



Jinja/Skellefteå 03/11/2013

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **PAINTING THE CITY BRIGHT AS ICE SWIMMING IS STAGED AT THE EQUATOR**

**The African Ice Swimming Championship at the equator, thousands of people painting houses in bright colors on the main street of Jinja, a lake-shore town in Uganda, and a relay to Sweden with a heartfelt message from one of Africa's seven wonders – River Nile.**

**– These are just some of the ingredients in events that will take place in May 2013 in collaboration with a Swedish team together with You-Tube star, Big Steve From England, says Jinja's Mayor Al-Hajji Mohammed Baswari Kezaala.**

The project, dubbed "Painting The City Bright," is to showcase the potential of Uganda's second largest city of Jinja to the world. "Painting the City Bright" will boost Jinja's visibility in the international eye. It includes River Nile, which in February 2013 was named one of Africa's seven wonders.

– Incidentally, here live friendly people with big smiles that come from good hearts," says Al-Hajj Kezaala.

The main focus will be on 17-18 May when thousands of people will paint some 60 buildings on the Main Street in cheerful colors. Here, men and women, boys and girls will go out on the street and grab brushes to brighten their city. On painting day there will even be a carnival on the Main Street with lots of musicians, dancers and other types of artists including world class reggae artists.

### **Championship in Ice Swimming**

On 11 May 2013 history will be written in Jinja, when The First African Ice Swimming Championship is staged, an event that officials of Jinja Municipal Council have said will be like bringing winter to the equator. Jinja residents have been inspired to undertake this from the city of Skellefteå in Northern Sweden, where, for the last two years both The Swedish and Scandinavian championships in winter swimming were held.

The water temperature in the swimming pool will be lowered to about 10°C, a rare phenomenon at the equator, for the championship to take place. Both individual races and relays are on the program.

– To arrange this will be a great challenge for us. An enormous contrast between

the polar cold and the oppressive heat at the equator, but we have the technology to pull that off, says Lars Westerlund, President of the Swedish Association Dark & Cold, which is co-organizer of the competition.

### **Relay from Jinja to northern Sweden**

On May 4, the program begins with a relay from Jinja to Northern Sweden, where glass bottles shaped like Uganda's delicious Nile Perch fish and other in a shape of a hippopotamus, will be filled with water from the source of the Nile and then carried, on and adjacent to the Nile, over the Mediterranean and Europe, ending up in Skellefteå.

During the trip, there will be a variety of cultural events with music and dance from Jinja. By 2014, the bottles are expected to have reached Northern Sweden and will be given to Mayors of various municipalities.

– This will be a great opportunity to sell Jinja's potential because its at that time that the city of Umeå in Västerbotten county in Sweden would have taken over as the European Capital of Culture, says Craig Dixon, executive producer of Big Steve from England films.

Craig and his team will be in Jinja from May 4 to May 18 for an on-site following of the events and to record several movies that will be distributed worldwide.

Cooperation between Jinja town and Big Steve began with an exchange between Skellefteå and Jinja town mainly for tourism development.

– When I was invited by the Mayor of Jinja to come and help with marketing Jinja it made me happy, says Big Steve from England, who normally goes by the name of Steve Babb.

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