

## 100 songs that chart the course

VP records, in collaboration with former Prime Minister of Jamaica Edward Seaga, launched the much-talked-about Reggae Golden Jubilee: Origins of Jamaican Music, a four-CD commemorative set of Jamaican-produced songs

Seaga, who has a well-known history as a record producer, selected the songs, which represent 100 of reggae music's most successful classics. The former prime minister was also the one to introduce the final product to the audience, and of course, gave a brief lesson on Jamaica's musical history. According to Seaga, reggae is a powerful, creative force that facilitated the development of other genres such as dub, dancehall and even hip hop and rap in the United States. Mr Seaga then went on to describe Reggae Golden Jubilee as an educational tool and collector's item for citizens living all over the world. Some of the songs, Seaga explained, were difficult to lay because there were copyright issues. "The big challenge was the copyright problem, to have copyright for all of them. But it turned out that half of the copyright was already owned by VP. "VP came in and put all their resources behind the project so I am very grateful to them for having helped with the project and for all the work that they have done to help make this a reality," said the former prime minister, and a man who has the enviable record of being the longest-serving member of parliament in Jamaica's political history. Some arguably powerful reggae songs were unable to make the final cut because there were record companies unwilling to give the go-ahead for their release. "There are only a few records that I wanted for this collection that I didn't get. One of them is a Bob Andy tune that is currently before the courts and is obviously not available at this time. Another two were Bob Marley's One Love and Redemption Song. Universal Publishers has the rights to all Bob Marley's music virtually, and wouldn't release even though I wrote a letter to the president of the company telling them that it was our 50th anniversary. Nonetheless, we found others who had rights to Bob Marley music and we got two selections and they are included in there," Seaga said. VP Records' Aaron Talbert also shared his view on the project. "It really is fitting that we are here in Jamaica on its 50th anniversary. We have done a lot of different promotions and VP's role is to take the music and the essence of Jamaica and spread it across the world as far as we can. We have, in this box set, a selection of great talent and fantastic music. It was comprised for the pride of the 50th and gives the promise of 50 more," Talbert said. High praises Opposition spokesperson on Youth, Sports, Gender Affairs, Entertainment and Culture, Olivia 'Babsy' Grange, who assisted in organising the event had high praises for the compilation. "I think that the product is a real prize possession and a collector's item and the launch is really befitting. Tonight's turnout underscores the importance and how people recognise and respect Mr Seaga's work. He is someone who recognises the importance of culture and music in the lives of Jamaicans," said Grange. Performances were also part of the launch and included performers like veteran reggae artiste Ken Booth. The Reggae Golden Jubilee box set is to be launched in New York next week. Mr Seaga will also participate in that launch. The compilation features music from every era over the last 50 years with hits from various Jamaican artistes including Milly Small, Gregory Isaacs, Marcia Griffiths, Lady Saw, Buju Banton, Shaggy, Sean Paul, Damian 'Jr Gong' Marley, Dennis Brown, and Bob Marley and The Wailers.