

Jamaica national heroes' day

Bob Marley, Bolt, Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee: the journey continues

Claudia Cecile Barnes
AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA

In commemoration of National Heroes' Day, Jamaicans at home and in the diaspora

solemnly recall and reflect on the tremendous struggles and sacrifices made by the founders of our nation: Marcus Mosiah Garvey, Nanny



of the Maroons, Samuel Sharpe, Paul Bogle, George William Gordon, Sir Alexander Bustamante and Norman Washington Manley.

On behalf of the government and people of Jamaica, I am deeply honored to convey on this occasion warm greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and to the government and people of Japan.

While celebrating our National Heroes, Jamaica remains cognizant of the March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami, which wreaked havoc on the economic and social infrastructure of Japan.

Allow me to reiterate the deep condolences of the government and people of Jamaica and to pay tribute to the heroic and courageous people of Japan who are undertaking the enormous tasks of rehabilitation and reconstruction. Please be reassured that the people of Jamaica

are standing firmly united with the people of Japan.

Conferral of honors

Each year, the conferral of national honors and awards is announced on our Independence Day, Aug. 6. The honors and awards are subsequently conferred on National Heroes' Day, which is celebrated on the third Monday in October.

I wish to recall that our seven National Heroes were ordinary people who did extraordinary things to improve the quality of life for all Jamaicans. They did so against all odds. Some were killed. Some were imprisoned. Others alienated and misunderstood. They all showed courage and determination, and most of all, a burning desire to achieve real freedom for the Jamaican people.

On this occasion, I wish to focus attention on two Jamaicans who, indeed, are national icons and, many would argue, are in their own right, modern national heroes: Bob Marley and Usain Bolt.

Robert Nesta Marley

The Hon. Robert Nesta Marley's short-lived but prolific career earned for reggae music international acclaim and recognition. Bob Marley's music provided a medium of expression and clamored rhythmically for freedom for the masses. Today, Marley's music continues to be a source of inspiration across in-



Famous brand: Coffee beans grown in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica are labeled as such and have developed into one of the finest and most sought-after varieties in the world. EMBASSY OF JAMAICA

ternational borders.

Marley died on May 11, 1981, at the age of 36 and arguably at the peak of his career as a composer, singer and musician.

A month prior to his passing, Marley was awarded the Order of Merit, Jamaica's third highest national honor, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to our country's culture. Today, Bob Marley's legend lives on, not only in Jamaica but far and wide throughout many continents. Marley's memory is revered for his universal message of love, equality and justice.

Usain Bolt

The Hon. Usain Bolt is acclaimed as the world's fastest sprinter. He is a five-time world and three-time Olympic gold medalist. He is the world record and Olympic record holder in the 100 and 200 meters, and along with his teammates (Michael Frater, Nesta Carter and Asafa Powell) the 4x100-meter record holder. Bolt is the reigning Olympic champion in these three events. He is also the IAAF Male Athlete of the Year for 2008 and 2009.

To date, he is the only ath-

lete in the 115-year history of the Olympics to have set three world records in track and field at a single Games.

In 2008, following the Beijing Olympics, Bolt was honored by the government of Jamaica and received an Order of Distinction in recognition of his achievements at the Summer Games. In 2009, Bolt was conferred with the Order of Jamaica for outstanding distinction in the field of sports.

Jamaica has had a tradition of successful participation in the Olympic Games dat-

ing back to 1948. Bolt and his peers have, therefore, followed in the footsteps of the pioneers, such as Herb McKenley, Arthur Wint, Merlene Ottey, Don Quarrie, Juliet Cuthbert and Grace Jackson, but have taken their Olympic achievements to new heights.

In recent times, the achievements of Jamaica's athletes and the allure of some of our premium export products such as Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee, have given Brand Jamaica a magnetic appeal.

