

Ja 50 Jubilee Village set to rock on August 1

The highly anticipated opening of the Jamaica 50 Golden Jubilee Village takes place on August 1, Emancipation Day.

For six days, Independence Park will rock to the heartbeat of a proud nation as the Jamaica 50 Secretariat unveils a smorgasbord of activities that speak to the passion and creativity of this "nation on a mission". The village will be abuzz with activity as it plays host to hundreds of performers and a multitude of patrons of all ages from all across the island and the world. Comprising a piano bar and a main stage - in addition to an exciting Children's Village - the Golden Jubilee Village will be replete with entertainment and thought-provoking conversations. "From what is being planned, I can assure you that there will be some difficulty attached to making those choices," Robert Bryan, head of the Jamaica 50 Secretariat said. "Because Jamaica has such a rich and vibrant cultural heritage, we have been challenged to encapsulate 50 spectacular years in six days. It has been a wonderful, mind-blowing experience for us here at the Secretariat, to plan the Jubilee Village, being mindful of the immense impact of Jamaica's culture on the world and not wanting to leave anything out," explained the usually serious Bryan, who becomes exceptionally animated when talking about the Golden Jubilee Village. All-inclusive celebration Bryan noted that the significance of Jamaica 50 will be forever enshrined in the hearts of those who participate - at whatever level - when the Jamaica 50 Jubilee Village officially opens to the public at Independence Park in St Andrew on August 1. "It will be an all-inclusive celebration second to none," Bryan said, adding that there will be Jamaica 50 venues in all 14 parishes and highlighted that the Village will have a global reach as "We will be linked to areas in the United Kingdom, Canada and Miramar in Florida, and will also be streamed live on the Internet." Equally enthused about this celebratory project for Jamaica's 50th is consultant at the Jamaica 50 Secretariat, with special emphasis on content, Joan Young-Davis. In outlining what to expect at the Jubilee Village, Young-Davis was very vocal in lauding the assiduousness of the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC), which has played a vital role in ensuring that a first-class production will be unveiled. "We are thankful that we were able to harness the expertise of an excellent team of producers and coordinators from the JCDC who worked assiduously to make the Jubilee Village authentic and exceptional," she declared. Traditional Folk forms "Our traditional folk forms will be brilliantly showcased under the theme 'Folk Allure'. 'Ska Mania' will pay tribute to the genre with various bands, artistes, dancers and selectors performing ska classics." Fashion will be highlighted with the revue titled Rhythms of Jamaican Fashion; Jamaica Praise will shine the spotlight on gospel music; Mello Go Round and the World Reggae Dance Contest are prominent features of the village and there will be a segment at the piano bar called jubilee conversations with some of the sharpest minds in our country engaging in a stimulating retrospective," Young-Davis explained. Of special significance is the official opening ceremony on August 1, which, she noted, "will see an eclectic mix of classical, contemporary and traditional expressions in what has been titled 'Standing Ovation', which tells the story of Jamaica, celebrating our African, European and other roots and our mission for the future." The concert features works, artistes, and concepts in the performing arts demonstrating the growth and success in the arts as a nation. Illuminating the opening-ceremony stage will be the L'Acadco Dance group, Jamaican Folk Singers, Company Dance Group, Paulette Bellamy and friends, Seretse Small, Leonie Forbes, Alwyn Scott, Winston 'Bello' Bell, Fab 5, Tessane Chin, and Duane Stephens. **TRULY EXCEPTIONAL** The Golden Jubilee Village opens at midday every day and while each day has its special ambience, day five of the Village, August 5, will be truly exceptional. "There will be 50 performers on the main stage, the most on any single day, and it so happens that it will be a big day for Jamaica at the Olympics in London. Therefore, coverage of the 100 and 400 metres semi-finals and the 400m finals has been woven into the showcase. Also, at 11:58 p.m., everything will grind to a halt for the reading of the Independence Proclamation," Mrs Young-Davis declared. She noted that at midday, Gem Myers will sing the National Anthem to declare the Village open, and it will be straight into show time with performances by Unique Vision, Queen Ifrica, Tony Rebel, Marcia Griffiths, Yellow Man and Stranger Cole, with a pause at 1:43 p.m., for the viewing of the 100 metres semi-final, after which the concert will move along with more performances from other big name acts like Mighty Diamonds, Lust, Luciano, Karen Smith, Junior Kelly, General Degree, Richie Spice, Junior Reid, Pam Hall, General Trees, Nadine Sutherland, Lovindeer, Daddy Lizard, Flouragon and Red Dragon, while Code Red will provide musical interlude.