

# WORLD news

## INDIA

The International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission says police in Bangalore are mistreating hijras and kothis.

Hijras are people who are trans or have intersex conditions—mostly men who undergo castration. They are found throughout South Asia. Kothis are men who have sex with men and see themselves as feminine.

IGLHRC cited instances of arbitrary arrest and torture as well as an apparent ban on hijra meetings within the city limits.

Seven officers from the Commercial Street Police Station visited the sexual minorities resource center Sangama and demanded it stop playing host to hijra meetings March 17. They followed up March 31 by physically preventing hijras and kothis, as well as some activists and others, from entering the premises, IGLHRC said.

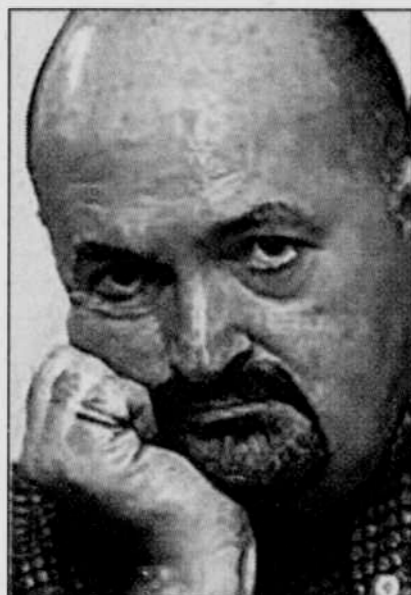
## UNITED KINGDOM

Liza Minnelli says rumors her new husband is gay are false, London's *the Sun* reported March 30. The 56-year-old married David Gest, 48, last month in New York City.

"I know many of my husband's ex-girlfriends who will agree that if every man was as good in bed as David, there would be a lot of happy women in the world," the singer reportedly said. "We moved in together one week after we met; that says it all."

Asked what would be a good wedding present for Minnelli this time around, singer Elton John said, "A heterosexual husband," according to the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and MSNBC.

According to the *New York Post*, *All My Children* star Ruth Warrick told the U.S. tabloid newspaper the *Globe*: "If Liza was expecting passion with David on their wedding night, believe



Vincent Monks

When the *Texas Triangle* asked Minnelli last month if she has "good gaydar," she replied: "What? No! I'm terrible. You're talking to the girl who married Peter Allen."

A gay janitorial manager at the British Broadcasting Corp. in Manchester, England, was fired March 26 for making a sexual joke to a female co-worker. Vincent Monks' superiors said he sexually harassed the unnamed woman in the company bar when he said to her, "I could take you home and make passionate love to you."

"When I was told about the allegation I was gobsmacked; it was unbelievable," the 49-year-old told the *Manchester Evening News*. "The whole incident was lighthearted banter, which somehow became an allegation against me. To be told as a gay man that I am being sacked for sexually harassing a woman is just ridiculous."

## AUSTRALIA

Legislation passed the Parliament of the state of Western Australia on March 21 that grants same-sex couples marriage rights in areas such as adoption, in vitro fertilization, property transfer, medical treatment, inheritance and death benefits. The legal age for gay sex also was lowered from 21 to 16.

According to the Australian Associated Press, the measures were "among the most contentious pieces of legislation...in years, as pro-family groups held rallies and placed newspaper advertisements suggesting the laws would lead to men having sex with 13-year-old boys." The state's largest city is Perth.

## HONG KONG

A gay man wearing a wedding dress and a lesbian wearing a tuxedo and a mustache got married March 25 at the Hong Kong City Hall registry office in order to access subsidized rental housing available only to straight couples and to challenge heterosexual laws.

Noel Chen, 28, and Yeo Wai-wai, 25, said that they have no intention of living together because they already have partners—and that their mates plan to wed each other as well. "Our purpose is to challenge the ban on housing assistance, married persons' tax allowances and adoption services to homosexual couples in Hong Kong," Chen told Agence France-Presse.

## NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand's biggest gay event, the annual Hero parade in Auckland, was a shadow of its former self March 24 because of money problems.

The crowd was smaller, there was just one float, and the event was renamed a "march" rather than a "parade." A rally and concert followed in Western Park. **J**

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.



David Gest and Liza Minnelli talk to the media about their new show Jan. 24 in London's Dorchester Hotel

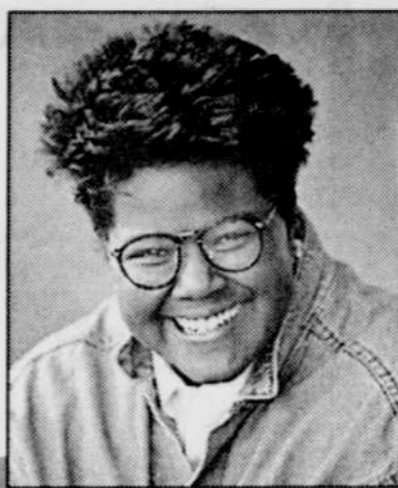
me, she's still waiting. David's been secretly into men, not women, for the entire 25 years I've known him."

Warrick, 86, later denied making the statement. "I have no knowledge of any affairs with men—not a whisper," she told the *Post*.

Gest was quoted by ThisIsLondon.com as saying: "I guess [the gay rumor] sells papers. I mean, I know who I am. That's the most important thing. We are going to beat the odds. We'll die in each other's arms, I promise you."

Minnelli's first husband was gay singer/songwriter Peter Allen. Her father, Vincent, was bi. Her mother, Judy Garland, also married a gay man, Mark Herron.

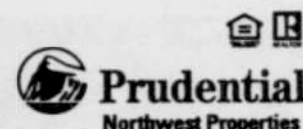
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