

LOOKS LIKE PANORAMA

By SUNITY MAHARAJ

POOPS

THE REST of this year's Panorama competition are off until further notice.

Yesterday, a decision to boycott Panorama was taken by the steelbandsmen's association, Pan Trinbago, minutes after its president George Goddard "washed his hands" off the show and handed over the reins to his second-in-command.

But, he begged panmen: "Do not follow me and institute any boycott nonsense."

"We have been deceived by government," said Pan Trinbago's public relations officer Gerald Clarke.

The panmen, who went into Panorama preliminaries without any indication from government about the kind of money and prizes they would be offered, are asking for more money.

Monday Cabinet decided to pay an appearance fee of \$500 to each band in the preliminaries and \$800 to those in the semi-finals as against a Pan Trinbago request for \$4,000 for the preliminaries and \$8,000 for the semi-finals.

INCENTIVES

Appearance fees and prize money would cost government \$198,550 according to the Cabinet statement. Cabinet also agreed to foot the bill for security and safety and transportation totalling \$382,000.

Government has also offered cash incentives to panmen. This money, said Whitehall, would come from gate receipts: The revenue collected in excess of \$275,000 will be available for distribution to Pan Trinbago as an incentive for their participation in Panorama.

But, panmen do not expect any money from this area.

"We would never be able to clear 275,000. So we cannot expect to share form a profit," said Clarke.

Last year, gate receipts totalled \$184,439.

Government has estimated that ticket sales this year would bring in \$475,000.

At meetings with Minister of Education and Culture Dr. Cuthbert Joseph late last month, Pan Trinbago had not asked for any incentive.

Instead, the association requested - a \$5,000 appearance fee for the preliminaries. Last year the fee was \$500 and there was no incentive. After negotiations, a settlement of a \$4,000 fee was reached, Pan Trinbago said.

"We were told that the increase was too exorbitant and we should temper it by asking cabinet for the same fee as the previous year, \$500. It would be easier to get the remaining \$3,500, we were advised, if we asked for it as an incentive fee, said Clarke.

According to Goddard, Pan Trinbago was assured shortly before this weekend's preliminaries that "everything would be all right. So panmen agreed to go ahead with the competition," said Goddard.

"Now we are told we would get the incentive, but that would depend on gate receipts. We cannot accept that uncertainty," said Clarke.

"With this kind of money it is not worth our while to enter Panorama. An existing band spends between \$15,000 and \$20,000 gearing for Panorama, while a new band can spend up to \$60,000," added Clarke.

4 KINGS MAKE IT

TWO women and four former calypso kings are among 24 semi-finalists in this year's calypso monarch competition which takes place at Skinner Park, San Fernando, Saturday.

The women are Francine and Lady Wonder. The ex-kings: Bomber, Duke, Chalkdust and Terror.

The others: All-rounder, Michael Baker, Blakie, Crazy, Crooner, Designer, Explainer, Melody, Merchant, Penguin, Poser, Relator, Short Pants, Shorty, Stalin, Sugar Aloes, Tobago Crusoe and Brother Valentino.

Reserves: Lady Chaconia, Cro-Cro and Gypsy. The finals take place at the Queen's Park Savannah, Port of Spain, Carnival Sunday night.

This year record prizes are at stake with donations from several quarters.