

# runs ICROSS, used charity cash to pursue his own sadistic pleasures

**CHARITY WORK:** Michael Meegan in Kenya with a Maasai and young baby



## 'He agreed to quit Kenya in 1986 over sex claims. Months later he was back'

IN A sworn affidavit to the court, Dr Vincent Kenny, one of Ireland's most respected aid experts, recounted his experience of dealing with sexual allegations against Meegan.

'In 1986, I became aware that allegations of a sexual nature had been made by a number of young males working in the ICROSS project in Kenya against the founder and administrator of ICROSS Kenya, Michael Meegan, whom I knew personally.

'Mr Meegan appeared concerned for his own safety because these allegations were of a sexual nature. He was looking for advice and he wanted me to help him.

'I then spoke with Mr Shaw who said he was with CID in Nairobi. Mr Shaw outlined a series of sexual allegations against Mr Meegan. He said the complainant was Meriape Ole Sangaire, a member of staff in ICROSS Kenya whom I knew. Mr Shaw said the allegations were very serious and would, if proven, result in a jail sentence for Meegan.'

Dr Kenny's evidence to the court also told of the response of the ICROSS board. 'Mr Shaw expressed concerns about the impact of the allegations on the expatriate community in Kenya and the possible reaction against missionaries and priests in particular. Mr Shaw was impressing on me and the ICROSS board the need to take the situation seriously.

'When I arrived in Kenya, I told Mr Meegan that he would have to withdraw from Kenya and return to Ireland. The reason for this was not alone the sexual allegations that had been made but also the fact that the board of ICROSS has real concerns relating to the policy and procedure put in place by Mr Meegan in ICROSS... I proposed that Mr Meegan withdraw from Kenya with some



dignity and that this would minimise the scandal on the expatriate community and the dangers therein.

'Mr Shaw appeared satisfied with the proposal and indicated he would not prevent Mr Meegan from leaving the country. Mr Shaw gave me the impression the allegations were credible and that Michael's character had been discredited by them. He also indicated that Mr Meegan should not be operating in Kenya and that his actions were bringing the Non-Government Organisation, its work and the people dependent on it into disrepute.

'I informed the board that Mr Meegan was advised to leave Kenya and return to Ireland and that he had agreed to do so in the interests of ICROSS.

'Some weeks later, I received letters and other information to the effect that Mr Meegan had returned and was interfering with the work of the charity - I was disappointed that, despite his agreement, Mr Meegan had returned to Kenya. There was disagreement between me and other members of the board on these subjects, as a result of which I resigned from the board.'

## 'He paid Ksh20 to cane me on my naked buttocks'

IN A statement presented to the court, one-time ICROSS worker James Njenga recalled alleged sexual approaches by Meegan. 'My job included making tea for him. One day when I was taking tea to him in his bedroom, he pulled me into his bed and tried to kiss me. I tried to resist but he was very powerful.'

James's court statement continued: 'There was a time when I was sharing a bedroom with Laurence, a friend and colleague. We guys would quite normally sleep close together. In the middle of the night, Meegan got into our bed between us. He wore the bottom half of a tracksuit. 'He tried to kiss us...

Laurence was furious and pushed him out of bed, shouting and screaming. Meegan was very aroused. He was repeating: 'Tigreul! Tigreul!' which means Shut your mouth in Maasai.

'Several times he would take his bamboo cane to me and hit me hard on my naked buttocks. Then he would give me Ksh20. This was a horrible experience for me.

'I did not tell my parents. In my culture it is completely shameful to have any sexual relations with another man, for cash or for anything. I felt very confused and very ashamed. This is how I feel today.'

