Meet Eugene Ankamah, a self-taught artist pushing boundaries of Art to the next level

By Dorcas Olorogun

He has been rightly described as prolific, talented and unassuming. This is none other than Eugene Ankamah, a young boy of Ghanaian heritage born and bred in the heart of London's borough of Brent in the notorious town of Harlesden North-West London.

The 28 year old artist grew up from humble beginnings but always had his sights set high on achieving great things. "Since the age of six people have been asking me to draw for them and from that early experience I was aware I had a natural talent in drawing, painting and in making things" he said.

Eugene is a local boy with a genius talent. You might not have heard of him yet but he can already count world renowned Paranormalist Uri Geller as a fan of his work as well as many other celebrity clientele. "Eugene is a brilliant Artist with a rare vision and a rare talent, he has the ability to re-invent himself and his art whilst always

Salvador Dali. In the words of one very experienced art dealer Karl Barrie, of the Kaleidoscope Gallery in London, "Eugene is so talented, you just want to be sick".

Eugene is a self-taught artist. He has a quiet, humble, unassuming nature that bellies one of the most unexpected and impressive range of artistic talents you will ever come across, and this is because he has put his unmistakably imaginative mark on his many creations.

His paintings, prints, sculptures and performance work, have displayed his sense of commitment, play, discovery and adventure.

Eugene naturally possesses that rare ability which enables him to turn his hand at many different artistic styles and different art forms, with equal understanding and success.

He is primarily a painter, but has dabbed his hands in other art forms, including amongst others instillation and sound art.

Eugene was once requested to design a special flag for her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in celebration of her 50th Anniversary. His unique flag was featured as part of a display on top of the World famous Buckingham Palace, the Royal family's official home.

His work also adorns the house of the Chairman of the British Airways, amongst other famous celebrities who admire his work.

To date Eugene has been awarded eleven Art Prizes and was the first ever person to receive the coveted Peter Evans Award for being chosen as the best and most promising Art

Student of the year- which was awarded to him by the Mayor of Brent. His works have been featured in international Art surveys.

Eugene has become for many of his fol-



Mr. Eugene Ankamah, the prolific, talented and unassuming young artist

lowers and fans synonymous with adaptability and being prolific. One is in fact often overwhelmed by the sheer variety and quantity of his work. It's Eugene's unpredictability that keeps his admirers coming back.

Today Eugene continues to be as prolific and productive as ever, always remaining vigilant not to fall into a rut and continues to be in demand. His works and creations have appeared in numerous publications and media, including the BBC, Sky TV, ITV and more.

He is cherished, respected and admired not only by his local community but also the world at large. Today his talent and ability have given inspiration to many young people, seeing him as a great role model, showing how one's talent, ability, hard work and persistence can achieve great things.

There is no telling of what Eugene will do next, but you can bet it will excite, inspire

An artist who continuously re-invents himself & his work

As early as 1996, at Willesden High School, North-West London, Eugene Ankamah was busy with his paintbrush creating works of art that the likes of Rembrandt and Michelangelo would have been only too proud to have painted.

His famous 'Elijah Ascending to Heaven' painting pictured, and the work 'Drunkenness', both Eugene's originals have been mistaken many times with the works of the great Masters. What's even more shocking to know is that Eugene was just 16 and 17 at the time when they were painted. Surely this is what many would call a "child prodigy" and a genius in the making.

After moving through many artistic disciplines such as painting, drawing, sculpture, print making, performance art and more, he has now taken part in almost 90 art shows, and has re-invented himself and his work yet again.

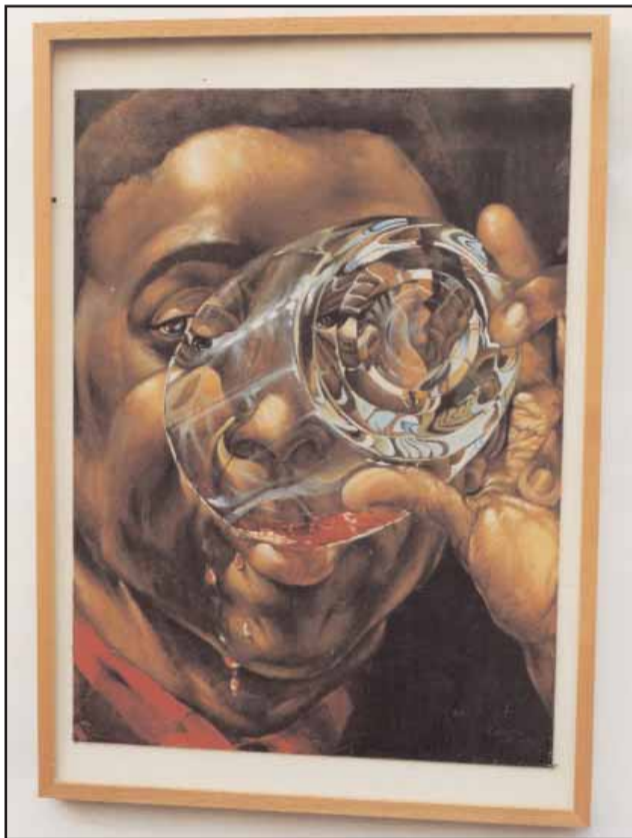
Eugene's new works represent the re-evaluation of everything he has created so far, and for him symbolises a re-birth of his ideas and the themes treated in his work. He has called the new works "Cover-Upps", for the reasons that these new works look at the mystery and process of packaging as a starting point, and also act as a metaphor for treating and un-wrapping in a direct way the issues in urban Britain, as well as looking at black historical issues whilst referencing old African art. These are very much paintings with ironic and contradictory tensions, he 'covers up to reveal', they are mysterious yet striking.

