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The Breadfruit Three

Inspired by the impact of a simple food on families, author pens a children's book

YOU might know Raul Bermudez as the man who sometimes gives out free breadfruit trees across T&T, but he is also an author.

Last year he published a children's book that has deep personal meaning to him called *The Breadfruit Three*.

Set in Tobago, the place where he honeymooned with the love of his life decades ago, the story echoes his early life in TT. It begins with a poor widowed woman with two children who sends her son to the market to buy a breadfruit to make oil down, a local delicacy. Thanks to the kindness of a nearby farmer, he returns with one as well as a breadfruit tree, which changes the family's fortune when it begins to bear.

Bermudez said his mother was widowed at age 35 and she had seven children under the age of 18. He said because it would take a year or more before his father's will was probated, they were left penniless. So she took them to Venezuela, where her family lived and helped care for them.

It was 17 years before he would return to the land of his birth and even more than before he developed a passion for breadfruit.

"My name is a big handicap. People see the name and assume you're born with a golden spoon in your mouth. I do not have the money to go with the name. It's because I know what it is not to have. I know what hunger is. That I am doing what I am doing today."

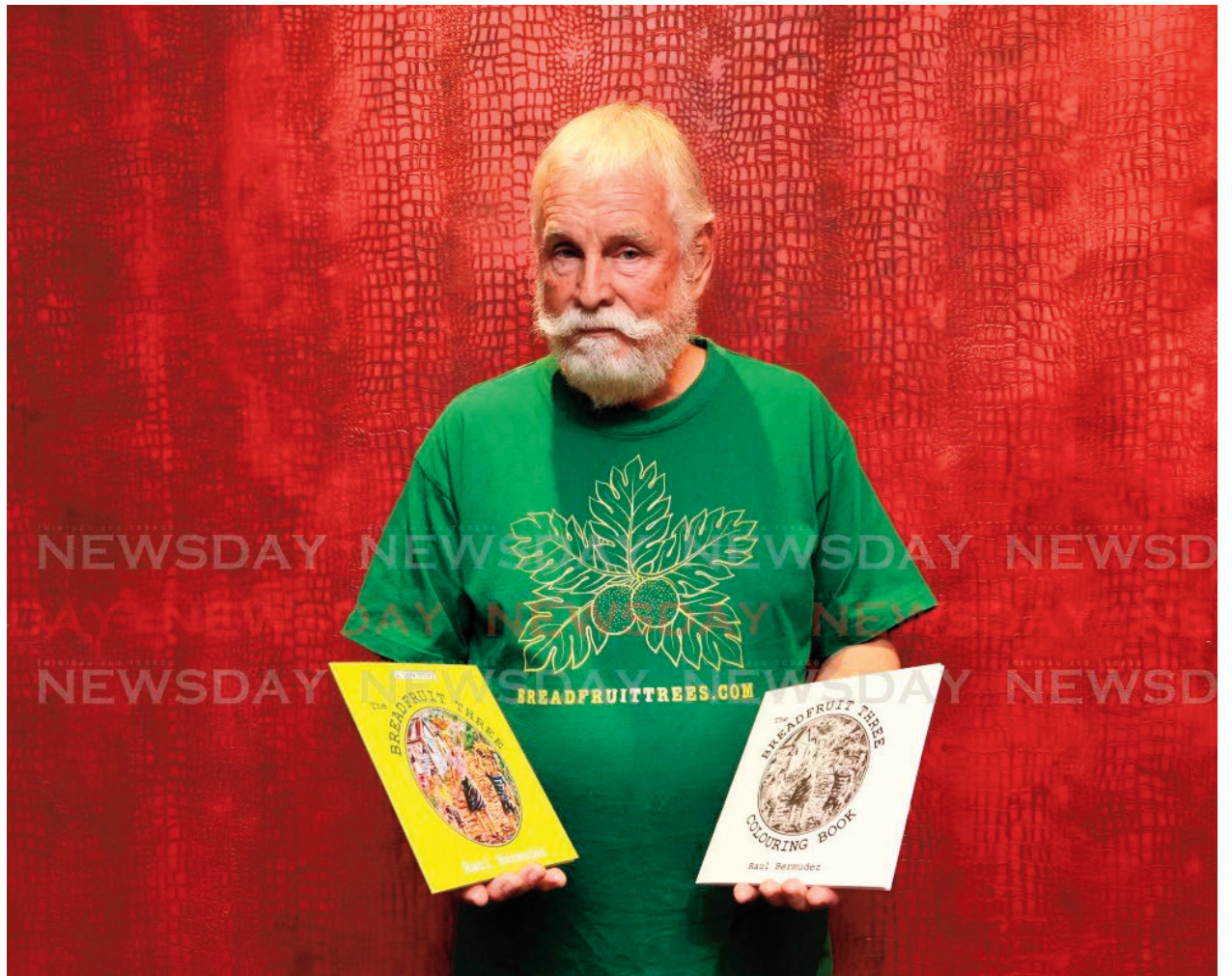
And what he is doing is trying to help people feed themselves and care for their families.

The story of *The Breadfruit Three* is one of kindness, resilience, community, creativity and entrepreneurship, with the hopes of planting those values in the hearts of children.

Asked how his love for breadfruit and the subsequent storybook came about, Bermudez explained that in 2015, then prime minister Dr Keith Rowley did a radio interview and spoke on many different issues.

One of those things was the country's high food import bill. Rowley said TT needed to re-educate the tastebuds of its children, starting with the school feeding programme.

He went on to say he had recently been in-



Raul Bermudez: inspired by the way breadfruit trees impact families

vited to lunch and was excited that the menu was breadfruit and peas.

