

ML 1040

Phase II needs help



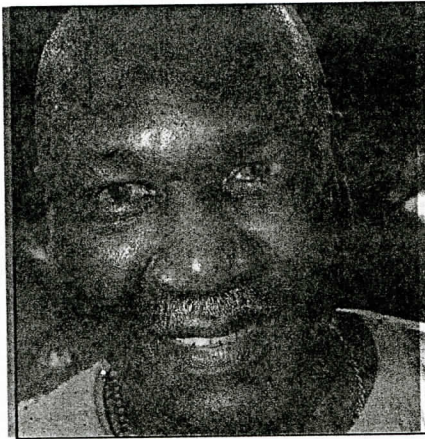
Wayne Bowman

REIGNING National Panorama Champion Phase II Pan Groove is in dire straits financially as it prepares to defend its title.

The band's leader/arranger, Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, yesterday called on the corporate sector to support the band in its attempt to score that elusive hat trick as well as claim its fifth overall Panorama championship. Sharpe estimated that it will take the band about \$500,000 to ready itself for the competition, which kicks off next week with preliminary judging in the respective panyards of the participating bands. Sharpe said he knows that the only opponent posing any threat to Phase II is the band itself and he and his pannists are coming out to "share licks on all takers come Carnival Saturday".

Phase II is currently working on "Sharing Licks" the music of which was composed by Sharpe while Anthony "Lexo" Alexis wrote the lyrics and Crazy performed the song. Asked about rumours that there was trouble brewing between Home Construction Limited and Phase II over the property housing the panyard, Sharpe said he knew nothing of that and had nothing to say on the matter. HCL is presently constructing a mega residential and business complex called One Mucurapo Road and the Phase II Panyard falls into the construction zone.

HCL built a new pan theatre near the Audrey Jeffers Highway for Phase II with



Len "Boogsie" Sharpe...We need help urgently and I am calling on the corporate sector to come forward and give us some support.

the agreement that the band would move there upon completion. Sharpe has, however, refused to move to the new pan theatre because he said HCL failed to provide what had initially been agreed upon and there has been a stand-off between the two parties since.

"I have nothing to say about that matter. I have said enough over the years and we have gotten no where. I am concentrating on taking my band to the Panorama championship and that is all I am focusing on right now. We need help urgently and I am calling on the corporate sector to come forward and give us some support. We are working on our music here and not allowing anything to bother us, but we need money to get ready," Sharpe said.

Phase II is considered to be the first successful unsponsored steel orchestra and won its first two Panorama titles as such back in 1987 following that with a repeat victory in 1988. The band eventually secured sponsorship from Petrotrin, but this relationship went sour in 2005 resulting in

the band securing an endorsement deal with Digicel for Carnival 2006. This too fell apart shortly after Carnival and the band has remained on its own since.

Founding member of the band, Franklyn Ollivierre, confirmed yesterday that Phase II has been in search of a sponsor and has so far been unable to secure one. He said that the Government has given the band a grant for which they are thankful, but this is still not enough to fully prepare the band for Panorama.

As for the relationship with HCL, Ollivierre said that there has been no trouble with the company and that the construction activities do not affect the band's rehearsals.

"We are working on our music here and not allowing anything to bother us, but we need money to get ready"