

WORLDnews

The suit was brought by "I.M.," who sought ownership of the house he shared with his late partner for 40 years. The government had rejected his claim, arguing that the 1965 Inheritance Law applied only to common law opposite-sex couples.

Activists said they believe the ruling may lead to other decisions granting same-sex couples ordinary matrimonial rights.

NIGERIA

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo called homosexuality "unnatural" Oct. 27. He was speaking in support of African Anglicans' denunciations of Gene Robinson, the gay bishop of the Episcopal diocese of the U.S. state of New Hampshire.



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"I wholeheartedly salute the wisdom, courage and resilience of African bishops within the Anglican Communion for standing so firmly against attempts to undermine our faith and falsify God's will and the word of God," Obasanjo told a meeting of African bishops in Lagos, Nigeria. "Such tendencies are clearly unbiblical, unnatural and definitely un-African."

PERU

Peru's Constitutional Court overturned a law Nov. 11 that prohibited gays in the military from having sex, the Agence France-Presse news wire reported.

The army had banned same-sex relations on or off military bases under threat of imprisonment or expulsion. The court said the ban was "completely discriminatory" and unconstitutional.

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia's government said Nov. 3 it has received "a 100 percent guarantee" from European Union foreign affairs ministers that it will not be forced to recognize same-sex partnerships or marriages from other European nations, Radio Slovakia International reported.

Slovakia was the only EU nation to make such a request, and it reportedly will be granted via an amendment to the Hague Programme, a policy adopted Nov. 4 and 5 by the European Council regarding cross-border security and human rights issues.

"Slovakia has taken this measure unilaterally, which means that we will have different laws in this area than the rest of the EU," Foreign Affairs Minister Eduard Kukan told *The Slovak Spectator* newspaper.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's first national gay radio program launched Nov. 10, reported MarketingWeb.co.za. The *Tuesday Night Show* airs on Radio 2000 from 8 to 10 p.m.

"The aim...is to present intellectual, stimulating and contemporary radio programming and content that would not only appeal to the greater gay and lesbian community, but also to a significant straight audience," said executive producer Maciek Mazur.

Unfortunately, Mazur said, advertisers seem to be taking a "wait-and-see attitude" to the show. He expects that to change once they hear the program.

SWEDEN

Sweden's new minister for equality, Jens Orback, has come under fire from the National Federation for Sexual Equality for trying to sound supportive of gay couples.

"Let people live with whom they want," he told a radio news program Nov. 15. "My grand-

mother's wonderful sister lived in Canada. She lived with a horse. I think it's great. Let people live with whom they want and how they want."

The federation's Sören Andersson told the daily newspaper *Expressen*: "If Orback equates animal sex and homosexuality, he should resign. It's absurd to compare relations to domestic animals with relations between people."

TAIWAN

About 2,000 queers marched in the Gay Pride parade Nov. 6 in Taipei, Taiwan.

Some carried signs demanding access to marriage. A bill to open marriage to same-sex couples, drafted by the Cabinet, awaits action in Parliament.

UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom's Civil Partnership Bill cleared its final hurdles Nov. 17 and 19—passage in the House of Lords and royal assent.

The vote was 251-136. The measure passed the House of Commons on Nov. 9 by a vote of 389-47.

Legally registered same-sex couples will obtain marriage rights in areas that include accident compensation, life insurance, immigration, inheritance, intestacy, pensions, taxation, tenancy, spouse and child support and workplace benefits.

"Finally, the House of Lords has recognized that Britain is a tolerant 21st century nation," said Ben Summerskill, head of the gay lobby group Stonewall. "For the first time, the front benches of all three major political parties have backed equality for gay people. That represents a hugely positive change."

The Coalition for Marriage Equality simultaneously welcomed and denounced the bill.

"The fact remains that same-sex marriage is illegal in the United Kingdom, and the Civil Partnership Bill will remain a separate system for those in same-sex relationships—almost equal, yet oddly segregated from the rest of mainstream society," said spokesman David Henry.

The coalition's Terry Sanderson added: "The government constantly tells us that equality is at the top of its agenda, but repeatedly gay people are given less than equality. This is a glaring example of that."

The first registrations likely will not take place until next fall, after the United Kingdom's tax and benefits systems have been overhauled to accommodate same-sex couples.

Jamaican dancehall singer Sizzla was denied entry to the United Kingdom in early November because his lyrics encourage murder of homosexuals.

The Home Office cited public safety reasons and lyrics such as "Shot battyboy, my big gun boom," which translates as "Shot a queer, my big gun went boom."



Peter Tatchell of OutRage with Green Party leaders Jenny Jones and Keith Taylor

The London gay group OutRage and other activists have conducted an extensive campaign against several Jamaican dancehall artists whose music supports killing gays. They include Elephant Man ("Queers must be killed"), Vybz Kartel ("Kartel puts one [a bullet] in a queer's spine"), Beenie Man ("I'm dreaming of a new Jamaica, come to execute all the queers"), Buju Banton, T.O.K., Bounty Killer and Capleton. **JN**

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.

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