These new works challenge our fixed ideas of what a painting can be, and are raw in their physical presence and theme, no issue being too much to treat. One of the new works includes "Body Bag" pictured, which is about the knife crime in Britain today. It's a piece showing the detrimental nature of replacing forgiveness with anger, which is here represented by the cross slowly morphing into a knife with a reef, representing death.

Currently Eugene is the first ever artist in the United Kingdom to start an Art Residency at the new specialist Capital City Academies. Being at the Academy and working alongside the students, he has been a great example for those wanting to break into the artistic field. His presence and encouragement to the students has indeed sparked a wave of enthusiasm and inspiration in the young people, and like his school days, many of the teachers are now seeing a growing fan-base being built, one would wonder how such an unassuming person could have such a great impact on the young people, but isn't that already evident? He is after all an artistic genius... who wouldn't want to be around him?

To purchase works or to get further information and keep up with Eugene's works and upcoming shows, please visit:

www.myspace.com/eugeneankamah
www.eugeneankamah.com
(currently being updated)
Email: eugene_ankamah@hotmail.com.



Drunkenness painting

remaining true to his vision just like Picasso did, absolute unique works," Uri said.

Eugene's creativity and his extraordinary technical skills have been compared to great artists such as Norman Rockwell and

and even provoke. He is one artist that will no doubt continue to challenge, invent and push the boundaries of Art to the next level.

and even provoke. He is one artist that will no doubt continue to challenge, invent and push the boundaries of Art to the next level.



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Tribal set with heads painting



It's a cover up painting

Ladies, be ware of friends who are overfriendly to your partners

By Mercy Bolus

Some single unmarried women use their children or boyfriends to get closer to married women. This is happening all over the world.

Don't be fooled ladies when you meet such people. They will find a way of getting to know that you are happy or affluent and then set their agenda to destroy you and your family. Such ladies are only after material wealth.

They could try and get into the family unit through sleepovers, etc and then get to know the family networks.

Once this intelligence is gathered, they strike. Don't lose your man to a girlfriend or any family member.

Check all the so called Xmas presents your supposed friends wrap for your family. They would sleekly put one in for your husband. When you find such a present just unwrap, check and give it to someone else.

Women be aware as those type of Xmas presents are just a coy to get at you and the family and destroy your Xmas festivities. This is what most married women do not know.

Don't be naïve. When you see such presents act as if you've seen a fire coming your direction. For those Xmas presents given to your husbands could be a start of a new relationship in front of your eyes.

Sometimes such women could also invite the whole family for an Xmas dinner. Women be wiser and never go with your husbands for such invites.

Trusting some women in the category as stated could be ending your own relationship.

Women watch out your friends and even

some family members. Scrutinise them very well before letting these type of women into your homes. Give a chance to these women and you would be signing your divorce papers unknowingly.

Smart women spot the signs from such ladies, as they are capable of scratching other people's husbands by hook or crook.

So what are the signs?

These type of women would deliberately befriend you with their hidden agenda. They then become overfriendly to your husbands, tend to smile to win attention, cook to attract

"Check all the so called Xmas presents your supposed friends wrap for your family. They would sleekly put one in for your husband. When you find such a present just unwrap, check and give it to someone else."

Mercy Bolus

your husband's attention that they are good cooks, etc.

Never allow this group to lure your man into their Santa grotto.

Never discuss the ups and downs of your relationship with anyone in an unpleasant relationship.

Some women of this category could be professionals or non-professionals and possibly have a child or children from unpleasant relationships.

Listen to their stories of unpleasant relationships and help them by referring them on to their GP, counsellors or church. Never ever take over someone's problems as African ladies do. By doing so, you risk creating a room for someone to destroy your family.



Remember you are not the expert in family affairs.

Your expertise is sticking to your own

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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unique family unit not someone else's.

Watch out ladies and be smart enough to protect your family.

African men, be on your guard for your families by ignoring these signals coming from some ladies.

Do refer these when you meet them as discussed above. You never know. Some may be suffering from an untreated postnatal depression hence seeking attention by these actions. Help such ladies but don't assume that they are in love with you.

Some are very lonely and feel isolated, as our adopted culture is not favourable to our own way of life. Some in fact, end up in psychiatric hospitals and in some cases family ties have been severed.

Warning signs to watch out women: when friends appear to be overfriendly to your partners, there may be something brewing, a new relationship that you would never know.

Many married women are loosing their husbands to close friends. Modern technology have made it even easier for everyone but at a price.

Ladies be the winners in this game, not victims.

Pull Off The Old, And Put On The New!

By Simon Weston

There is a difference between the 'you' before and the 'you' after you received Christ. The person before had the nature of sin, therefore he sinned at will. However, that old nature was crucified with Christ. Right now, you're a brand new person, for the new creation has no past.

For those of you, who would like to put on the new nature today,

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new."

