

Freedom in the distance for Buju

Jamaican reggae star Buju Banton, now serving a 10-year sentence on drug-related charges, could be freed due to a blunder on the part of the United States government.

According to the website examiner.com, under the United States law, Buju Banton — whose real name is Mark Anthony Myrie — should have been brought to trial before 70 days. This is a right guaranteed under the Sixth Amendment. BUJU... should have been brought to trial before 70 days. The media report states that the government may have violated the Speedy Trial Act. The act refers to one of the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution to defendants in criminal proceedings. The right to a speedy trial, guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment, is intended to make sure that defendants are not subjected to unreasonably lengthy incarceration prior to a fair trial. In judging speedy trial claims, the US Supreme Court has developed a four-part test that considers the length of the delay, the reasons for the delay, the defendant's assertion of his right to a speedy trial, and the prejudice to the defendant. Violations of the act, such as where the state has failed to bring the case to trial for an 'unreasonable' length of time, may be a cause for dismissal of a criminal case. Buju Banton's first trial took place in September 2010, nine months after his initial arrest by law enforcement officials in Florida and four months after Judge James Moody pushed back Buju's initial court date without giving any specifics regarding why the case was postponed. His second trial, where he was later convicted, took place in February of this year, four months after he was granted bail in the case.