Bermudez said, "At home, we buy breadfruit, cook it and eat it, and that is that. Because I was at my computer when the radio was on, I googled breadfruit for the first time to discover what a wondrous superfood it is."

Breadfruit is rich in vitamins and minerals, is an excellent source of proteins and fibre, and has been linked to improved heart, skin and bone health, brain function and digestion. It is also said to help regulate weight, diabetes, cholesterol, arthritis, asthma and more.

The following day Bermudez bought a breadfruit tree and planted it in his backyard. He also wrote Rowley and all the MPs letters suggesting the government plant breadfruit trees in the common areas of Housing Development Corporation developments and distribute breadfruit trees to the population. Only Health Minister Terrence Deyalsingh replied saying it was a good idea.

"I told myself, 'Let me start this ball rolling.' So I went to the place where I bought the tree and asked for ten, but they said the policy was one per person.

"I thought that the government would have stepped in to say, 'Let us feed our people.' But they are not interested in that."

So each year, he purchases larger trees which are typically destroyed to distribute on both islands, now with the help of volunteers.

Bermudez, 71, said he saw the effect having the trees had on the lives of some of the people he had given the trees to in Tobago, which he visited often.

"That was the trigger for this thing (*The Breadfruit Three*). Granted, none of those I spoke to had gone into enterprise and so on, but I said, 'Let me write a story that would give the people a blueprint of what they could do.' In a subtle way, I'm telling people who have one, or who can go get one, 'This is what can happen to you and improve your family's situation.'"

THE POWER OF Attitude

There is something powerful about the way you choose to show up each day. The way you decide to think, to feel, to engage with the world around you. Have you ever stopped to consider how much control you truly have? How much influence you hold over your own experiences? So often, people believe that circumstances dictate attitude, that external situations determine internal responses. But what if it is the other way around? What if your attitude shapes everything?

You have probably seen it before. Two people go through the same challenge, yet one becomes defeated while the other rises. One sees failure, the other sees a lesson. One gives up, the other grows stronger. What is the difference? It is not luck. It is not an easy life or a privileged background. It is attitude. The choice of how to perceive, how to respond, how to move forward.

Think about your own life. Think about the times you felt like something was impossible, like you had no options, no control. Now look back. Were those moments really as limiting as they seemed? Or was there a shift that could have changed everything? A different way to look at the situation, a different belief, a different response. Maybe, at the time, it felt like there was no choice. But in reality, there always was. And there still is.

So, what kind of energy have you been carrying? What kind of attitude have you been allowing to shape your reality? It is easy to fall into patterns without realizing it. To let frustration, doubt, or hesitation creep in and dictate the way you think. To assume that things are happening to you rather than happening through you. But here is the truth, you hold more power than you realize. And it begins with a decision.

What if, right now, you decided that your attitude would no longer be dictated by circumstances? What if you refused to let external situations determine how you feel inside? What if you chose, instead, to meet everything with strength, with clarity, with an unshakable belief that you are always in control of your response? That is what makes the difference. Not perfection, not ease, but choice. The willingness to step into each moment with intention.

I want you to pause for a moment. Close your eyes if you need to. Breathe in deeply. Feel yourself here, in this moment. Think about something that has been weighing on you. A challenge, a frustration, a doubt. Now, imagine looking at it differently. Imagine choosing a new attitude, one that serves you. Imagine shifting your energy, shifting your focus. What changes? How do you feel? What new possibilities emerge?

That is the power you hold.

Your mind will try to convince you that things need to change first. That you need better circumstances, clearer answers, fewer struggles. But that is an illusion. The most powerful shift happens not when everything falls into place, but when you decide to change how you see what is in front of you.

You have seen this before, have you not? The way one simple shift in perspective can transform an entire experience. The way a challenge can suddenly become an opportunity. The way frustration can dissolve into clarity. It is not magic, and it is not something reserved for certain people. It is a choice. And it is one you can make right now.

So, what if today, you made that choice? What if today, you decided to meet everything with an attitude of possibility? To approach challenges as stepping stones instead of barriers? To hold yourself in a space of confidence rather than hesitation? What would that look like? How would it feel? How much would shift around you simply because you shifted within?

You do not have to wait to become the person who does this. You already are that person. The strength, the wisdom, the clarity, it is already within you. It is just waiting for you to tap into it. Waiting for you to trust it. Waiting for you to decide that you will no longer be at the mercy of circumstances. That you will be the one who decides how you show up, no matter what.

Do you know what happens when you make that shift? Life begins to respond differently. You notice opportunities you had overlooked before. You attract experiences that align with your new energy. You feel a sense of empow-



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erment that was always there but had been buried beneath doubt. It is not because the world suddenly changes. It is because you do. And when you change, everything around you begins to shift as well.

So, take another deep breath. Feel that truth settling into you. Feel that energy rising within you. You are in control of your attitude. You are in control of your response. You are in control of how you shape your own experience.

What will you choose today?

Not tomorrow, not next week, but today. Right now. What is one way you can shift your attitude in this moment? One thought, one belief, one perspective that serves you rather than holds you back. Take a moment. Think about it. Let it settle in.

Now, carry that forward. Hold onto it. Bring it into the next hour, the next challenge, the next conversation. Watch what happens when you do. Watch how your energy shifts, how people respond differently, how solutions begin to emerge. It is not coincidence. It is alignment. It is the natural result of choosing a new way of seeing, a new way of being.

This is your power. Use it wisely. Choose it daily. And watch as everything begins to unfold in ways you never expected.

