



BEAUTY IN THE NEWS

These excerpts are from news reports about the staging of the 2002 Miss World beauty pageant in Nigeria. How do different reporters present the story in different ways?

- What sort of language does the reporter use?
- How easy is it to distinguish fact from opinion?
- Whose opinions are quoted?
- Is the report biased, or does it offer a balance of views?

NEWS REPORT #1

Miss World vs. Muslim law

THE CONTEST scheduled for Nov. 30 in Abuja, brings together more than 100 pageant winners from around the world and is expected to be broadcast to more than 140 countries.

For those not offended by the pageant, it is the source of some pride in Nigeria. The program will showcase the current Miss World, Nigeria's Agbani Darego, in what is billed as the most widely watched single event on television. Some also hope it will help the country restart its floundering tourism industry. (...)

Some Muslim groups are outraged that Nigeria is

holding the event, particularly because it falls during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

"The beauty contest is not only abhorrent and obnoxious but also a mockery of the nation's conscience, since Nigerians are known to be committed religious people," Dahiru Muhammad Argungu, head of the Jama'atul Muslimin group, said in a statement. "A beauty contest is nothing but a parade of nudity which is against the norms of all religions and morally civilized societies and cultures, as it has a high potential to breed promiscuity." (...)

The National Council of Muslim Youth (NACOMYO) said Nigeria was wasting millions of naira in hosting a beauty pageant when "policemen and civil servants are being owed arrears of salaries."

"It also shows insensitivity on the part of government to the feelings of Muslims who constituted the majority in this country for the show of shame to be organized during the period of Ramadan fasting," he said.

by Kari Huus
MSNBC News

NEWS REPORT #2

Beauties Protest Against Beastly Stoning

INTERNATIONAL beauty queens, who were set to travel to Nigeria to compete for the Miss World crown, have threatened to boycott November' s event in protest against the sentencing of a single mother to death by stoning under Islamic law.

Others said they were concerned for their safety after threats from Islamic groups to disrupt the ceremony.

Miss SA Vanessa Carreira said SA pageant organisers Sun International would let her know only by the end of September whether she

would be entered in the Miss World contest in Nigeria.

"They are still negotiating. But if I do get to go, I may decide not to, if it would help that poor woman and if that is the general feeling among contestants. (...)

An Islamic court in northern Nigeria last week dismissed the appeal of 30-year-old Amina Lawal, who was sentenced to death by stoning for bearing a child out of wedlock.

Last week Miss Norway, Kathrine Soerland, was quoted as saying she

found the sentence "utterly revolting" and was contemplating pulling out. (...)

Miss World is billed as the world' s largest television spectacular.

Last year it was won for the first time by a black African, Nigeria' s Agbani Darego.

But Miss World committees around the world this week warned that their participation in the pageant should not be taken for granted.

by Staff Writer and Sapa
Cape Times

NEWS REPORT #3

Nigeria's Obasanjo Defends Shari'a, Blames Press for Miss World Riots

NIGERIAN President Olusegun Obasanjo blamed an inflammatory newspaper article that slandered Prophet Muhammad (Peace and prayers be upon him) for the riots that killed more than 200 Nigerian citizens and drove the Miss World beauty contest out of the country. (...)

Riots erupted in Kaduna last week after the newspaper This Day published an offensive Miss World article in which it implied that Prophet Mohammed (Peace and prayers be upon him) would have enjoyed the show. (...)

Muslim leaders have insisted that they found the very idea of hosting a "parade of nudity" unacceptable, particularly as the beauty queens arrived in Nigeria during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

from Islam Online