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# Beauty queen turns condom pitchwoman

**SINGAPORE:** There's never been anything safe about ex-beauty queen Ris Low.

The former Singapore Miss World, who was stripped of her crown last year when a credit card fraud conviction was revealed, is back in the spotlight again, this time as a spokeswoman for condoms and safe sex.

Low, 20, first shot to fame in the city-state after bloggers criticised her English, and her slang inventions "Boomz" and "Shingz" – words even she admits defy clear definition – became national catchphrases.

Low has said bipolar disorder helped trigger a compulsion to steal since she was a child and led to last year's credit card fraud sentence of two years probation. Now Low is pitching for Espire condoms and preaching safe sex, moves she

hopes will improve her image.

"From being infamous to something positive is actually a big change," Low said in an interview on Thursday. "My image is becoming more positive and most people can see the change in me."

Low said her passion for the safe sex issue comes from knowing a friend who contracted the HIV virus six years ago at 15 and acquaintances who had unwanted pregnancies.

"They have to face that and all the criticism from the public," she said. "So I think that using safe sex and being responsible for your own actions is important."

Low said she grew up in a working-class neighbourhood in west Singapore speaking Mandarin with her parents and the Chinese dialect Hokkien with her grandparents. — AP



**Educating the public:** Low giving out free condoms to members of the public in Singapore on Thursday. — AP