At 8:00 pm on February 2 — a day before his 77th birthday — Jamaica and the Caribbean lost one of its cultural luminaries.

Historian, dancer, choreographer and cultural icon, Professor Rex Nettleford died in an American hospital, six days after he collapsed in his hotel room in Washington.

Nettleford, who reportedly suffered a massive heart attack and was admitted to the hospital’s intensive care unit, never regained consciousness.

In addition to being Vice Chancellor Emeritus at the University of the West Indies, Nettleford was most known for his work in the area of dance and was one of the founding pillars who formed the 50-odd-year-old National Dance Theatre Company (NDTC).