2 Corinthians 5 v17

invite Jesus Christ into your life by praying, 'O Lord God, I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ, I ask Jesus to come into my heart to

be Lord of my life. I receive eternal life into my spirit and (according to Romans 10 v 9-10) confess with my mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in my heart that God raised him from the dead. Forgive me of my sins, cleanse me from all unrighteousness and make me whole again.'

As far as God is concerned, your past has been buried in the grave from which Jesus arose victorious. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5 v 21). Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God, therefore submit and humble yourself before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

What is God's counsel or direction for you today? Everything you are and will ever be is already written in his Word. "Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? (James 3v11). With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men. This should not be! "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins."

Aid and African Dictators

By Moses Nsubuga

I have been an ardent reader of Irish writer - John O'shea's views about African dictators, funded, groomed and put in power by the West.

Mr. O'shea asserts that from the time Africa got independence it has been bedevilled by the greatest collection of thugs, international thugs who have robbed their own people blind and in many cases went next door like in case of Uganda in Congo and robbed them too. Some African academicians living in the West have dubbed his views as simplistic, that only serve the media agenda.

However, as an African living in Europe for over twenty years, I beg to differ. I support his views as they are informed, sound and correct. The biggest hinder to development in Africa are the corrupt dictators and tyrants that head many African States.

Indeed, Mr. O'shea is right when he questions money given to African dictators in form of AID, like late Mobutu, Mubarak, Museveni, etc.

Take an example of Congo - Brazzaville. President - Sassou Nguesso; Population - 3.7 Million; National Income per capita - \$520; More than of 70% of the population live on less than a \$1 a day; Infant Mortality - 79.41 per 1,000; Orphans - 270,000.

Yet, the leader of one of Africa's poorest countries, President Nguesso in two short visits in New York last year, spent a whopping \$400,000 on hotel bills as members of his entourage wined and dined on crystal champagne.

When he returned to the same hotel, Waldorf Astoria in New York during the UN General Assembly in September last year, \$15,000 was added to his room service bill, during another five nights stay in the USA.

His entourage, including several members of his family occupied 44 rooms which together ran up a bill of more than \$150,000.

Isn't this an insult to the poor People of Congo by their President Sassou Nguesso? Is Mr. O'shea not right when he says that African Presidents are thugs that rob their own people blind?

Another dictator is Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. Children are starving in Zimbabwe because President Mugabe has ruined the Farm Industry.

The army has gone in hard beating peasants, raping wives and daughters and destroying orchards and vegetable gardens. Shanty dwellers have seen their homes bulldozed and have been forcibly dumped out of town in the bush. Isn't he an African tyrant gone mad?

Indeed the west have to change their Aid Policies Vis-a Vis Africa. They should demand accountability from these leaders and halt giving money to dictators who just enrich themselves and their cronies. The current Aid Policies from the West to Africa rarely are benefiting the poor of Africa.

The western countries as a group ought to create an African Aid Fund and consequently establish a new African Marshall Plan.

I believe France, Britain or USA giving Aid to Africa on an individual basis is not working. The current Aid System and Policies should be scrapped and replaced.



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2010 Fifa World Cup in South Africa is more than just a game

"It is about South Africa's and Africa's ability to host the world"

By Simangaliso Zwane

The 2010 Fifa World Cup to be hosted in South Africa should be used as a vehicle to send new images to the world about the people of South Africa and the African continent alike.

Minister in the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa Essop Pahad said that the hosting of the Fifa World Cup is about South Africa's and Africa's ability to welcome the world.

"For us this event is much more than sports - it is about South Africa's and Africa's ability to host the world. It is about getting out from underneath the welter of negative press coverage our continent receives.

"It is about informing the world that Africa has much to offer, that our people are ready to receive the world, ready to host those who come to the World Cup and that when they come they will receive a wonderfully unforgettable African experience," he said.

Minister Pahad said the World Cup is about celebrating Africa's humanity. "We project to the world our readiness to host the World Cup and we project our humanity and our humility," he said.

The 2010 Fifa World Cup also presents an opportunity to demonstrate to the world the



positive socio-economic development in South Africa, the SADC region and the continent. "We are confident that the world will change after the World Cup," said Pahad.

"It is about informing the world that Africa has much to offer, that our people are ready to receive the world, ready to host those who come to the World Cup and that when they come they will receive a wonderfully unforgettable African experience"

Minister in the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa Essop Pahad

for successfully hosting the 2008 Beijing Olympics and thanked the people of China

scale and magnitude was inextricably linked to the broader agenda of the African Renaissance. "Our destiny is linked to that of the rest of Africa and we are working to build a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world," he concluded.

"Let us congratulate the government and the people of China for hosting the best Olympics ever. From the spectacular opening ceremony to the unflinching courtesy of all the volunteers and the performances of the athletes representing the Peoples Republic of China we can all agree that these Olympic Games are simply phenomenal," he said.

Minister Pahad said hosting an event of the World Cup's

Zambia First Lady sends away Opposition Leader from late President's funeral

The widow of the late Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa chased away opposition leader Michael Sata from a funeral gathering.

The government reportedly described Sata's behaviour as "provocative".

But Mr. Sata denied reports that he had been provocative to Maureen Mwanawasa. "I said to her: 'I'm very sorry,' then she blew up," Mr Sata said.

The opposition leader accused her of using the funeral tour as a bid for her to stand for president in three months time. "It is her who has turned the whole funeral into politics," Mr Sata told the BBC's Focus on Africa programme, adding that a widow should stay at home to mourn not tour the coun-



The late Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa

try.

