

PAN TRINBAGO NEEDS \$600,000 FOR FESTIVAL

By PETER RAY BLOOD

WITH eight days left before the start of this year's Steelband Music Festival — *Pan is Beautiful Five: A World Steelband Festival* — its operational cost is still short by more than \$600,000. This startling disclosure was made yesterday when Festival organisers held a media conference, at the Festival Secretariat, at the Independence Square branch of Royal Bank.

When the festival was launched in April, its co-producer — Royal Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited — announced that it would invest \$200,000 into the Festival, primarily to offset the cost of appearance fees and transportation. Pan Trinbago president Arnim Smith said that the remainder of the Festival's expenditure would have been accrued through the sale of tickets, and other pre-Festival miscellaneous sales.

Festival Organising Committee vice-chairman Bruce Aanansen, who yesterday disclosed that the overall cost of the Festival is \$753,000, explained that

a substantial part of this figure is to go to the participating orchestras, whose overhead costs were "exorbitant."

At yesterday's conference, Smith disclosed that an appeal had been made to the business sector, and the general public, for support of the Festival. At the April launch he highlighted the constraints under which his organisation and Royal Bank were attempting to stage the Festival and make it a success. Thus far, the Caribbean Development Company, makers of Carib Beer, has come forward and made a tangible donation, as well as offer its product as "the official beer of the Festival."

Aanansen underscored Smith's statements about the business sector, adding that support from this quarter "has not been as expected." He was full in praise of the business community in Sangre Grande, adding that almost every business house in that area had made a contribution towards the Festival.

Both Smith and Aanansen repeated their appeals to the business sector, with Aanansen adding that, "the only way the Festival can be a success, is with the support of the business community."