

גאנה בישראל

בהשתתפות ג'וני, ננה ומירי יהודה

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הודעה לעיתונות לקראת התערוכה:

אל ישראל מגיעים עובדים בני לאומים ויבשות שונות. עיקר הקשר של העובדים עם החברה המקומית כרוך בתעסוקה ובפרנסה. אולם, לצד העבודה מתרחשים חיים נוספים. העובדים המגיעים מארצות אפריקה הם בני השכבה המשכילה בארצותיהם. רובם בוגרי אקדמיות ובעלי מקצוע בתחומי התמחות שונים. בישראל הם עוסקים בעיקר בניקיון ובסבלות. רבים מהם באים עם בני משפחה ומקיימים כאן חיי קהילה פעילים. מציאות זו מקנה להם נקודת מבט מיוחדת כלפי החברה המקומית וזהות פרטית של קבוצת מהגרים. תנאי העבודה, המגע עם הרשויות, המצב הלא חוקי, תנאי המגורים, הקשר עם ארצותיהם וחיי הקהילה יוצרים תנאים מיוחדים של הישרדות. לא תמיד אפשר לספר את הסיפור האמיתי. התערוכה הנוכחית היא תוצאה של מפגשים ושיחות עם עובדים מגאנה השוהים בישראל. דברים שכתבו ומצבים שצילמו מייצגים רק חלקים בתמונה של חיי חברה, קשר עם הבית, מסורת, דת, חינוך, שפה, חוק והמציאות בישראל. שמות המשתתפים בתערוכה יישארו פרטיים.

הכותרות הבאות נכתבו על ידי המשתתפים מגאנה:

AN AFRICAN LIFE IN ISRAEL: GHANAIAN PERSPECTIVE

Social Life

Anyone who knows an African might be easily realized that he or she is what I term 'Social Interactive Being' because they are much more cordial and open towards even non African, whether he or she knows that person in question or not.

The Social life of the African in Israel comprises of Church activities, parties. Political gatherings and other social benevolent clubs, which is, based primarily on ethnic or tribal lines as well as soccer (football) clubs.

Church Services

There are numerous Churches in and around the South Tel-Aviv neighborhood and they are normally organized during the evening weekdays after the day's tedious manual working hours and the climax of the weeks spiritual activities is on Saturday almost from morning to evening, even beyond the Jewish Shabbat hours and since Africans are noisy by nature one cannot be among them without being deafened by noise.

The tribal based social clubs do raise funds through monthly levied dues for developmental projects such as hospitals and educational institutions in Ghana and other African countries. Beside these, there are financial help for

club members when they fall into immigration or police hands. The sick and the bereaved are also catered for in time of need; and since Africans do not benefit from the Israeli government social insurance policies these serve as a way the African enjoy their way of collective insurance policies.

We are friendly among ourselves than between other national such as the Chinese, Latinos, Thais, Russians and the Eastern Europeans but our relationship with Philippines are much more stronger even it goes beyond common friendship and this is the fact that we speak common language which is English Language.

Hebrew Words In African Language

Among the African we have picked up some common words in the Hebrew language which are becoming part and parcel of our day life, for example, 'Toda, Lo, Ken, Beseeder, Auto buus, Shalom, Balagan, Bokertov' etc. and these type of words are usually common among our daily conversation which is associated with the type of work we are doing in Israel. Many Africans too have named their children after their employers eg Rivka, Rachel, Sharon, Abigail, Yossi, etc.

Immigration Issues

Among all the foreigners in Israel, the Africans or Ghanaians are the least of the percentage of those who have legal staying status out of the population of about 10 to 15 thousands Africans citizens in Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem and Eilat, and the bulk of these people are in Tel-Aviv.

The Israeli police do arrest other foreigners than Africans or Ghanaians in particular because it might be the fact that, the work we do in Israel is not the type an Israeli is prepared to do and since it is cleaning job and generally at homes of the employers it is very difficult for the police to go after people in their work, places which are the homes of the Israelis rather than open places such as restaurants, constructional sites or supermarkets, etc.

When one is arrested, we do inform ourselves on telephones and fax or e-mails and also no one do venture out doors for the fear of the police and the house to house police operation is the worst of our nightmares. They do arrest you in the night as if you are a Palestinian terrorist fighting for control of Jerusalem.

When one is arrested and the Israeli government is not prepared to buy ticket for the illegal, the various social clubs raise funds for the police "VICTIMS" and even most of the deported illegals do come back to Israel on different document and in 1998, the mere mass arrest at the Central Bus Station and almost half of those arrested came back to Israel within a matter of weeks so what is the sense of the arrests, the Israeli Government must have better solution to the immigrational issues because building a camp at Ramle is not the solution. We normally come in with different documents and the Israeli police think they know but they do not know much about it because Africans are immigration experts and since it is sensitive the writer can't write much about it. The Israeli presses too are either ill-informed or sometimes consult

only a few source for their information and they just jump into conclusion which is fallacy of generalization.

Education

Generally speaking, most of the Africans are either high school or university graduates and they actually know what to do and what to use their money for, but all the same there are also those who are below the standard of high school level.