The statement, read by the court, also included other



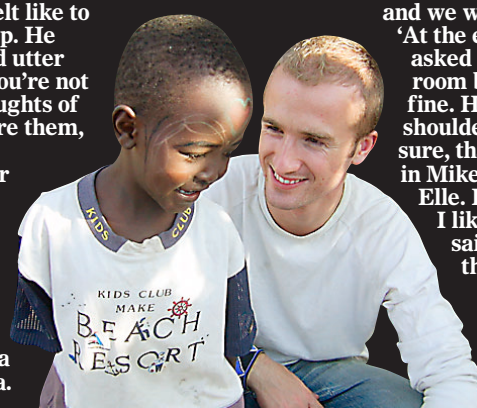
allegations. 'A French guy came to do some work for ICROSS and was sleeping every night with Meegan. Also I saw him looking at a gay website on his laptop several times. He was looking at pictures of young guys, some white, some Asian. He made contact... and paid their fares to come over to ICROSS where they slept with him. I remember them well.'

## 'He massaged my shoulders and said I should join him in his bed'

IN A sworn affidavit and a letter from 2005 Brion Ó Loinsigh - now working with Concern in Chad - informed the court of his concerns about Meegan and his friendship with Elle Kihara, a local man.

'Mike operates what felt like to me a concentration camp. He engages in complete and utter brainwashing. Firstly, you're not allowed to have any thoughts of your own, you must share them, if you don't answer his questions, or reveal your thoughts to him he tries to emasculate and humiliate you in front of others.'

Mr Ó Loinsigh's court evidence also dealt with inappropriate sexual behaviour while he and a colleague were in Africa.



'Talking to Brett and myself once, he asked Brett when was the last time he masturbated and what was he thinking of. One night while in the main house and not the guest house, Mike came in drunk and sat on the couch and we were watching a movie.

'At the end of the movie, he asked me if I was okay in my room by myself. I said I was fine. He started to massage my shoulders and asked if I was sure, that I could always sleep in Mike's bed with himself and Elle. I said No, I was fine, that I liked my small room. He said we have to look after the little baby now.

'While on a trip to Nakumatt with an ICROSS worker and Elle, Mike said, "Brion, do you use a dildo?"'

that he lives amongst the Maasai while in fact he lives in an urban compound.

It also raises allegations involving 'the skimming off of ICROSS funds for personal use' and that employees have allegedly been 'induced to engage in false reporting about the use of donated funds and the effectiveness of projects'.

Further details of the letter, opened as evidence in court, involve what the board referred to as 'a constant stream of allegations that Mr Meegan likes the company of younger men'.

The letter refers specifically to an allegation that Meegan shares a bed with a named ICROSS employee.

The court learned that the board, in its letter, expressed uneasiness about the number of allegations against Meegan, something the letter says has 'been compounded by the percep-

## 'A liar and a cheat. He also molests the boys'

tion that Mr Meegan has been less than open and honest'.

Further correspondence deemed Meegan's response to the allegations as 'wholly inadequate' before the board closed the British arm of the

charity down completely.

Meegan also provided affidavits from a number of individuals who alleged that the MoS had offered large sums of money to anyone who would make false statements against Meegan.

This allegation was refuted by MoS editor Sebastian Hamilton who swore an affidavit confirming that no inducements or payments had been offered or made by the newspaper in return for any statements.

In his affidavits, Meegan also alleged that his accusers were making up false stories in the hope of being able to sue for compensation.

However, Meegan's legal team admitted that three weeks ago

ICROSS Kenya had tried to get Kenyan police to arrest his accusers and said they wanted the investigation by the MoS gagged until those concerned had been put on trial and were convicted or cleared.

Meegan denied that a risqué Gaydar profile of him submitted as an exhibit was genuine and argued that the revelation of his sexuality would be a breach of his privacy which would make it impossible for him to remain in Kenya.

However, Judge Kearns threw out Meegan's case, saying the draconian gag order sought was not appropriate or justified in the circumstances.

He awarded costs against Meegan, saying his legal team had misled the

court during a brief earlier application in which the amount of time needed to hear the case had been exaggerated.

Judge Kearns said there was an obligation on Meegan's side to 'make full and honest disclosure to the court' in their application for an injunction against the newspaper group but ruled:

'This has not happened in this case. I am particularly angered by the fact that on Friday, when this matter was brought before the court at 12.45, I was assured by counsel for the applicant [Meegan] that this was a matter that would take two days.

'This was a completely false representation.'