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CHUTNEY QUEEN

Reshma Ramlal conquers the genre's biggest stage

Her dream was to one day win the title of Chutney Queen. So naturally when the results were announced that Reshma Ramlal won the title at the 30th edition of the Chutney Soca Monarch on March 1st at Skinner Park in San Fernando, Trinidad, she cried tears of joy.

Ramlal was among four female artistes competing in the finals of the annual competition. Reehanna Gopaul, Hurricane Hemlatha Dindial and Vanessa Ramoutar were the other competitors. She emerged winner, alongside Lil Bitts (Shivonne Church-Isaacs) with their collaboration “Poowah Nah Ready”.

Even from the semi finals, Ramlal, known by her stage name “The Warrior Princess”, was a crowd favourite. After the results were read, the 42-year-old singer said, “I’m still trying to process this win. I can’t believe it. Last night, I was watching a video one of my friends posted and I broke down. It hit me and I cried because I worked so hard for this,” she said.

As the daughter of former singer and musician Gobin Boodram, Ramlal said she began singing from a young age.

“I come from a musically-inclined family. Since I was five years old, I’ve been singing. Professionally, however, I came out when I was 22 years old,” she said.

Her father was a member of the band JMC Triveni, now known as KI & The Band, she said. The band is now based in Toronto.

She enrolled in classes at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Cultural Cooperation, where she studied Hindustani Classical music for three years under trained teachers and musicians from India.

“I was really a Bollywood singer, but when I joined the band Spread Pal Crew in 2011, led by Omarkath Maraj, I transitioned into singing different genres. As a party band, they wanted chutney and soca, so I changed the tone of my voice to do different genres of music,” she added.

While Ramlal also performed with other bands, she began focusing on her career as a solo artiste.

Asked about the criticism of chutney for its irresponsible lyrics, she said: “Everybody has their own way of thinking. People who speak (ill) of chutney music have to be in it to understand what it comes from. They think everything is rum and horn, and I’m not bringing down the soca artiste, but they do it too, and they don’t get the backlash as we do.

“In chutney music, we speak about reality. This is what goes on in everyday life. It is storytelling through music. No music is bad. Everyone has their preference. We can’t stop you from doing what you like,” she said.

A former spa owner, Ramlal said she has been in the CSM competition for the past 15 years and a finalist five times.

“This is my fifth time as a finalist in the competition. I’ve been in the competition for 15 years,” she said.

She said her journey to CSM queen was not without its challenges.

“I came back out after a three-year break because I was ailing. From the pandemic to now, I’ve been through a lot and suffered from depression. I went through the process and pulled myself together, with the help of my two children,” she continued.

Her encouragement to participate in the CSM came from her 24-year-old son, who manages her, and her 22-year-old daughter.

Her producer, Zaheer Khan, commonly known as “Big Rich”, also motivated her to make her return to the CSM stage, and organised her partnership with soca singer Lil Bitts.

Describing herself as a “huge fan” of Lil Bitts, she said the collaboration came as a surprise.

“The reason I went back out to the competition was not for the money. It was for the love of the people who missed me, who kept supporting me



Reshma Ramlal: a crowd favourite

from the moment I came out in this industry to now. I didn’t do this for money or title, but just for the people, and the love and respect I get from people.

“Music is my passion. I will do this till I die. I’m not going to give up on music. People say the older heads should pack up; no, you cannot tell people when to leave music. If this is what we love to do...”

FIRE RAGING IN ME

Mavado threatens to sue for injustice after son freed on murder charge

Dancehall artist Mavado has announced plans to pursue legal action against those he accuses of orchestrating a “cruel act of injustice” against his son, Dantay Brooks, and co-accused Andre Hinds.

This move follows the recent overturning of their 2018 murder convictions by the Court of Appeal, which ruled that the trial had been marred by significant legal errors, resulting in a miscarriage of justice.

Brooks and Hinds, who were convicted for the murder of Lorenzo “Israel” Thomas in Cas-sava Piece, St. Andrew, were freed this week after the Appeal Court panel — comprising Justices Marva McDonald-Bishop, David Fraser, and Kissock Laing — found that the trial judge had mishandled key aspects of the case. The judges highlighted the failure to adequately caution against the risks of unreliable identification evidence and flaws in assessing the credibility of the prosecution’s sole eyewitness.

Mavado, whose real name is David Brooks, broke his silence in an emotional Instagram post, expressing both relief and anger.

“To God be the glory — He comes first in everything we do. I am naturally elated, relieved and full of joy that my son Dantay has been freed from the state-imposed hell he has endured for seven years of his young life. But at the same time, there is a fire raging within me at the injustice — or as the appeal judges put it, substantial miscarriage of justice — that has taken place,” he stated. The artist criticized the judge’s decision to proceed without a jury and accused the prosecution of sensationalizing the case with false claims that were later disproven by forensic evidence.

The Appeal Court’s ruling pointed to critical errors, including the trial judge’s inadequate warnings about the risks of basing a conviction solely on identification evidence, especially given that the prosecution’s key witness had changed his statements multiple times and admitted to lying to police. The prosecution, acknowledging these errors, did



Movado with his son Dantay, when he was a child

not contest the appeal or seek a retrial, resulting in a full acquittal for Brooks and Hinds.

Mavado vowed to hold those responsible accountable, declaring, “this story and those headlines are far from over, and we will see the names of those conspirators and workers of iniquity brought to bear, to face justice and accountability for their egregious actions and motivations.”

He expressed gratitude to attorneys Hugh Wildman and Oswest Senior-Smith for their roles in securing the acquittal, commending their “bravery against a system designed to destroy the lives of innocent youth.”

