

## Everton Blender represents Jamaica in China

Veteran roots singer Everton Blender was the sole representative from Jamaica at the recently held Caribbean Music Festival in Beijing, China.

Blender performed alongside artistes from Caribbean territories including the Bahamas, Grenada, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana and Barbados. He delivered a creditable performance riddled with many of his hits. "It was a really good experience, especially being my first time performing in China I received a warm welcome from the locals, and there were even Jamaicans in the crowd as well. There was an interpreter on the stage so I even sang some of my lyrics in Chinese, much to the delight of my Beijing fans," said Blender. The event, featured musicians and bands from Caribbean countries with embassies in Beijing, providing a forum for the embassies in Beijing to work together to showcase the Caribbean. Organised by the Ministry of Culture of China, presented by China Arts and Entertainment Group, in collaboration with the embassies of the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, the music festival is also part of the China-Latin America and Caribbean Year of Culture Exchange.

According to Brad Hemmings of Caribbean Entertainment, the artiste-booking agency which provided the performers for the festival, the first staging was quite encouraging. "The successful first staging will, undoubtedly, mean continuity and expansion of this cultural-exchange activity, going forward. It not only provided opportunities for cultural exchange but a stage for our Caribbean artistes to showcase their amazing talent to a virtually untapped Asian market," Hemmings added. Other Caribbean performers at the four-day festival included Rupee, Tizzy, Mr Killa, Mitchell Brunnings, David L and Lil Bitts.