Mrs. Mwanawasa is taking the body on a tour of the country ahead of a state funeral. President Mwanawasa died in France on 19th August, 2008 having suffered a stroke in June. He will be given a state funeral on 3rd September, on

what would have been his 60th birthday.

Mr. Sata confirmed that he would be standing in the forthcoming elections. "My party will participate in the elections, there's nothing politicking about that - but she must also come out in the open instead of hiding in a dead man, instead of exhibiting a dead man all over the country."

Mr. Sata and the late Mwanawasa had a longstanding bitter rivalry but they reconciled in May.

Following the president's death, Vice-President Rupiah Banda has taken over interim leadership of the country. Elections must be held within 90 days to decide who will succeed Mr Mwanawasa.

Nigerian presidency: No threat to administration

The recent changes in the command structure of the Nigeria's armed forces were not due to any perceived threat to the administration, Nigerian presidency has said.

The changes "were made in the normal course of affairs and were not a reaction to any particular occurrence," Presidential Spokesman Olusegun Adeniyi said in a statement.

He said the recently announced changes "were certainly not made in response to any perceived threat to Government and the stability of the nation. Attempts to tie the changes to statements by some politicians should therefore be disregarded as mere mischief."

The statement further said: "The fact is that a change of guards in the armed forces had been on the cards for sometime since both the former Chief of Defence Staff, General Andrew Azazi and the former Chief



of Naval Staff, Admiral Ganiyu Adekeye became due for retirement several months ago.

"The changes were not made earlier because of the President's insistence that things be done properly at all times. He demanded proper background checks and briefs on all those recommended as replacements for the outgoing service chiefs and also undertook necessary consultations."

President Umaru Yar'Adua announced a major shape up in Nigeria's military command structure on 20th August. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and the three service chiefs were all replaced.

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“Coalition to serve Kenyans equally” assures Prime Minister Odinga

The grand coalition government is at the service of all Kenyans irrespective of their ethnic and socioeconomic status in the society, Prime Minister Raila Odinga has said.

He emphasized that the coalition administration was an "open government that belongs to Kenyans because it is your tax that pays our salaries, this is a new era and you should feel free to be served your status not withstanding".

The Premier said the public services offered must reflect and adhere to the demands of the citizenry and declared that the era when "the government was king and saw leaders elevated from people's servants to masters was long gone.

"We want to build a strong united country without biases and corruption so that the citizens can feel proud to seek services in public offices. The government must reflect what the people seek," he said.

The premier said that the dawning of an era of transparency and accountability in governance had come and extolled Kenyans for agitating for quality public service in recent times.

"Kenyans have proven to us that they know their power and have the ability to throw out not only the MPs but government itself. I support their campaigns to demand total accountability from the government" he said.

The premier regretted that public funds went down the drain due to bureaucracies, which could be avoided noting that the desired

"We want to build a strong united country without biases and corruption so that the citizens can feel proud to seek services in public offices. The government must reflect what the people seek"

Kenya's Prime Minister Raila Odinga



economic growth in the country could not be realized unless the deeply entrenched barriers to progress were unlocked.

Raila said it was time Kenyans took control of government services as the primary users contrary to events that characterized the previous regimes when the tax payers were compelled to part with kickbacks to get attention in public offices.

He declared that the culture of impunity and corruption was over and warned public servants abetting the trend that their days were numbered while urging the public to

report officers demanding bribes for necessary disciplinary action.

The Prime Minister said the "government should be held responsible by the citizen for any malpractices" adding that plans to computerize systems was to "enhance transparency, accountability and good governance."

He said the modernization of government operations was to minimize loopholes through which graft thrived and inculcate zero tolerance to the vice which he said could undermine delivery of public services.

Raila cautioned the civil servants against discourtesy and lethargy in the delivery of services to the tax payers and told them to discard the retrogressive culture and attitude while discharging duties in public office.

"We have to exterminate the existing cultures that hinder provision of quality services; there is no room for the attitude that members of the public have the exclusive responsibility to pursue their files and claims in corridors of government offices," he stressed.

Mugabe heckled as he opens parliament

Talks are still on to resolve political crisis in Zimbabwe, the country's new parliamentary Speaker Lovemore Moyo has said. Mr. Moyo told South Africa's Talk Radio 702 that the parliament will continue to meet during the negotiations.

The power sharing talks mediated by South Africa, have stalled over how powers should be divided between President Robert Mugabe

and opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai. Mr Tsvangirai would be named to fill the new post of prime minister.

Mr. Moyo, is 43 years old, and member of the MDC. He is the first opposition leader to become Zimbabwe's speaker since the country attained independence from the United Kingdom in 1980.

BBC reported that Mr. Moyo's relationship with Mr Mugabe over his five-year term is likely to be turbulent given their wide political gulf. "I'm not in this job to pander to the interests of individuals or political

organisations. Even with the head of state, we both have different constitutional obligations."

He says he wants to oversee a parliament where there are lively and real "balanced" debates.

"The polarised parliament of the past should remain in the past. I don't owe anybody anything, I owe Zimbabweans a service."

The opposition MPs heckled and jeered President Mugabe, as he opened parliament five months after disputed polls.

While Mr. Mugabe was busy listing government achievements, some MPs shouted "You killed people, we won't forget that".