Brooks and Hinds were initially sentenced to life imprisonment in March 2021, with Brooks, who was 16 at the time of the 2018 in-

cident, ordered to serve 22 years before being eligible for parole. Hinds, who was 23 at the time, was required to serve 17 years before parole. Both men had also received additional sentences for arson and illegal firearm possession, stemming from allegations that they, along with other armed men, forcibly entered Thomas’ home, shot and attempted to behead him before setting the house and body on fire.

The case, which relied heavily on the testimony of Thomas’ father as the sole eyewitness, has sparked widespread discussion in Jamaica about the justice system’s handling of young defendants and the use of single-witness identification in serious cases. Mavado’s pledge to seek justice signals that the legal battle may be far from over.

Parang singer known for a number of hits

SUSAN GONE!

Renowned parang singer Susan Maicoo has died.

Maicoo reportedly died on March 24 at the Port of Spain General Hospital shortly after she was admitted.

The 62-year-old, best known for her Christmas hits “Trini Christmas is the Best,” “Where Daisy Gone,” and “Dance, Dance, Dance,” had been battling an undisclosed health issue in recent months, leading to several weeks in hospital.

Many have turned to social media to offer condolences to Maicoo’s family and share their gratitude for her musical contributions and cherished memories.

In a condolence message, Opposition Leader Kamla Persad-Bissessar said Maicoo’s is forever etched in this country’s Christmas traditions.

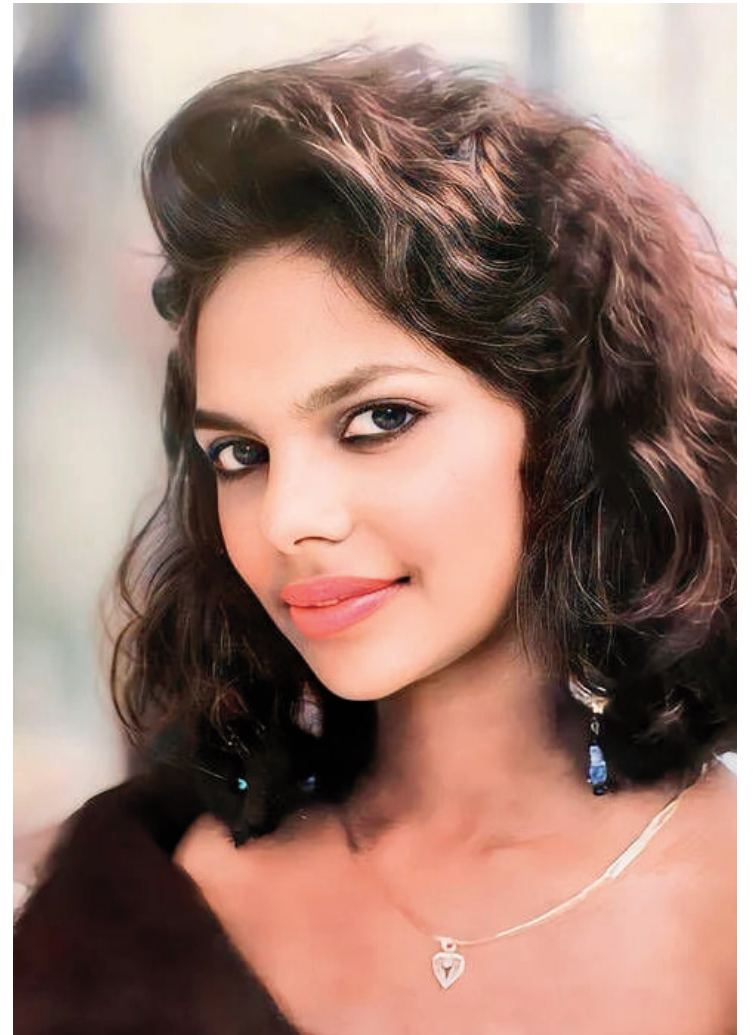
“I extend my deepest condolences to the

family, friends, and loved ones of Susan Maicoo on her untimely passing. Her beautiful voice and beloved songs, especially during the Christmas season, became a cherished part of our homes and traditions. She leaves behind a lasting musical legacy that will continue to bring joy to many,” she wrote in a Facebook post.

In November 2023, over 30 years after retiring from performing soca parang, Maicoo collaborated with Digicel to revamp this classic, aiming to introduce it to a new generation.

She was admitted to hospital on March 14 after being diagnosed with sepsis, her husband Rawle said, but was later discharged.

However, there was a relapse, and Maicoo was taken to hospital on March 24. She died there.



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The King and the I-Man

Charles III praises Bob Marley as the voice of the people

King Charles has paid tribute to reggae legend Bob Marley, describing his “marvellous, infectious energy” and the lasting influence of his music.

In a new Apple Music broadcast, The King’s Music Room, the monarch reflected on Marley’s deep sincerity and how his music gave people a powerful voice.

The podcast, which premiered on March 10, features Charles’ personally curated playlist with a Commonwealth theme. With an eclectic mix of artists—including Beyoncé, Kylie Minogue, and RAYE—the show highlights the King’s admiration for musicians who have shaped his travels and supported his charitable work.

Speaking on The King’s Music Room, Charles recalled meeting Marley when the reggae icon performed in London.

“Bob Marley would have been 80 this year,” King Charles said. “I remember when he came to London to perform when I was much younger, and I met him at some event. That marvellous, infectious energy, of course, he had, but also his deep sincerity and his profound concern for his community. I always recall his words: ‘The people have a voice inside of them.’ He gave the world that voice in a way that no one who heard can ever forget.”

