

OBAMA: The Most Popular Name in the World

President-Elect Barack Obama often jokes about his unique name.

Now that he is the most powerful and well-known man in the world, people no longer have trouble pronouncing the name, which he inherited from his Kenyan-born father. The name Barack means "blessing" in Kiswahili.

Since his victory in the November General Election, Obama's name has become super popular. Parents are naming their newborns after the President-Elect, towns and cities are searching for roads, buildings and just about anything else that they can stick the history-maker's name on. Here are just a few examples of the Obama name blitz.

- Mothers in Kenya have marked Barack Obama's historic win in the US presidential elections by naming their newborns after him and his wife.

More than half of the babies born in a Kisumu Hospital on the day after the election were named either Barack or Michelle Obama.

Kisumu is close to the village where Mr. Obama's father was born and raised and Mr. Obama is a local hero. Out of 15 babies born in the New Nyanza Provincial Hospital in the western city of Kisumu on Wednesday (Nov. 5), five boys were named Barack Obama and three girls were called Michelle.

— From the BBC News

- A Hollywood, Fla. couple became among the country's first to bestow the name Barack Obama on their child, even before most had declared the Illinois senator the president-elect.

Sanjae Obama Fisher was born at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2008 (Election Day) at Hollywood's Memorial Regional Hospital to Patrick and Sasha Hall Fisher.

— From The Associated Press

- They call him The Little President, all 7 pounds, 2 ounces of him. Just like President-elect Barack Obama, he made a big impression on the world on Tuesday, Nov. 4. At 4:16 p.m., as after-work voters started to line up, Pierre Obama Adell Willis was born at Grady Hospital in Atlanta.

Even if Obama hadn't won the election, The Little President's mother, Atlantan Kimberly Wise, was firm in her choice.

— From The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

- One South Florida city is planning to honor the president-elect with his own street. Opa-locka plans to rename Perviz Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue on President's 8 Day in February.

— From The Associated Press

- A school in Long Island, N.Y., has been renamed Barack Obama Elementary School in honor of his historic rise to the presidency.

"When I'm older I'm going to look back and say I went to Barack Obama Elementary School," said fifth-grader Teonte Jackson, who played Obama in a mock presidential debate before the election. "He had the guts to run for president and believe in himself."

— From The Associated Press



REUTERS Photo by Thomas Mukoya

Kenyan Nancy Otieno holds her newborn baby boy on Nov. 5, 2008. She named him after President-elect Barack Obama.

- In central Alabama's Perry County, government workers already get a day off for President's Day, Martin Luther King Day, and Veterans Day. In 2009, they'll get one more: "Barack Obama Day."

The rural county, which overwhelmingly supported Obama in last month's presidential election, has approved the second Monday in November as "The Barack Obama Day."

Commissioners passed a measure that would close county offices for the new annual holiday and roughly 40 workers will get a paid day off.

— From The Associated Press

- Antigua's prime minister wants to rename the island's highest mountain peak "Mount Obama" in honor of the U.S. president-elect.

"Boggy Peak," as it is currently known, soars more than 1,300 feet over the island's southern point and serves as a transmission site for broadcast and telecommunication providers. It also is a popular hiking spot.

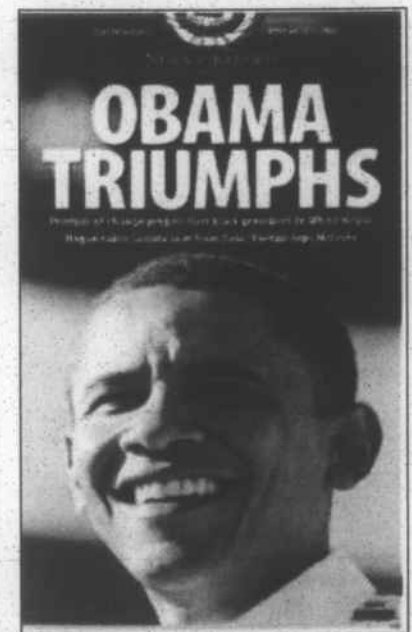
Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer announced the plans Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2008, in a congratulatory letter to President-elect Obama.

— From The Associated Press

- The central avenue in Naquera, a town of 5,000 people in the eastern region of Valencia, Spain is currently named after Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of the right-wing Falange movement and Franco's ideological mentor.

But the mayor of the town has proposed to rename the main thoroughfare 'Calle Barack Obama' because the president-elect symbolizes "unity among different races and the fight against racism."

— From The Telegraph of Great Britain



Medellin, Colombia