Mr. Mugabe said there was "every expectation" that a power-sharing deal would be agreed.

The MDC MPs refused to stand when Mr. Mugabe entered parliament, before booing him.

Mr. Mugabe's speech was occasionally drowned out as they sang that his party was "rotten".



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SADC to set up regional grain reserve

By IRIN

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has announced it will go ahead with plans to set up a regional grain reserve, while urging member states not to impose export restrictions on maize as the region grapples with high food prices.

"The recently held Integrated Committee of Ministers Meeting in Manzini, Swaziland, urged member states to remove restrictions - in fact, we have urged countries with surplus maize to sell their produce within the region," said Margaret Nyirenda, head of the SADC's Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate. "But at the end of the day it is a commercial decision - we can only advise member states to prioritise the region."

Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia all have imposed export restrictions and many other countries still have high import tariffs on maize. "These measures impede grain flowing from surplus to deficit areas within the region," said Thom Jayne, who teaches agricultural economics at Michigan State



© IRIN PHOTO

In the absence of maize meal, Zimbabweans also eat rice, up for sale in a market in Mbare, Harare

"The reserve, which will include a combination of cereals, will be kept in several selected countries to provide easy access around the region"

Margaret Nyirenda, head of the SADC's Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate

University (MSU) in the US.

"It is a travesty that 95 percent of all the grain imported by countries in sub-Saharan Africa is grown by farmers on other continents; only five percent of this grain comes from exports by neighbouring countries. This unfortunate situation is reinforced by a "beggar thy neighbour" approach to trade within the region," he said.

As an example of what regional trade can achieve, Jayne pointed out that in January 2005, "Kenya dropped its import tariff on maize from Uganda and Tanzania as part of the East African Commission trade agreement. There has been a notable improvement in maize price stability since that time."

Unrestricted cross-border movement of goods is on the cards: the SADC launched its free trade area on 17 August, in which 85 percent of goods produced and sold within the region will be exempt from customs duties.

This would apply to agricultural goods as well, said Boitumelo Gofhamodimo, acting head of the SADC's Trade, Industry and Finance Investment Directorate.

Regional food reserve

In a significant move, the SADC has revived plans to launch a strategic grain reserve to help bail out countries experiencing food shortages, as part of a pre-emptive

strategy to minimise the impact of natural disasters on food security.

"The plans are now at an advanced stage and have received support because of the current global food crisis," said Nyirenda.

Various models of the proposed facility are being negotiated; the strongest contender is based on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Emergency Rice Reserve, established in the late 1970s.

In the Southern African model a 500,000 metric tonne facility, including a cash component for countries that do not have any surplus to contribute, would be set up. About 75 percent of the reserve will comprise food in kind, while the remaining 25 percent will be in the form of cash.

"The reserve, which will include a combination of cereals, will be kept in several selected countries to provide easy access around the region," said Nyirenda. The reserve is to be run by a board, and officials hope to get the facility operational by mid-2009.

Cross-border bilateral initiatives

Three SADC countries - Mauritius, Madagascar and Mozambique - have established a regional food company funded by the World Bank's Global Food Crisis Response Facility. Under this initiative, Mauritius and Madagascar, which have limited agricultural land, plan to grow food in Mozambique.

"We support such bilateral initiatives to boost food security, but we are concerned in instances where land is being leased or purchased for biofuel production at the expense of food production," said Nyirenda. "We are busy formulating a regional policy on biofuel."

Liberia death penalty violates international law, says UN human rights body

The United Nations Human Rights Committee has expressed deep concern at new death penalty legislation authorized by Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, contravening an international treaty on civil and political rights.

The Committee - in charge of monitoring compliance with the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) - observed that Liberia is party to the Second Optional Protocol to that pact aimed at the abolition of the death penalty, UN News Service reported.

"The Act signed by the President of Liberia on 22 July 2008 therefore constitutes a clear breach by Liberia

of its international legal obligations under the Second Optional Protocol," the Committee stated in a press release.

The new law in Liberia provides that "in the event death occurs during the commission of a crime of armed robbery, terrorism or hijacking, the accused ... shall be sentenced to death by hanging or imprisonment for life without possible parole."

The Committee pointed out that as a signatory to the ICCPR's Second Optional Protocol since 2005, Liberia has committed to ensuring that, as the pact states, "no one within (its) jurisdiction (...) shall be executed."

Further, the Protocol notes that States party to it should also "take all necessary measures to abolish the death penalty within (their) jurisdiction."

The rights body "urges Liberia to revisit the Act for possible amendment as soon as possible and encourages it, in the meantime, to maintain the moratorium in place since 1979."

Ghana reverse brain drain in the health sector

Ghana has started experiencing 'brain-gain' in the health sector, Deputy Minister for Health, Mr Abraham Dwumoh Odum has said.

The minister said that due to the good human resource policy put in place by the government in that sector, the country had reversed the brain drain and now achieved brain gain, GNA reported.

The Ghana Health Service (GHS) has received a lot of applications from Ghanaian and foreign health workers to work in the country, Mr Odum said.

Mr Odum was speaking at the inauguration of the Eastern Regional branch of the Health Workers Association of the Nation (HEWAN) a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) made up of staff of the GHS.

He said when President John Kufuor assumed office in 2001, the Ministry of Health (MOH) had no policy that guided health delivery in the country. As a result of good policies the government put in place,



many development partners were now chasing the government to fund the health programme.