The King’s comments came as he introduced a rendition of Marley’s hit *Could You Be Loved*, performed by the King’s Guard. His Majesty also reminisced about his last visit to Jamaica in 2008, when Marley’s widow, Rita, helped organize a tribute concert in Kingston. “It was one of those unforgettable moments,” he said. King Charles first met Rita Marley during a royal tour in March 2000. He was visiting Trench Town, where the British government was helping to fund regeneration work. “It’s more than words can express,” she said at the time. “It’s a great feeling and a great accomplishment for him to visit us in Trench Town.”

Beyond reggae, The King’s Music Room explores Charles’ appreciation for other genres, from ska to jazz. He praised Jamaican-born singer Millie Small for her “unexpected gift [of] an extraordinary voice” on *My Boy Lollipop* and highlighted his admiration for Jamaican Grace



King Charles III and Bob Marley — met in London

Jones’ rendition of *La Vie en rose*.

Throughout the broadcast, Charles emphasized music’s ability to uplift and unite. “It can lift our spirits to such a degree, and all the more so when it brings us together in celebration,” he said. “In other words, it brings us joy.”

King Charles’s admiration for Marley extends beyond the music. The two men shared a moment in history at the 1980 independence celebrations in Zimbabwe, where Marley headlined the concert marking the country’s liberation.





Squash was arrested on gun charges while in Florida

SQUASH ON ICE

Dancehall star in Immigration custody in the US after arrest in Florida

Jamaican dancehall entertainer Squash, whose real name is Andrae Whittaker, is currently in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) following his arrest in Florida in mid-April on gun-related charges.

The artist, known for his contributions to the dancehall scene, was detained on February 25 and is facing several charges, including possession of a short-barrel shotgun, a rifle, a machine gun, and a concealed firearm.

Squash is being held at the Krome North Service Processing Center in Miami, where he remains as legal proceedings continue. Authorities have yet to schedule a court date, and although he was offered a bond of US\$3,000, the charges against him have not been resolved.

This is not the first time Squash has encountered legal issues in the U.S. In 2023, reports surfaced that he had been arrested on immigration-related charges. Additionally, in 2022, he was linked to a deadly shootout in Lauderhill, Florida, which resulted in two fatalities and one injury. Squash, along with members of the G-City

Gang, was reportedly involved in the violent altercation, which stemmed from ongoing tensions with the rival Badbreed Gang.

As the investigation into his latest arrest unfolds, Squash's legal troubles continue to draw attention. He remains in ICE custody while awaiting further developments in his case.





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No more Cocoa Tea

Reggae world pays tribute to dancehall legend

The reggae world is reeling from the loss of legendary Jamaican singer Cocoa Tea, who passed away on March 17 at the age of 65 in a Florida hospital. Best known for his smooth vocals and classic hits like “Barack Obama,” “She Loves Me Now,” and “Rikers Island,” Cocoa Tea’s music transcended generations and borders, leaving an indelible mark on reggae and dancehall.

Born Calvin Scott in Rocky Point, Clarendon, Jamaica, on September 3, 1959, Cocoa Tea started his career on Kingston’s sound system scene in the early 1980s. His big break came through Henry ‘Junjo’ Lawes as part of the Volcano Sounds Movement, and he went on to work with renowned producers such as King Jammy, Gussie Clarke, and Phillip ‘Fatis’ Burrell. His ability to blend roots reggae with dancehall made him a household name.

A particularly memorable moment in his career came in 2008 when his song “Barack Obama” became an anthem celebrating the historic election of the first Black U.S. president, leading to an invitation to perform at Obama’s inauguration.

Following the news of his passing, tributes have poured in from across the music industry. Reggae label VP Records honored his legacy, stating, “Rest in Power Cocoa Tea, a Jamaican music icon whose songs will continue to resonate for generations to come.”

Irwine Clare Sr. OD, founder and CEO of Caribbean Immigrant Services and Team Jamaica Bickle, shared memories of Cocoa Tea’s generosity, noting that he often performed without asking for payment, showing his deep commitment to the community.

Jamaica’s Opposition Leader, Mark Gold-



Cocoa Tea: performed at Barack Obama’s inauguration

ing, also paid tribute, saying, “Jamaica lost another musical icon. Cocoa Tea’s smooth vocals, timeless reggae songs, and presence in the global music scene have left a lasting impression on our culture.”

His daughter, Rashaine Scott, confirmed his passing, revealing that he died at 4 AM after battling a prolonged illness. She described her father as a fighter who remained strong until the very end, recalling his emphasis on education and independence. “He was a warrior, and he fought until the end,” she said.

Jamaica’s Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport, Olivia Grange, hailed

Cocoa Tea as “one of our greatest reggae singers ever,” revealing that he had remained hopeful about performing again despite his illness. She also mentioned discussions about a grand celebration of his life.

Cocoa Tea’s wife, Malvia, confirmed that he succumbed to cardiac arrest preceded by pneumonia.

With a career spanning decades and a repertoire of timeless hits, Cocoa Tea’s legacy will continue to inspire future generations. His music, influence, and generosity will forever remain a part of Jamaica’s rich musical heritage.

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Publisher

RAYNIER MAHARAJ

Editor

MILAN MAHARAJ

Digital Manager

KATHY PLACE

email: independentnewspaper@aol.com

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Jada Kingdom is set to explode the charts with her new single G.A.D.

GIRLS ARE DRUGS

Jada Kingdom, a.k.a. Twinkle, releases new single

Multi-talented artist and Jamaican singer, songwriter, and producer Jada Kingdom is making waves with her daring new single, “G.A.D”—an acronym for “Girls Are Drugs.”

Released independently via Kingdom Mab, the track officially dropped following a viral snippet that has already sparked hundreds of fan-created videos on social media.

