

\$900,000 aid so far this year to steelbands

THE MINISTRY of Sport, Culture and Youth Affairs has assisted steelbands to the tune of \$900,250 so far this year. Steelbands and cultural and sports organisations must fulfil criteria required by the Ministry for financial assistance to be granted.

The Ministry outlined these requirements in a document issued at the monthly Press conference held at the Ministry of Information on Wednesday.

Cultural and sporting groups which ask for assistance must be recognised as bona fide organisations which are duly constituted. There should be sound financial management and audited financial statements for the preceding year should be made available to the Ministry. Groups should also provide satisfactory evidence of local fund raising.

Those organisations wanting assistance for overseas tours must have earned a national reputation for excellence. The tours should also pursue the national interest of Trinidad and Tobago. The country to which the tour is destined should be one with which a positive relationship can be fostered as determined from the foreign policy of Trinidad and Tobago.

However, any assistance granted by the Ministry will not exceed 50 per cent of the estimated budget for the activity and will not exceed the sum raised by the applicant.

Financial assistance for local events is given for rental of venues for cultural and sporting activities, technical aids-sound, light and special effects, other management expenses and extra ordinary transportation costs.

Assistance for overseas tours will cover air fares, boarding and lodging and transport. For overseas training projects, assistance will cover air fare, lodging and out-of-pocket allowances.

For locally-based training projects assistance will cover traveling costs and fees or lodging for tutors. In the case of training programmes, seminars, and conferences, individuals, in the view of a panel to be established, must be capable of making a significant contribution in the field of culture.

Assistance for tours arranged by steelbands totalled \$54,792 in 1983. Allocations recommended for sporting organisations this year have reached \$551,326.97.