

PANMEN GET OWN ROAD MARCH

By TERRY JOSEPH

IN WHAT may lead to a further distancing of pan from mas, Pan Trinbago has decided to have its own nationwide Road March competition.

The decision comes hot on the heels of a public row between Pan Trinbago and the National Carnival Bands Association (NCBA), details of which were carried in an exclusive story in yesterday's *Express*.

The winner of the annual Road March competition, although rewarded by the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation (Tuco), is assessed during the NCBA's Parade of

the Bands.

Pan Trinbago president Patrick Arnold yesterday confirmed to the *Express* that plans were already in place to organise a Road March competition exclusive to steelbands and that the scoring would take place at all venues across Trinidad and Tobago.

Arnold said that the original idea came from The Grandmaster, Kitchener, whose calypso tributes to pan are legendary.

"He came up with this idea when we were originally discussing the pan-kaiso competition and although we did not pursue it right away, we since decided that now is the time to

implement it.

"What we—and, in fact, the whole country—had been going along with over the years was a DJ and brass band march, which did not have any real input from the steelband," Arnold said. "We intend to correct that from this year and will be setting up our own checkers to list only the songs that steelbands play as they cross the stage at the various competition venues."

Arnold argued that pan was being marginalised in those Carnival day competitions that are currently being managed by the National Carnival Bands Association (NCBA).

"Even the new route they

have put out seems to be part of a plan to keep pan out of what they feel is their business, their Carnival," Arnold said.

For the first time, Pan Trinbago this year recognised the contribution of composers and performers who dedicate their work to the celebration of the national musical instrument and its players.

Last Friday, 12 calypsonians competed for a \$20,000 prize at the final of the inaugural pan-kaiso competition, which was held at the Expo site in Trincity.

At the end of the evening, The Original De Fosto Himself was declared the first-ever Pan-Kaiso Monarch, for his song "Tune for Pan".

Pan music composers get another accolade this evening, when The Signature Collection and Exodus Steel Orchestra will jointly host the second Glitterwood Awards, at the Exodus panyard in Tunapuna.

This year has seen a significant rise in the number of compositions done exclusively for the steelband. At the preliminary stage of Pan Trinbago's pan-kaiso competition, 36 singers performed, in a show that doubled as the launch of this year's Panorama competition.

Prizes for the Pan March competition will be announced tomorrow, when full details of the plan are made public.