Mr Odum said soon, an Italian health group would be coming to establish a centre for the treatment of diabetes and hypertension at the Okomfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

He said the government has increased the nursing training institutions in the country from 15 to 54, increased the enrolment at the nursing training institutions from 680 students to 8000 per annum and constructed 205 new hospitals and health centres throughout the country.

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Interview with Nigerian actress Bimbo Akintola

Marriage is a very important institution that one should not rush into

By Alayande Dayo*

Bimbo Akintola's road to screen success was not on a roller coaster. Her father wanted her to be a mass communicator or an accountant. But the young lady was strong-willed. She prevailed. So, instead of Mass Communication or Accounting that her father wanted her to study, Bimbo studied Theatre Arts at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. It was her debut role in "Owo Blow" that did the magic for her. It got her on the map of successful Nollywood artistes. It was therefore not surprising that she was already making money for herself, even before she left the four walls of the university.

Tell us about your family and education?

I'm the third child in a family of six. My father is from Oyo State, while my mother is from Edo State. I had my diploma and first degree in Theatre Arts from the University of Ibadan. I like singing, dancing and, above all, I like acting.

How did you come about being an actress?

My father was initially opposed to my studying Theatre Arts. But my stubbornness had the day. I stayed home for four years before my father agreed to let me do as I wished. He got tired of seeing my face in his house and so, one day, he went to Ibadan and came back with a diploma application form for me to study Theatre Arts.

You are a good English and Yoruba actress. How have you been able to stay relevant in both sectors?

For me, acting is acting. Acting is being able to take on a role and interpret a character and hopefully be able to inform, entertain and

educate, all at the same time. I do not want to think that because I do English movies, I am an English actress or otherwise. First thing first, I am an actress and so I act in whatever language I can deliver in.

You are also strong on the stage circuit. Which do you prefer and which has been your most challenging performances on stage and in movies so far?

Stage performance is different because you get an instant response.

On stage, there is no break in characterisation. You go the whole length in a particular length of time, unlike with film where you can start from the end and work your way to the first scene. I still consider Chuck Mike's production, "Death and the maiden" very challenging. It was the first time I found it extremely difficult getting into character. It was real hard work for me. The role required mental accuracy and so far, it is the hardest role. For movies, "Widows: The Mourning After" was a most impressive movie. I played the role of a 40-something year-old cardiologist who lost her husband to a heart attack and had to go through the widowhood rites of Eastern Nigeria. I loved the movie because I was able to become that character. I learnt to speak slower, walk slower and all that. The movie touched a lot of people, as I got to know about people who had been in similar situations.

Would you say, therefore, that you are versatile?

"A man does not define a woman's right. Now if I do not have a relationship, it doesn't change the fact that I'm Bimbo Akintola and this is what we do to our females in this country (Nigeria); we frustrate them to the point that they marry anybody, not thinking of the fact that there is a life after marriage, which is why we have so many break ups. That's one of the things we need to address."

Nigerian actress Bimbo Akintola



anybody, not thinking of the fact that there is a life after marriage, which is why we have so many break ups. That's one of the things we need to address. Marriage is a very important institution that one should not rush into. I know people are so curious about who goes out with whom. But I think that is not important. We are already in the limelight. There are certain parts of you that you would want to keep secret, and I am sure that would be the one part that is most important to you.

What kind of people are you attracted to?

I like very, very plain, easy, nice people, people with integrity, principled people. I like people who have something upstairs, intellectuals. I don't think I'm asking for too much because we have lots and lots of people like that in this country. Nigeria has great men, and women too, very talented, any way you like to put it.

What's your greatest achievement so far?

The fact that, at a tender age, I found out what I wanted to do and went on to do just that.

Any regrets?

I learn from my mistakes but harbour no regrets, really.

How do you deal with negative publicity?

Hazards of the job.

*Nigeriafilms.com

I would love to believe that I am versatile because I like to play different kinds of characters.

How would you describe yourself in one word?

Vivacious.

Who do you admire in the industry?

Joke Silva; she is wonderful in her interpretation of characters and elocution. Omotola is a great actress. I like Eucharia's interpretation of characters. KOK is also fantastic. I admire directors like Tade Ogidan, Amaka Igwe, Tunde Kelani and Jimi Odumosu.

Are you the sociable type?

Well, yes, I like to go out with my girlfriends. I go clubbing once in a while, depending on my mood. I am sociable, I can be very sociable.

Talking about your girls, every young girl wants a man of her

own. Do you hang out with guys and do you have a man of your own?