Blue Mountain Coffee

Premium coffee labeled Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee is Jamaica's No. 1 export product to Japan. Jamaica's coffee trade with Japan dates back to 1953. Over the years, Japan has not only imported but has also made significant investments that have contributed to the long-term growth and development of the coffee sector. This has a tremendous impact on the people of Jamaica, particularly owing to the fact that coffee farming is generally being done by small farmers.

In recognition of the pivotal role played by Japan, the chairman of the Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee (AJJIC), Tatsushi Ueshima, will today be conferred the honor of the Order of Distinc-

tion in the Rank of Commander, Honorary.

In congratulating Mr. Ueshima, who is also the honorary consul of Jamaica in Kobe, I should also like to use this opportunity to thank the members of the AJJIC for their commitment and sterling service to the people of Jamaica, in particular the small coffee farmers who are the foundation of Jamaica's coffee industry.

Jamaica Rocks

Jamaica Rocks, a talented collection of singers, dancers and musicians, is currently participating in the Caribbean Musical Cruise concert series, under the auspices of the Min-On Concert Association. We were honored to have the Hon. Olivia Grange, minister of youth, sports and culture, attend the inaugural concert in Tokyo.

Jamaica's participation in the Caribbean Musical Cruise concert series is particularly significant as this coincides with preparations for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of our country's independence in 2012. This, indeed, is a milestone of which all Jamaicans are extremely proud.

This 24-city concert tour of Japan by Jamaica Rocks is a signal honor for the Jamaica and is yet another of the many dem-

onstrations of the generosity of the Japanese people at this time to the people of Jamaica since the establishment of diplomatic relations in March 1964.

We remain extremely moved by the fact that, even in a time of adversity, Japan is still reaching out to its partner countries.

I trust that this concert series will be remembered not only as a mark of our cooperation and friendship with Japan, but also our confidence that Japan will emerge from this catastrophe even stronger.

I trust also that the performances of Jamaica Rocks will have served as a source of inspiration for the people of Japan at this time.

In saluting Jamaica's National Heroes, our athletes and our entertainers and reflecting on their achievements, we pay tribute to all Jamaicans who continue to dedicate themselves toward the goal of national development.

The indomitable spirit of our distinguished heroes and their achievements continue to inspire hope and confidence for the future of our country, Jamaica, land we love.

To all Jamaicans residing here, have a blessed National Heroes' Day and our very best wishes to everyone in our host country, Japan.

Working with Jamaica for deeper cultural, economic exchanges

Tatsushi Ueshima
HONORARY CONSUL OF JAMAICA IN KOBE, CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE IMPORTERS OF JAMAICAN COFFEE

On behalf of the Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee (AJJIC) and on my own behalf as honorary consul of Jamaica in Kobe, I am delighted to congratulate the government and people of Jamaica on their National Heroes' Day, celebrated this year on Oct. 17.



Jamaica is a country blessed with scenic beauty of magnificent mountains and white, sandy

beaches. With its abundance of natural resources, this country produces the world-renowned coffee Blue Mountain. It has been our honor for AJJIC members to be able to make this one of the world's finest coffees available to Japanese consumers.

Jamaica is not only a producer of great coffee but its strength can be found in other areas, such as music and sports. Reggae is really popular in Japan and outstanding performances by Jamaican athletes have become the focus of international attention.

On this special occasion, I would like to reaffirm that Japan stands with Jamaica as a partner and friend, and our relationship will be further strengthened through deeper cultural and economic exchanges.

Congratulations to the Government and People of Jamaica on the Celebration of National Heroes' Day

Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee

Ataka Trading Co., Ltd.
Kanematsu Corporation
MC FOODS LIMITED
UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.
Wataru & Co., Ltd.
Yutaka Trading Co., Ltd.

Congratulations to the Government and People of Jamaica on the Celebration of National Heroes' Day

Tatsushi Ueshima

Honorary Consul of Jamaica in Kobe and
Representative Director-Chairman
Group Representative
UCC Holdings Co., Ltd.

Congratulations to the Government and People of Jamaica on the Celebration of National Heroes' Day

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