

ML 1040

# Only 8 big bands for pan finals

By JOAN RAMPERSAD

PAN TRINBAGO president Patrick Arnold yesterday maintained that only eight large steelbands are going to take the stage at Skinner Park, San Fernando for the Panorama finals.

Arnold denied ever telling another newspaper that his organisation planned to increase the number to ten, after none of the large bands from South Trinidad qualified for the finals on February 17. San Fernando-based TCL Skiffle Bunch which wowed pan lovers at last Sunday's Panorama semifinals, Queen's Park Savannah, Port-of-Spain just missed making it into the final eight.

"The 10-band story came up before the competition started when we received a letter from the management of the band Pamberi. We considered it but decided back then against it," Arnold explained.

He added that the first thing that Pan Trinbago took into consideration was the budget for Panorama.

"We are not going to bring in bands just for bringing them in sake. That is not how Panorama is run."



Arnold also stated that if there had been a mistake in the judging process, then the necessary adjustments to correct that mistake would have been made. But having gone over the score sheets on Monday, he said there was no error, therefore Pan Trinbago will not alter the number of large bands going into the finals.

Asked if he though TCL Skiffle Bunch gave an entertaining performance last Sunday, Arnold replied: "Yes, Skiffle was entertaining but all the bands played to a high standard and the judges decision is final."

Arnold said there was no chance that the finals would return to Port-of-Spain, since six of the eight finalists are from the north, and given their costs to go to San Fernando.

"There is no possibility of that at all. In (Pan Trinbago's) budget proposal to the Government sent in April 2006, we had asked for an increase in prizes. It appears that we will be getting it so we are not talking transport."

He added that bands spend as much as \$300,000 to prepare for Panorama hence the request for the increase in prizes. In its proposal, Pan Trinbago asked for a million-dollar first prize for the large band category, \$800,000 for the medium band winner and \$600,000 for the small band victor.