

Nia Vardalos Now a Greek Mommy



Actress and husband are parents of adopted girl.

Nia Vardalos, star of the smash independent film, My Big Fat Greek Wedding, and her husband, actor Ian Gomez, are new parents.

The couple, who married in 1993, adopted a toddler under 5 years old several months ago, but these are the only details they are revealing, E! reports.

Vardalos's rep said in a statement, "They

are going public now to bring attention to National Adoption Month and the 500,000 children in foster care." The rep also added, "Of these children, 129,000 are 'legally free' for adoption and waiting for a family."

The actress has two films being released, My Life in Ruins and I Hate Valentine's Day. The latter also stars John Corbett, who played her husband-to-be in My Big Fat Greek Wedding.

Athens Polytechnic

The Athens Polytechnic opened its gates on Saturday morning for events commemorating the student uprising in November, 1973, against the military dictatorship ruling Greece at the time.

The three-day events on the 35th anniversary of the uprising heightened on Monday with the established march to the U.S. Embassy in Athens. Thousands of police have been placed on standby and, as is the case every year, the Polytechnic premises will be guarded by students and university professors.

The Polytechnic's administration is taking all the necessary measures to ensure that all the events scheduled to take place in the main building will develop smoothly.

Chinese 'living longer than ever'

A UN report on China says the lives of its people have been vastly improved over the last three decades.

Poverty has fallen, adult literacy has climbed and Chinese people are now living longer than ever, it says.

But despite rapid economic progress, new problems have emerged, such as the gap between rich and poor.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which published the report, says these problems need urgent attention.

The report, entitled Basic Public Services for 1.3 Billion People, comes just weeks before China celebrates 30 years of economic reforms.

During this period, the Chinese government has largely ditched central planning in favour of the free market.

The impact of the "Clarkson" comments on Greek-British relations

The comments by Jeremy Clarkson in The Sun on Saturday 8/11/08 has enraged a vast majority of the Greek nation with all of the major radio and television networks scrambling to speak to the editor of this paper to gauge the mood in "London" and the possible next course of action.

Relations between Athens and London have always been pretty "up and down" with the Blair government refusing to hand back the stolen marbles of the Parthenon to Athens for the 2004 Olympic Games provoking great disappointment in Athens, one example of this prickly relationship.

The recent visit by President Karamanlis to London to discuss with Prime Minister Brown the economic crisis engulfing the world, and the opening of the "Byzantium" exhibition at the Royal Academy of Art have all helped to build better relations between Athens and London in recent times.

But there is always an area that never seems to be properly addressed by the Greeks in the UK. Who do they ultimately feel loyal too and whose side do you go on when it comes to issues like Clarkson's comments on Greece?



John Kaponi the editor of The London Daily News a Greek Londoner said:

"It has to be said that I am a very proud Greek who was born and raised in London and is also a proud Brit too, but when it comes to humour I think I have honed in my senses after so many years on what is "funny" and what is "offensive". I had this strange email from I presume an English lady that said "I don't understand why you are offended by Clarkson's comments?" Well if you are of Greek heritage you would understand why I was offended, to call your ancestral home a "toilet", I challenge anyone to tell me if Clarkson had said this about lets say Pakistani Muslims or black Jamaicans, what reaction this may have provoked. Ultimately those of us

born in the UK who play a positive contribution to society are loyal to this country, but when Hellenism needs support we will always be vocal advocates."

John Kaponi the editor of The London Daily News said:

"In terms of the response of the Greek government, I have been asked this question by many Greek journalists asking whether it was correct for the embassy in London to not issue a statement. Well maybe in future the press office at the Greek embassy will engage in media debates like this one with statements and rebuttals."

Its not just the issue of the press office of the embassy, but also the speed at which the Greek "diaspora" in the UK responds to challenges affecting Hellenism. There are no organisations to my knowledge that have the ability to wage sophisticated media campaigns in the UK on behalf of Hellenism, unless a rich benefactor employs a PR agency, in principle there are no groups of Greeks that could be described as the "Greek lobby" on a par with the US.

What exist's are groups of ship-owners, the Greek Orthodox church, the Cypriot lobby, various cultural groups involved with the repatriation of the Parthenon marbles. So this should be an area that needs addressing, greater co-ordination between Hellenism in the UK, so that challenges are addressed in a co-ordinated fashion. I don't want to blow my trumpet but if it was not for the work of my team here at the London Daily News no one would have blinked an eyelid either here in the UK or in Athens, all that would have happened is a barrage of Greek students sending illegible emails to *The Sun*, making no sense and no impact. Our fight goes on Mr Clarkson, we will not relent!

Officer accused of robbing migrant

An Athens policeman has been suspended after allegedly stealing 600 euros from a Bangladeshi immigrant during a routine identity check on central Patission Avenue early yesterday. The 22-year-old officer is alleged to have removed the cash from the wallet of the 30-year-old migrant, which he had taken to check the man's identity card.

The migrant, who had been on his way home from the restaurant where he works, said he realized the cash was missing from his wallet after the policeman and his colleague had driven off in their patrol car. The 30-year-old said he then approached an officer in another patrol car parked further along the same street and told him what had happened. The officers traced the 22-year-old, determined that it was he who had questioned the migrant and reportedly found the cash on him. Migrant support groups often accuse police of seizing money from immigrants, but it is the first time that an officer has been charged with doing this. The development came as a study commissioned by the British Council revealed that immigrants account for 17 percent of the population in the Greek capital. According to the study, nearly half (42.8 percent) of migrants who come to Greece live in Athens, but only over one-third (37 percent) have valid residents' permits.

According to a study by Public Issue and the Hellenic Migration Policy Institute, 48 percent of Greeks believe migrants are threatening the country's national identity, while nearly three quarters of those asked (71 percent) think migrants are to blame for a rise in crime.