



The life and work of National Hero the Rt. Excellent Marcus Garvey, was on Friday (August 17), given special recognition in the parish of his birth, St. Ann.

Scores of persons representing civic groups, the Rastafarian community, academia, the political directorate, along with a number of children, turned out at the St. Ann's Bay Parish Library, just a few kilometres from Garvey's childhood home, to pay glowing tribute to the National Hero on the 125th anniversary of his birth.

Custos of St. Ann, the Hon. Radcliffe Walters, described Garvey as a leading intellectual who must be taken seriously.

"The man whose memory we celebrate is undoubtedly an international icon whose study of philosophy ranks among the world's top philosophers of the last 2000 years according to scholars. People of St. Ann, be proud of the fact that your parish. Our parish gave birth to such a man, and let us use what appears to be adverse for him, to make us stronger," the Custos said.



Minister of Health, Hon. Dr. Fenton Ferguson, commended the musicians and Rastafarians for keeping Garvey's work alive over the years. He also applauded the move to have the teachings of Garveyism in the new Civics Programme in schools beginning September.

"While we celebrate the work of a giant, I say to the teachers in the institutions that will be presiding over this civics programme, this is a far-reaching decision taken in education that will go down to the greatest glory of our people. Knowing the importance of governance, and being a people with confidence, and a people who, despite the odds, have done well as a small island developing state," the Dr. Ferguson told his audience.

For Mayor of St. Ann's Bay, Councillor Desmond Gilmore, Marcus Garvey was the most "influential" person of African descent that has ever lived.

"Because of his (Garvey's) teaching, his philosophy, Nelson Mandela could be emboldened to stand against apartheid in South Africa, Malcolm X could become the greatest Civil Rights leader, Martin Luther-King could dream. Barack Obama could say 'yes we can', and he did (win the US presidential election). This man had influence on all these persons," the Mayor said.

Opposition Spokesperson on Education, Marisa Dalrymple-Philibert, also endorsed the 'Teachings of Garveyism in schools'. Mrs. Dalrymple-Philibert said Garvey, "sparkled the energy of hundred of thousands with the dream of redemption of his Negro brothers and sisters of African descent.

"Marcus Garvey's dream is unfolding by the achievements of black people in all spheres of life, in research and science, in education, in politics, in business -everywhere the achievements of our people continue to grow. I agree that the time has come after 50 years of Independence that we should teach our children about the people who helped to pave the way for the opportunities and freedoms that we now enjoy."

In the meantime, Member of Parliament for North East St. Ann, Shahine Robinson, used the occasion to urge young people to work hard for their success. She noted that Garvey's message is "relevant to our message of transformation, to the Vision 2030. It is relevant to our youth who must understand that they must clothe themselves in success."

Meanwhile, Member of Parliament for North West St. Ann, Dr. Dayton Campbell, encouraged persons to adhere to the principles of Garvey. "If Garvey is to rest in peace, then we as a people must adhere to certain principles. We must adhere to that principle of integrity. We must adhere to that principle of equality to ensure that everyone has their space in this country. We must adhere to nationhood to ensure that at all times the nation of Jamaica is placed at the forefront of our development and not the interest of a few. We must adhere to consultative governance."