

# The Gleaner

Jamaica WI  
Established 1834

## 'Ancients' to celebrate Selassie visit

Published: Friday | March 18, 2011 | 12:00 AM



Ras Ho-Shing  
**Howard Campbell, Gleaner Writer**

**In 1998 when Lance Ho-Shing came to Jamaica, it was to recruit gospel performers for the Reggae Sunsplash For World Peace Music Festival in his London hometown.**

Within one year, he was singing a different song - a Rastafarian one.

More than a decade after he became a Rastafarian, Ho-Shing is preparing to stage what he considers his biggest project to date: a week-long festival commemorating the 45th anniversary of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I's visit to Jamaica.

That event, the 'Survival World Culture Music Festival', is scheduled for April 20-27, at the Trelawny Multi-purpose Stadium.

"It's very important to Rasta, because it will show how much His Imperial Majesty (Selassie) is now regarded globally," Ho-Shing, 49, said.

"We are expecting a large turnout."

Some of the biggest names in roots-reggae are expected to perform at the festival, including Ras Michael and The Sons of Negus, Sizzla and Capleton.

Ho-Shing told **The Gleaner** that delegations from as far away as Africa have also confirmed their participation.

Haile Selassie arrived in Kingston on April 21, 1966 for a three-day state visit.

### **Tolerance is critical**

Hundreds of exuberant Rastafarians - who hailed Selassie as God - greeted him when he arrived at, was then the Palisadoes International Airport.

Some of the excited, young Rastas who welcomed Selassie that day now form the Ancient Council, for which Ho-Shing is spokesperson. While mainstream acceptance of Rasta principles and repatriation to Africa remain primary concerns, Ho-Shing believes building tolerance among its elders is critical.

"The modern reality is that Rasta is not only for those who call His name, it's for all Africans," Ho-Shing explained. "Our purpose was to unify Africa, and that means much more than people wearing locks on their heads."

Born in Falmouth, Trelawny, Ho-Shing, who now has a subtle British accent, immigrated to London at age nine. He began growing his now shoulder-length locks four years ago, only after deciding to make a permanent return to Jamaica and devote his time to the Rastafarian cause.

For most of his professional life, Ho-Shing was a civil engineer but also dabbled in show promotion as head of High Society (London) Limited.

### **Life-changing experience**

Twelve years ago, he said he had a life-changing experience when he met Alvin 'Ras Cudjoe' Brown, a respected member of the Nyahbinghi order.

"Before I came to Jamaica, the spirit told me to seek out the ancients because they are the ones who took the beatings and sacrificed themselves in the King's name," said Ho-Shing.

"After I met Cudjoe, I started to understand more and more about the whole reality of the movement," he added.

Ho-Shing admits his family in England questioned his sanity when he told them he had converted to Rastafari and received a divine order to return to Jamaica.

"Even they have come to realise that while this is my calling, it's bigger than any one person. This is a movement that's a tribute to every African who came through the Middle Passage," he said.

Copyright © 2015 The Gleaner Company (Media) Limited. All Rights Reserved.

Pasted from <<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20110318/ent/ent5.html>>