The highly anticipated song, produced by renowned Jamaican producer Yo Christon—who has worked with Vybz Kartel, Sizzla, and Buju Banton—delivers an exhilarating mix of pop-punk and dancehall. Featuring electrifying guitar riffs and driving rhythms, “G.A.D” pushes sonic

boundaries while showcasing Jada’s signature vocal style and Jamaican patois-infused delivery.

Jada, known to fans as TWINKLE, embraces a fearless approach in this latest release, blending genres and offering a playful yet powerful commentary on modern relationships.

“I’ve heard some guys saying ‘Girls Are Drugs,’ and honestly, that cracked me up! If you know me, you know I’m all about celebrating the gal dem and representing, so I had to speak up,” Jada said in a statement. “If we’re going with the whole girls-as-drugs idea, let’s be real—some guys can get a bit too hooked [laughs]. It’s funny how dudes often focus on women instead of tak-

ing a good look at themselves first. I had a blast making this song, and the playful controversy around it was all in good fun. One thing’s for sure: I really went all out on that beat, and I hope you vibe a likkle bit to it.”

The single follows the success of “Only You” and the hit “Can’t Tell Me That,” both of which have earned major playlist placements, including Spotify’s ‘Fever’, Tidal’s ‘Dancehall Massive’, and Pandora’s ‘Dancehall Queen’. Fresh off a press run in New York City, Jada Kingdom is now gearing up for the highly anticipated follow-up to her 2022 EP, New Motion.



The Virgin Islands Consortium

Reemey
Photogra

JAMMING IN ST THOMAS

Shabba Ranks, Kes to headline 73rd annual Carnival in USVI

The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism and Division of Festivals have unveiled the performance line-up for the highly anticipated 73rd Annual St. Thomas Carnival Village, set to kick off on Monday, April 28. This year's event promises six free Village Nights, headlined by global dancehall icon Shabba Ranks and international soca superstar Kes.

USVI Department of Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte expressed his excitement, saying, "This year's St. Thomas Carnival is going to be at another level. We're thrilled to bring global talent to our islands while continuing to showcase local talent. The Village Night performers reflect the ongoing growth and in-

fluence of our three territorial carnivals."

The event will feature a stellar line-up of local talent, including Pressure Busspipe, Adam O, Th3rd, Star Martin, Mic Love, Temisha, Shaw HP, and Spectrum Band, all taking the stage to represent the U.S. Virgin Islands.

USVI Division of Festivals Director Ian Turnbull emphasized the significance of the annual celebrations, stating, "These festivals are special because they highlight the best of Caribbean culture and celebrate the rich traditions that unite us all. Our goal is to authentically showcase Caribbean artistry and talent for all those attending the festival."

The Carnival will also showcase inter-

national acts, with Dominican bouyon band Triple Kay, merengue sensation El Blachy, and Trinidadian soca star Voice offering a diverse blend of musical styles that cater to the varied tastes of both residents and visitors.

On Thursday, May 1, the festivities will continue with the traditional J'ouvert, featuring Virgin Islands breakout star Pumpa and Vincentian soca legend Skinny Fabulous. The night will culminate in a Wet Fete with performances from B-Squad, Quan, and Sisa.

This year's Carnival promises to be a celebration of Caribbean culture, blending global and local talent for an unforgettable experience.

ISLAND STYLE

Rihanna rolls out her Fenty Beauty line in Jamaica

Jamaican beauty lovers, the wait is over—Fenty Beauty is officially coming to the island. Rihanna’s globally acclaimed beauty brand announced today that its products will be available in Jamaica starting April 10, with an exclusive rollout at Fontana Pharmacy locations in Waterloo and Fairview.

The confirmation came via an Instagram post from Fenty Beauty, which read: “We heard you, fam! @BadGalRiri is bringin’ Fenty Beauty + Fenty Skin to Jamaica! Shop exclusively at @Fontana_Pharmacy Waterloo on 4/10 and Fairview on 4/12 JM.” The brand also posted a video featuring Rihanna holding a Fenty Beauty product, her nails painted with the Jamaican flag—a nod to the island’s highly anticipated addition to the Fenty family.

This announcement follows Rihanna’s revelation last November during an exclusive event in Barbados, where she officially launched Fenty Beauty across the Caribbean. At the time, the brand announced its expansion to several regional markets, including Antigua, the Bahamas, Aruba, Bermuda, Cayman, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, and St. Maarten. However, Jamaica was notably absent from the initial rollout, leaving many local fans disappointed and vocal about their desire for the brand’s presence on the island.

Rihanna, however, reassured Jamaican fans that their time would come. “Coming home is always a pleasure and coming home for something like this is monumental,” she said during the Barbados launch. “And guess what? We bout to tear the rest of the Caribbean up. Everybody is waiting. Jamaica, I’m so sorry I’m not there yet, but I’m coming your way and you’re gonna have something special



Rihanna in a clip from her Fenty Jamaica promo

too.”

Fenty Beauty, which first launched in 2017, is known for its commitment to diversity and inclusion, offering a wide range of makeup and skincare products designed for all skin tones. Since then, the brand has expanded into haircare and continues to be a trailblazer in the

beauty industry.

With the official confirmation of Jamaica’s inclusion, fans can now mark their calendars for April 10 and 12 to get their hands on the highly sought-after Fenty Beauty and Fenty Skin products at Fontana Pharmacy.



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Jamaica had a very popular booth at the World Expo 2020 in Dubai

DUBAI BOUND

Non-stop flights between Jamaica and UAE begin this month

As of April, Jamaicans and visitors to Jamaica looking to travel to Dubai will now have easier access to flights, according to officials in the island's Ministry of Tourism.

