

# He was no ordinary musician or ordinary man

By Prime Minister  
Edward Seaga

**B**OB MARLEY, Jamaica's international reggae superstar, friend of the poor and the weak, who inspired the Jamaican youth to new heights in popular music, passed away in Miami on Monday, May 11, at the youthful age of 36.

Bob was on his way home to Jamaica from West Germany where he had been for medical treatment.

Bob Marley was no ordinary musician or ordinary man.

His music did more than entertain. He translated into music, in a remarkable, inimitable style, the aspirations, pain and feeling of millions of people throughout the world. He gave them great hopes for peace and love.

He was the unapologetic spokesman for a generation who languished for a better world and his admirers ranged from the poverty-stricken in Kingston, New York, London, Paris and other parts of the world to the affluent.

As an individual, Bob Marley was the embodiment of discipline and he personified hard work and determination to reach his goals. Without these attributes which he demonstrated so much he could not have reached the stars in the world of popular music.

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His talent would have been wasted if he had not

worked hard and developed it to perfection. His life was an outstanding example to ghetto youth.

His influence on children was profound. And he always showed his concern and love for them.

Bob was indeed a giant among musicians and men.



Reggae King Bob Marley saying his bit during a "Sunsplash" Press conference in June 1979. To his right is Jamus Grant of Reels and Reality Film Company of Chicago, USA.

He began his journey to stardom in the sixties, when the Wailers was formed. At that time the nation realised that it was fortunate in having 'traditional' singers in modern garb. These were difficult years, but with perservance in pursuing his artistic goals he gained the heart of the nation.

When Jamaica became independent he was among those who provided a beacon of hope striving to overcome obstacles. How well do we remember songs like 'Simmer Down' and 'One Love' that provided a message while they entertained.

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In 1973 Bob Marley entered the international music scene with the album 'Catch A Fire'. This was a big step in the series of developments that have seen Marley, a self-taught artist, emerge as a singer, composer and musician of world renown.

The albums that followed were of a consistently high calibre: "Rastaman Vibration" and "Exodus" to name only two.

It was just recently that he was awarded the Order of Merit, the nation's third highest honour, for his international contributions to music.

Bob's death is not only Jamaica's loss but the world's loss. But we can take solace in the fact that he left with us a rich heritage of popular Jamaican music. He has passed on but his music and spirit live on.

On behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica I extend deep sympathy and condolence to his family, and particularly to his widow Mrs. Rita Marley and the children.

I should like to end this tribute by pointing out that Bob recently wrote a song called "I Know" which is soon to be released on record. Rita has asked me to share with you a verse from this song:

*"When the race is hard to run  
And you just can't stand the pace  
All I know is that Jah will be  
Waiting there. I know".*