

ML1040

Pan Foundation: Make pan mainstream instrument worldwide

THE STEELPAN should be made the main stream musical instrument worldwide according to findings of Pan Trinbago's Foundation Board.

"Pan is not just the only world class invention of Trinidad and Tobago; it represents true entrepreneurship in every respect."

The report was largely the product of a strategic planning workshop designed and conducted by the Foundation Board and Hollick Rajkumar Consulting and represents the views of the board and stakeholders within the pan fraternity.

The only product of its kind, said the Foundation Board, pan is micro enterprise with "big business" potential.

"In a world where every entrepreneur, businessman and corporation is seeking to create a better car, a better beer, a better computer pan is a unique product. And like any such product the absence of an international awareness programme has resulted in limited exposure of the instrument, as it is unknown globally.

"Therefore, for the industry to grow and prosper, the instrument needs a well-constructed and funded domestic and international awareness campaign."

The study said other than being called the national instrument, there is no protocol that governs the role of pan as such and questioned if the title meant it must be taught in schools played at all national events, or displayed at all state buildings and embassies.

Also noted was the lack of a national strategy to either patent the invention or to brand the product as a Trinidad and Tobago invention. As a consequence many other Caribbean countries are claiming that the pan is theirs.

But even with all its good intentions the Foundation Board in its desire to make the steelpan the musical instrument worldwide, acknowledges that its most significant challenges were the market place and the many mountains it still has to climb.