Among the Ghanaians, Nigerians, South Africans, Ivorians, Kenyans, etc in Israel there are also professionals such as Police' Military Officers, Artisans, Nurses, Drivers and experts handicraft workers etc and since they are not given the opportunity to bring out their capabilities and talents, so all of us have become professional domestic workers. Only few Nigerians stand by the street side in search for jobs each morning.

Within the Israeli society, they assumed that apart from the domestic work, the illegal African workers do not know anything about the so-called hi-tech business, not even knowing how to operate television set, refrigerators or sound systems or any of the domestic electrical appliances and these ignorance can be cured only through teaching and awareness and that's the primary aims of these program. The Israeli media and the public at large think that they know much about us but they actually know nothing at all, most of their information are half-truth and fallacies.

Within the Africans, there are computer experts and highly qualified university professors who are also in the universal domestic jobs. There are also many Africans who are improving their educational standards by attending evening Israeli computer studies among others and by so doing and by so doing there are those who have got jobs out of these studies both in Israel and beyond. The writer cannot write much of the African talents on this sheet of paper because a full volume of book cannot contain what an African can do and the Israel impression of the African.

Marriage and Friendship with Israelis

The men are more likely to marry with Israeli women than the African women marrying to the Israeli men but in Europe, Africans are more ready to marry than in Israel and the fact that the women are prepared to marry Israelis is quiet simple. Some are here with the help of their husbands and family members and also due to cultural and the strong ties back in Africa or Ghana in particular, it is very difficult for an African to come to stay and marry an Israeli and also the real motive of the African is not to marry but he or she is here for financial reasons.

Again the degree of cordial friendship between an African and Israeli is virtually non-existent unless he or she is an employer to the African in question and the fact of this friendship barrier might be the cultural, the type of work the Africans do in Israel which is actually very bad and since we don't share any common interest it hinders perfect friendship. Among the Nigerians

there is high degree of marriage contact with Israelis than among other Africans.

An African's Responsibilities

The writer always used to say that if the Israeli public had been to Ghana and noticed what we are using our money for, they would have thrown all the illegal aliens out of the country within minutes of time, because since we do not pay any tax, etc to the government of the state, all the money we make go straight into our purses.

Well, our primary aim of coming to Israel is to work for money to build our countries, families and achieve the best we can in life and this has come about due to harsh IMF and World Bank loan policies to the Third World countries and corruption mismanagement within government circles in African countries.

We actually save some of our money in foreign banks and also in shares and stocks, through Stock Exchanges in Ghana and Nigeria. Meanwhile many Ghanaians have bought treasury bills from the Bank of Ghana, some of the Africans have also set up small businesses and also do sponsor their family members welfare, education and also send family members to Europe, America, Japan, Canada and Australia to search for greener pastures with the cost of about US\$7,000 to US\$10,000. Again some of us including the writer have put up very expensive Savyon or Kfar-Shemaryahu type of villas in

Ghana, which normally cost between US\$30,000 to US\$50,000. However, these building are equipped with the best modern appliances one can think of.

In Africa, there is high degree of an extended family bond and so some of the children born here are sent to our families' back home who take good care of them than an uninformed Israeli can think of.

The writer wants to urge the Israeli public that they must not think what is happening in Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia, Guinea, Sierra-Leone, Mozambique or Algeria is the total true story of the entire African Continent because Africa, the second largest continent in the world has the largest number of countries in the world. So if about ten countries are experiencing civil wars and chaos it does not necessarily mean that the whole continent is in flames so to speak.

גאנה בתל-אביב

מירי יהודה

עמי שטייניץ ועובדים מגאנה החלו בתהליך העבודה לפני הצטרפותי. חלק מן המסע היה כרוך גם בצילומים שנערכו על ידי ג'וני, אחד המשתתפים. הצטרפותי נבעה מהצורך בגיבוש ובהוספת מרכיב חזותי לתכנים בהם עסק הפרויקט. תכנים שיצרו מגע והכרות עם עולם שלם המתקיים במקביל לחיי הישראלים בארץ. הצטרפות למסע שעבר כברת דרך סייעה להשתלבות במערכת יחסי אמון שכבר נוצרה. אמון בסיסי שוויוני ואנושי אפשר פתיחת צוהר לתרבות, לחיים ולמקומות. עובדת קיומם ידועה אבל המצלמה מחדדת את ההכרה, הצילום משמש כפילטר להבנת עובדות הקיום האנושיות של מי שחולקים כאן עם כולם את אותה מציאות. עבדנו במסגרת של מפגשים קבועים ומתוכננים מראש. התכנון לא מנע גם התרחשויות פתיעות. השתתפנו באירועים משפחתיים, קהילתיים, בהרבה שעות של

פעילויות יומיות וטיולי רחוב. המצלמה תמיד שם גם כשכלל לא מצלמים. המצלמה היא חלק ממך ומהאופן בו אתה מזוהה. זיהוי זה מוכיח את עצמו כשאתה כן רוצה לצלם משהו. הרצון לגעת בחיים הביא לכמות גדולה של צילומים יומיומיים, חד-פעמיים או מאירועים יוצאי דופן. נוצרו כמויות גדולות של דימויים, כמעט כמו ערבוביה של צילומי אלבום משפחה.