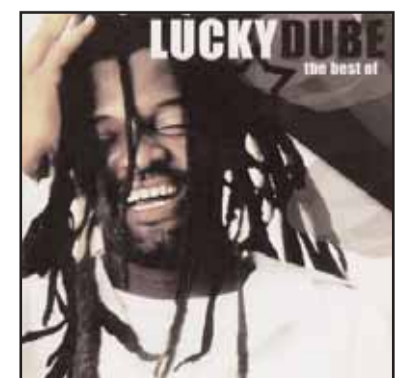
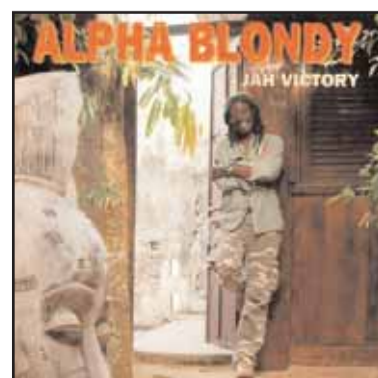
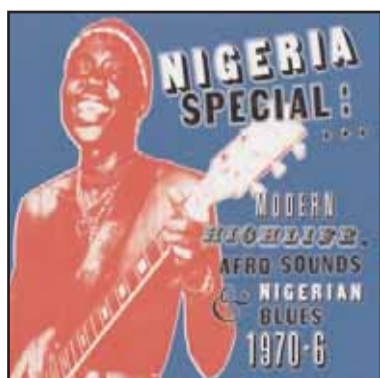
God created male and female for a particular reason. Men do matter, but I enjoy having night outs with my girlfriends. It's just great fun, for us to gist and talk about men. I have close male friends though, and when I say close, like blood close. As for the man in my life, when it is time for him to be revealed, he shall be.

Do you hope to settle down soon?

Isn't that every girl's wish? Look at a little child, a girl; by the time she is as little as say three, she is talking about tying her baby to her back. So, it is in the female make up to settle down someday to family life. A man does not define a woman's right. Now if I do not have a relationship, it doesn't change the fact that I'm Bimbo Akintola and this is what we do to our females in this country (Nigeria); we frustrate them to the point that they marry



TOP CHARTS



Oosie praises women's love for children in new LP *Da Transfiguration*

By Stephen Ogongo

The heralded Oosie a.k.a King Of Da West, a Nigerian musician has just released a new LP titled "Da Transfiguration".

Some of the best hits in the LP include "I need Love", "Crying" and "Help us all".

In this new LP, Oosie speaks about the harsh realities of life, about the love women give to their children and the pain women go through in life in order to be mothers. Oosie also reflects on the chaos in our present world. He is saddened by wars and the sufferings they cause to innocent people, especially women and children.

The Nigerian born Oosie is recognized as one of the most famous and successful underground artists in Belgium.

His first album "Da Sacrifice" was a big success in Nigeria and in Belgium. Oosie's songs have been aired on national and international radio stations. He also stages extraordinary concerts.

The LP can be obtained from www.myspace.com/worldwideoosie and music stores in Belgium from 1st September. It will be available in Nigeria from 1st November.

For more information about Oosie please visit his website www.oosie.be or his myspace www.myspace.com/worldwideoosie



Oosie & B2D dancers

Interview with Oosie

"Africans abroad, never forget where you came from"

By Stephen Ogongo

Why did you decide to become a musician?

Music has always been part of my life but I never aimed for a career in music. For me music was just something that took the pain away. But after some auditions, performances and writing of my own lyrics, it became clear to me that this is what I was meant to do. That's why I always say I didn't choose music, music chose me.

When did you move to Belgium and where are you currently based?

I moved to Belgium 2003 and I'm Based in 8760 Meulebeke West-Vlaanderen.

Is it possible for an African musician to make a living out of music in Belgium?



It's possible, I mean anything is possible regardless of the place but you don't expect to make the same profit as artists from

America or UK or something like that.

What would you say are some of the problems you are facing as an African musician in Belgium?

They play less urban music on radios and don't give enough room to Belgian artists in the national TV stations. So part of the way to make it in Belgium is to influence the small

radio and TV stations to make them broadcast your music.

How do you compose your songs?

I compose my lyrics from the deepest lines of inspirations I feel in my soul.

What message do you try to convey through your songs?

Love, life, reality, pain, pleasure, but most important of all experiences from me or from others.

Are there any African musicians you greatly admire?

Fela Kuti.

Advice to young people who would like to become musicians?

Do not let anybody discourage you, because you can be what you want to be. If it's in you then let it show. No matter what never stop, your dreams could be a magic to you if you follow your heart.

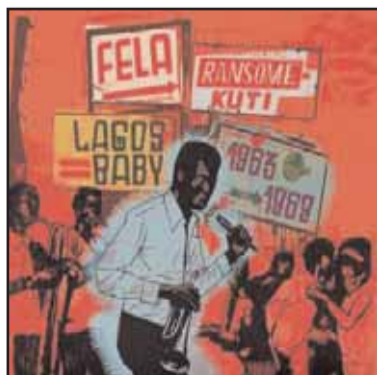
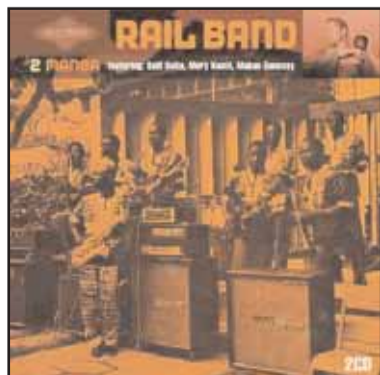
What's your message to Africans abroad?

Be positive, set a goal and strive to reach it. Most of all never forget where you came from.

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NEW RELEASES



Parents in UK to be told if their children are overweight

From this month parents of children in the UK who have been weighed and measured at school could automatically receive their child's results. This is a new initiative introduced by the Department of Health to get parents to be more aware about healthy lifestyles, and help their children achieve a healthy weight.

The National Child Measurement Programme weighs and measures the height of all primary school children in reception class and Year 6 (aged 4-5 and 10-11). This year, the Government is urging Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to send parents the results so that parents don't have to ask for them.