A tweet from Jamaican Senator and Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism Delano Seiveright said that starting in April, Emirates Airlines will partner with German airline Condor to offer a code-share route from Dubai to Montego Bay via Frankfurt, making travel between the United Arab Emirates and Jamaica easier.

Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett said that the new development is a milestone for Ja-

maica's tourism industry.

"This is one of the great accomplishments of my tenure as minister," Bartlett stated. "We began discussions with Emirates before COVID, and now we are finally seeing it come to fruition."

According to Bartlett, this move strategically positions Jamaica as a hub for Middle Eastern tourism into the wider Caribbean. "This will achieve a number of objectives, including reinforcing Montego Bay's role as a hub," he said. "It aligns with the multi-destination tourism strategy we've been championing and firmly places Jamaica at the center of a new wave of

travel connectivity."

The announcement comes amid Jamaica's broader efforts to expand its global tourism footprint beyond its traditional markets in North America and Europe. With Emirates now on-board, Bartlett said the island will strengthen its links to emerging markets in the Middle East, Asia, and beyond, creating new opportunities for investment and cultural exchange.

"Jamaica will now position itself as a leading destination in the region for multiple markets around the world," he declared.

PHOENIX

Paws & Claws

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fundraiser <https://surl.li/vbyx1x>

Rhythm & Soul

Buju, other top acts in star-studded line-up for Tobago Easter Festival

Tobago is set to host one of the most anticipated Easter festivals this April, with reggae music icon Buju Banton returning to the island for what is being billed as the largest concert Tobago has ever seen. On April 20th, the island will be buzzing with excitement as the legendary artist takes center stage alongside other top-tier performers, including Gramps Morgan and Wayne Wonder.

The Tobago Festival Commission has taken a dynamic approach this year, adding more events to enhance the experience for both locals and visitors. “Buju Banton, Gramps Morgan, and Wayne Wonder, along with other high-caliber artistes, will provide the perfect finale on Easter Sunday,” a representative from the Festival Commission shared. “Before they take the stage, we’ve lined up an incredible slate of entertainers who will offer unparalleled showmanship and music that bridges generational gaps.”

As anticipation builds for the Easter weekend, festival organizers are thrilled to welcome some of the biggest names in reggae music to the island. “Buju Banton remains an undeniable force in music. His energy is unmatched, and we are excited to host him this Easter,” said one of the event’s organizers.

The celebrations will kick off early, with internationally renowned gospel singer Sinach arriving in Tobago on April 17th. The Nigerian singer-songwriter, known for hits like “Way Maker” and “He Did It Again,” will be joined by Tobagonian talents Positive and Blessed Messenger, as well as award-winning Guyanese artist Samuel Medas. The event, dubbed “Melodies from Heaven,” promises to be a transformative experience, showcasing an incredible blend of gospel and Caribbean music.

Adding to the weekend’s allure, the Bucco Seafood Jazz experience on Saturday, April 19th,



Buju Banton will headline the Rhythm and Soul Festival in Tobago on April 20th

will feature performances from international stars Jon Secada and Brian McKnight, as well as the dynamic Mical Teja. “This weekend is about revisiting the elements of music, food, and overall destination satisfaction,” explained the organizer. “Tobago stands strong in the Caribbean region, but we understand the need to continuously enhance our offerings to attract global travelers.”

The Rhythm and Soul Festival, which forms a major part of the Easter celebrations, is seen as key to promoting Tobago as a premier tourism destination. “For us, it’s more than just entertainment; it’s about creating employment, fostering independence, and building something that we can be proud of year after year,” the spokesperson added.

The excitement on the island is palpable, especially with Buju Banton’s return. Last summer, he sold out multiple concerts across the United States, and in June, he will make his debut performance at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas. “Bringing Buju back to the region for this spectacular performance, just before his Las Vegas show, is truly heartwarming,” said the spokesperson. “Tobago is full of surprises, and as we look to the future, we’re committed to standing strong with our people and making the most of what we have here.”

Tickets for the weekend-long festival are available online at www.islandetickets.com. “For those planning to travel from Trinidad, we encourage you to act quickly.”

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Beyonce and Jay-Z: targets of angry tweets from Kanye West

BACKLASH

Kanye faces the heat over his remarks about Jay-Z, Beyonce

Kanye West found himself on the receiving end of severe backlash following his recent meltdown on X.

The G.O.O.D. Music rapper went off on his ex-wife, Kim Kardashian, before turning his attention to Jay-Z and Beyonce, where he mentioned their kids Rumi and Sir Carter, calling them the R-word. While Kanye West quickly deleted the tweet, fans took a screenshot of it and started circulating it on social media, resulting in many condemning the controversial rapper.

In other tweets, Kanye West blast Jay-Z and Beyonce for not attending his wedding to Kim Kardashian and not inviting him to perform at the Super Bowl. “I LOVE JAY Z AND I DO FEEL BAD,” Kanye said. “I ALWAYS FELT LIKE THE BLACK SHEEP LIKE I WANTED FAMILY IN THIS MUSIC S[—]T[.]”

Ye also alluded to the 2009 MTV VMAs incident in which he ran on stage to take the mic

from Taylor Swift to defend Beyonce.

“I’D RUN ON STAGES THINKING I WAS DOING THE RIGHT THING AND WOULD ALWAYS BE A SLIGHT HOV NOT COMING TO MY FIRST WEDDING,” he wrote while mentioning his red hat incident and Hov taking a jab at him for it. “HIM PUTTING KENDRICK ON THE SUPERBOWL OVER ME OR EVEN US NEVER BEING INVITED TO S[—]T TAKING [sic] JABS ABOUT MY RED HAT ON DONDA.”

