

# NEWS

ML 1040

## Pan in the 21st Century:

# Pannists must be musically literate for TT to remain knowledge centre of pan

By SEAN NERO

**TRINIDAD and Tobago could lose its position as the knowledge centre of pan if pannists do not become musically literate**

**and if they do not achieve that quickly, according to Pan Trinbago's Foundation Board.**

"If TT is to remain at the forefront of pan, as well as the effective headquarters of the

world-wide industry, it must be the knowledge centre of the international pan industry."

The organisation believes that Trinidad and Tobago was in danger of losing its hold

over the industry to countries in Europe, North America and Asia, and needed to develop a database of information on and about the industry including every person, group and band involved in pan world-wide.

Most of the musicians participating in overseas bands at the World Steelband Music Festival in 2000 are likely to be musically literate, wrote the board in its findings.

These recommendations forms part of a comprehensive 45-page document entitled *Pan, Getting Organised for the new Millennium* which noted it was not sufficient for Government to ensure that members of the National Steel Orchestra are musically literate, but to set up music literacy programmes targeting the children of the nation's pannists.

This is documented under the "Education and Training Musicians and Organisations proposals, and is likely to be achieved via the pan yards and community centres using resources of the Ministry of Education, UWI, and Government's Distance Learning Programme.

Further, the foundation board reiterated the need for pan players to see themselves as "musicians" and not "pan beaters". "If pan players acquire music literacy, they would become more marketable and exportable. Just like any other profession, pan players must be trained and (must be) musically literate."