At this stage, about 40 percent of local primary health care trusts have said they intend to automatically contact parents in the next school year, and a further 40 percent will decide when they see the newly issued guidance.

The new guidance will help PCTs implement this new approach and help to make sure parents get the information they need about their child's results in ways that they have said will be most helpful.

Trained staff, such as a school nurse, will weigh and measure children. Care is taken that it is done in a sensitive way with the measurements being taken in a separate room or screened off area. Pupils will not be told



"Schools are well placed to make a real difference in tackling obesity - with record investment in sport and exercise; encouraging active travel to and from home; making cooking compulsory in secondary schools; scrapping junk food and transforming the quality of school lunches. But at the end of the day, parents bring up children, not the Government, schools or health services. Every parent wants their child to be fit and healthy so it's only right to help them make informed decisions about their lives."

Children's Minister Kevin Brennan

about other pupils' weight and height and the results will not be shown to teachers or other school staff.

Eighty per cent of schoolchildren - an increase of 32 per cent compared to the previous year - in Reception Year and Year 6 were weighed and measured in 2006/7.

Health Minister Ivan Lewis said: "It's clear from research we've done that parents want to know their child's results and whether

there is a concern about their health. But they want clear information which is helpful and non-stigmatising."

The minister cited a research showing that most parents of overweight or obese children think that their child is a healthy weight. "This important move isn't about pointing the finger and telling parents that their children are overweight, instead it's about equipping parents with the information they need to

help their children live healthier lives," Mr. Lewis said.

Children's Minister Kevin Brennan said: "Schools are well placed to make a real difference in tackling obesity - with record investment in sport and exercise; encouraging active travel to and from home; making cooking compulsory in secondary schools; scrapping junk food and transforming the quality of school lunches.

"But at the end of the day, parents bring up children, not the Government, schools or health services. Every parent wants their child to be fit and healthy so it's only right to help them make informed decisions about their lives."

Figures published earlier this year showed that in UK in 2006/7 22.9 per cent of children in Reception year (age four to five) were overweight or obese. In year six (age 10 to 11) 31.6 per cent were overweight.

The UK has made tackling obesity a top cross Government priority, investing £372 million in a strategy to enable people to maintain a healthier weight for a healthier life. The Government is calling on everyone - from the smallest community keep fit class to the biggest retailers in the land - to join in this campaign to change the way people in England live their lives.

Recipe

Kelewele

Kelewele is a fried plantain dish, akin to plantain chips. This recipe makes 6-8 servings. It will take about 30 minutes to make, with 15 minutes of preparation time.

Ingredients

- 4-6 plantain bananas, peeled and cut into cubes or chips
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper or red pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons water or lemon juice
- vegetable oil

Method

Grind together ginger, pepper, and salt. Mix with water. Add the plantain cubes to the spice mixture. Let it marinate for 10-20 minutes. Heat oil in a skillet to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. At this temperature, the plantains should float. Add the plantains to the skillet and deep-



fry them. Turn them over once until golden brown on both sides. Do not overcrowd the skillet with plantains.

After frying, remove any excess oil by using an absorbent material. Serve hot and fresh.

From Wikibooks

Teach your children to chew!

It's during the first years of life that our jaws really develop.... by being stretched and gradually moulded. And our dietary habits play a crucial role in the way our jaws are formed.

So if you want to avoid your children having orthodontic treatment later in life and having to wear a brace, get them into good eating habits. Begin early - starting with breastfeeding!

Sucking offers a bit of a challenge and when com-

bined with the natural firmness of the breast it encourages the development of infants' lower jaws. Then, little by little, teach your child to chew. As soon as the milk molars appear - between 12 and 18 months - give your child soft food mashed with a fork, softly cooked meat cut into small pieces rather than minced, and stewed fruit...

By the age of 3 children are able to chew solids. They can then eat the same things as adults, in appropriate amounts. Don't feed your

child on a diet of beef burgers and chips, which require hardly any effort to chew. Instead give them steak cut into pieces and sautéed potatoes. Likewise, at teatime some crusty bread and chocolate are preferable to soft pastries which can be swallowed without chewing. It's really not complicated at all and it will give your children every chance of developing jaws that are capable of accommodating all their teeth.

By Destinationsante.com

Television and child obesity

The more television children watch, the more likely they are to crave the foods shown in the adverts.

This is the finding reached by Marie-Laure Frelut, a paediatrician specialising in nutrition who decries the vast amount of advertising given over to foods that are unsuitable for small children. The figures are breathtaking: in the United States, by the age of 3 months 40% of infants watch television. And by the age of 2 the figure has risen to over 80%! So the TV screen becomes an everyday part of children's lives at a very early age. And the result of this is a

veritable addiction to these images which, even if the children don't understand them, are still imprinted on their minds.

According to Marie-Laure Frelut, it is highly probable that television has had an influence on dietary behaviour and perception. It also produces sedentary children. In terms of energy expenditure, she continues, watching television is the equivalent of sleeping. So it's hardly surprising that a child with a television in his bedroom is twice as likely to become overweight.

Numerous studies have demonstrated a clear correla-

tion between the number of food adverts and the prevalence of overweight children. It is essential to work to achieve ethical advertising during programmes aimed at children because children are so extremely vulnerable. Indeed, this is the very core of the problem.

By Destinationsante.com



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