

The newsmakers for 2011 - An entertainment retrospective

Entertainers were very much in the news during 2011. They became the subject of headlines more for their performances off stage, rather than on stage.

The entertainment fraternity and lovers of the grammy-winning recording artiste Buju Banton was relieved when his sentence was handed down in June. Banton was issued with a 10-year sentencing by Judge James Moody in Florida after being found guilty of drug related charges. His sentencing brought to end a second trial after the the initial proceedings in a Florida court ended in a hung jury. The artiste born Mark Myrie who is now serving time in a Miami-based prison has recently filed an appeal to have his conviction reversed in the United States Court of Appeal. Vybz Kartel What a year it was for dancehall artiste Vybz Kartel who made international and local headlines throughout the year. Along with producing chart-topping singles, the artiste whose real name is Adidja Palmer parted ways with his then manager Corey Todd. Todd accused Palmer of making threats against his life. Things got even worse for Kartel, as on October 3, he was charged with the murder of 27-year-old Barrington 'Bossie' Burton, a promotor of a Gregory Park address. Added to the charges were conspiracy to murder and illegal possession of firearm and possession of ganja. Approximately three weeks later, Palmer was once again charged with a second murder. The deejay was charged jointly another man, Kiro Jones, for the killing of Clive 'Lizard' Williams on August 16. Things got even worse for the embattled entertainer as he is now being probed in relation of five additional murder cases. Most recently, Kartel was ordered to pay a Turks and Caicos show promoter in order to recover the costs for an event which was promoted in that northern Caribbean territory, but the deejay failed to show. Fellow Gaza deejay Shawn Storm became the second member of the Portmore Empire family to be charged jointly with Vybz Kartel for the murder of Clive 'Lizard' Williams. The deceased was allegedly killed at a house in Havendale, St Andrew. Storm was pointed out in an identification parade a week after being named as a person of interest. The Gaza camp continued to make headlines and most recently it was the turn of Vanessa Saddler more commonly known as Vanessa Bling or Gaza Slim. She was slapped with charges of conspiracy and attempting to pervert the course of justice earlier this month. This development is connected to the August 16 murder in which Vybz Kartel and fellow entertainer Shawn Storm are charged. Saddler, allegedly reported to the Constant Spring police that she was robbed by Clive 'Lizard' Williams -- that man it is alleged that was murdered by Kartel. A text message was said to have been sent to the entertainer's cellphone instructing her to make the report. The artiste will spend the hoilday season behind bars as she was denied bail earlier this week. On September 14, veteran reggae singer Denroy Morgan -- patriarch of the Morgan Heritage group -- was arrested and charged with possession of 25 pounds of ganja in New York. According to the New York police, Morgan's capture led to the seizure of a 310-pound stash of ganja and the arrest of another man caught with 16 pounds of ganja. The matter is still pending in the United States court. Back home, dancehall artiste Elephant Man was hauled before the Corporate Area Resident Magistrate's Court in June for allegedly stealing electricity from the Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS). According to police reports, the deejay whose real name is O'Neil Bryan was picked up at his Hillcrest Avenue apartment during an operation on the property housing several other apartments. It is alledged that while inspecting the metering point it was discovered that an illegal connection went directly to the entertainer's apartment. Several appliances inside of the house were also said to been have powered by the stolen energy. Dancehall artiste Mavado also found himself on the other side of the law when he was charged for assault and malicious destruction of property. Reports are that July 22, the deejay and members of his entourage physically assaulted a man and his son and damaged his motor car. It is alledged that the man was beaten and was hit in the face with a machete causing him to lose several teeth. This was the second assault charge for the entertainer, born David Brooks for 2011. Earlier this year Mavado was accused and charged with assault following an incident at the Quad nightclub in New Kingston. Reports are that Mavado and members of his entourage refused to be searched by members of the security forces resulting in a scuffle between the artiste and the lawman. The policeman reportedly fired a shot and a member of the deejay's entourage was shot. The man succumbed to his injuries and died days later in hospital. Two entertainers appeared in divorce court this year. After a fairy tale wedding in 2006, the 'First Lady' and the King of Dancehall failed miserably at keeping their private life out of the media. After a separating and reconciling for almost five years, D'Angel, born Michelle Downer, finally called it quits by filing for divorce from Beenie Man in August. The statement said the relationship has come to an end but Beenie Man will remain a part of their son's, Marco Dean life. It was not all court matters that kept entertainers in the headlines. In August came the news that deejay Sizzla was seriously injured in a hit and run motorcycle accident in St Ann. The artiste suffered multiple injures including broken arms and ribs, a fractured collarbone and a ruptured liver.