Kanye West also accused Jay-Z and Beyonce of not helping him “have more leverage” with his children with Kim Kardashian. He didn’t share how he expected the power couple to help him with that remains a mystery.

While Jay-Z nor Beyonce have responded to Kanye West, Bey’s mother, Tina Knowles, seemingly took a jab at the Chicago rapper. “Corny joke, time!” she wrote in a post on Instagram in which she shared a video telling the joke. “It’s

hard to remain positive and classy in the face of ignorance and evil. But I know that no weapon formed against me or my family shall prosper. This battle is not mine, but the Lords, I know that God has got this.”

Twitter/X did not remove Kanye West’s account or tweets from the social media platform.

Fans of Jay-Z and Beyonce have been condemning Kanye West for his tweets calling this episode the last straw. “Remember when Kanye was on stage crying because Jay z and Bey wouldn’t let North go on play dates with Blue, now he’s saying the most vile things about their children, Ye is a terrible person man I will never follow him or buy his products again,” one fan wrote.

Another person wrote, “That Kanye tweet about Beyonce and Jay Z kids was so damn disgusting!”



Jailhouse Rock

Diddy vows to Kanye that he'll beat his court case and 'get next to you'

Diddy appears confident he will beat his federal case and link up with Kanye West.

A video of a jailhouse phone call between Diddy and Kanye West has surfaced online in which the Bad Boy rap mogul expressed positive sentiments about his upcoming trial.

Diddy, whose real name is Sean Combs, is set to go on trial in May of this year for racketeering and sex trafficking. These are all charges that could put him away for decades if found guilty.

Lately, Diddy found a very unlikely ally in Kanye West, who has been showing the embattled billionaire a lot of support on social media. Ye recently called Combs his idol and someone he looked up to while accusing his other celebrity friends of abandoning the Bad Bad Records founder in jail to rot.

In a new jail conversation shared by the Shade Room, Diddy expressed his thanks to Kanye West for taking care of his children and that he is confident he will beat the case. "I just

want to thank you so much for just taking care of my kids man," Diddy said. "Ain't nobody reach out to them, ain't nobody call, you know what I'm saying. Nobody... That meant so much, that you reached out to them and took them under your wing."

"I'm gonna beat this sh*t and get next to you," Combs added. "We gon raise our families, and become the kings that we're supposed to be."

Elsewhere in the conversation, Diddy urged Ye to focus on his music and get back to smiling again. It appears that he got wind of Kanye's recent meltdown on social media in which he spewed some distasteful insults towards certain groups of people and towards Jay-Z and Beyoncé.

"Get behind the mic, have some fun. Chop up them samples," Combs continues. "Get back on your hit man vibe. Have some fun. Get back to smiling. F**k these other mother****ers, they are wasting your time. Put that love in

your heart [and] enjoy yourself. When I get out there, I want to see you fu***ing tear down the stadiums, I need to see you back on that stage, actually rapping and performing and everything. I be dreaming of that sh*t."

"We gon' have years and decades to fight these mother****ers. Right now, enjoy your life. This is coming from me, from God to you," the New York rapper/producer said.

In the meantime, Kanye West is under fire from fans for making disparaging claims about Jay-Z and Beyoncé's children. Ye is also battling his ex-wife Kim Kardashian over their daughter North West's likeness. He claimed Kim owns the trademark to North West's name after she seemingly objected to him putting her on a song with himself, Diddy's son Christian "King" Combs, and Chicago artist Jasmine Williams. The song, "Lonely Roads Still Go to Sunshine," was released last week and was met with mixed reviews from fans.

BACK IN STYLE

Bounty Killer returns to Miami after getting his US Visa reinstated; working with DJ Khaled on new tracks

Bounty Killer is back on U.S. soil after getting his visa reinstated after 15 years.

The dancehall legend was among several Jamaican artists whose United States visas were revoked for unknown reasons two decades ago. Some artists lost their visas due to issues with gay rights groups, while others remained a mystery. Bounty Killer was one of those artists who stated that they weren't sure what led to their travel documents being revoked back then.

That is now water under the bridge since Bounty Killer touched down in Florida on Tuesday (March 18) via a private jet with his team and his immigration lawyer. Killer shared a photo of himself seated comfortably while reflecting on his journey.

"God is the greatest all the times despite how it may seem like in March 2010 my visa was revoked for what reasons up until this day is unknown fast forward 15yrs later today March 2025 I arrived in the states with no hassle the greatest thing I never had to beg bend or bow i stayed true to myself vigilant and resilient," he wrote.

Bounty Killer also thanked his attorney, Bridgette M. Bennett, for working on his case, writing, "Thanks for all the well wishes and congratulations but y'all say hello the Wonder Woman who works the wonders my wonderful attorney @ReggaeVisaLawyer the most fast effective and efficient service if she solves my case who's own she can't fix check her out folks all the fans go tell her thanks now."

Since making the announcement on Instagram, Bounty Killer has been getting a lot of shout-outs from fellow artists like Baby Cham, I-Octane, Konshens, Safaree, Shaggy, Kiprich, Vybz Kartel, Busy Signal, Dexta Daps, Demarco, Stacious, Teejay, and Christopher Martin.

Moments after his arrival in Miami, Bounty Killer visited DJ Khaled at his estate, where the two are expected to lay down some new songs. "Fifteen years Bounty Killer hasn't been in the States in Miami in 15 years," Khaled said in a video of himself and the dancehall legend. "Warlord has return Miami unnu better come hire me," Killer said while laughing.



Flying in style: Bounty Killer on his private jet on his way to Miami

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