

Panday pulls up Pan Trinbago

...do not rely on handouts

By PETER RAY BLOOD

"GET down to serious business!" was the stern admonition Prime Minister Basdeo Panday gave Pan Trinbago when the steelband organisation hosted its Dedication Awards function, at the Queen's Park Savannah on Saturday night.

The advice formed part of the Prime Minister's feature address which was replete with suggestions for Pan Trinbago to turn around the state of its financial management and well being.

Pledging continued allegiance and support to the national instrument and the organisation, the prime minister said that Pan Trinbago possesses resources which, if used wisely and prudently,

could reap rich returns.

He challenged Pan Trinbago's executive to manage the organisation as an entrepreneurial entity if they were serious about self-sufficiency. He warned the organisation against relying on handouts and subsidies.

He added that the recently opened steelband factory was in a healthy state, having learned that demand was outstripping supply at this facility.

Panday said that if this was the case, and

the factory was turning a profit, Pan Trinbago should use that profit for reinvestment.

Citing Panvesco's \$3 million account in fixed deposits, Panday suggested that this money ought to be put to good use through investment.

About the contentious land at Williams Bay, Chaguaramas, Panday suggested that the site wasn't the best location for a steelband headquarters, but was more suitable for marinas and aqua sports and other tourism ori-

ented infrastructure. He said Pan Trinbago could always find another piece of land for its proposed headquarters.

Panday began his speech by disclosing that he had recently spoken to pan pioneer Ellie Mannette in Washington DC and expressed the wish that Mannette would be present at the next dedication.

He also spoke in glowing terms of the formation and accomplishments of the National Steel Orchestra, adding that his dream

is to see the orchestra rise to international prominence, like the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Panday was joined on Saturday by government ministers Senators Dr Daphne Phillip-Gaskin, Lindsay Gillette and Wade Mark.

On a night when stage management seemed to have gone through the window, the event was saved through some outstanding live performances.

Performing for the appreciative audience, made up primarily of members of the steelband fraternity, were Witco Desperadoes, Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars, David Rudder, Black Stalin, Brother Mudda, De Fosto, Ken "Professor" Philmore, Terror and Regeneration Now.

Witco Desperadoes received the night's most prestigious award, selected as the Most Outstanding Band of the past 50 years.

Anthony Williams was named the Most Outstanding Pan Man, and Ray Holman was honoured for pioneering "original compositions for Panorama."

Hydro Agri Skiffle Bunch, which evolved from being a traditional aggregation to being a full orchestra, received the award for Best Transition Band.

The Dr Eric Williams Award, presented by the prime minister for Life Time Achievement, was won by Bertie Marshall, Tony Williams and Oscar Pile.

The winners of round achievement Decade awards for all (1950s); Pan Am (1970s); Trinidad All Stars (1980s); and, Best Band of the were Boystown Witco Desperadoes Amoco Renegades (1990s).