

Land gift not political, says Pan Trinbago

By TERRY JOSEPH

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THE handing over of some eight acres of land currently the property of Caroni 1975 Ltd to Pan Trinbago, scheduled for November 17, has no relationship with the politics of the day, according to the pan body's president, Patrick Arnold.

"There are those who think Government quickly decided to identify a parcel of land and dump it on Pan Trinbago so the party in power could look good with the impending election, but that is not at all true," Arnold said.

"It is nothing but coincidence that this deal achieved closure at this particular time, because we estimated that all details would have been completed by October, long before there was any thought of a general election. It got just slightly delayed and now it appears as though there is some connection



PATRICK ARNOLD

between the two events.

"It is we who identified the parcel and applied for permission to use it and that took place three years ago," Arnold said. "Our vice-chairman of the eastern region Peter Khanhai was dealing with it on an ongoing basis and we secured agreement from Caroni earlier this year, so its not like we're falling for gimmickry or imaging

initiatives by the ruling party. In fact, it is all our initiative and I would like to make that perfectly clear," Arnold said.

The parcel of land is situated immediately off the Churchill/Roosevelt Highway near Trincity. Pan Trinbago proposes to build its new headquarters there.

"If anything, we are hoping to hear Government has decided to release some of the millions promised us, so we can get this project up an running in the shortest possible time," Arnold said. Of \$7.5 million promised to Pan Trinbago on July 25, 1990 by then Prime Minister (now President) Arthur NR Robinson, only \$3.5 million has so far been released. The residual amount is said to be now worth some \$15 million, given accruals of interest and returns on investments over the 11-year interim.