

OUR OPINION

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Too many pan shows?

TODAY, the 1994 Carnival goes into its final seven days and the hope must be that this last leg will be trouble-free in spite of the disturbing reports of violence coming from the festival's fringes.

None of the huge public fetes seem to have escaped some kind of blood-letting although, in contrast, thousands of people thronged Skinner Park for the national calypso semifinals and managed to have a good time without untoward incidents.

They, however, left the Park in a mess although the absence of sanitation bins added to the traditional laissez-faire. It meant a late start to the southern leg of the National Panorama Competition which, as was the case in the last years before the competition was moved to the Queen's Spark Savannah, was poorly attended.

But the same can be said of the North Panorama Finals held last Friday which we believe says

more about the state of the economy than the state of the steelband movement. There was a time when both the North and Grand stands could hardly contain the teeming crowds at this show but on Friday one could have had a row of chairs to oneself in some parts of these stands. In fact many people, unable to afford even the entrance fee converged on "The Tracks" lead-up to the concert stage where, some said, they were able to hear the bands, free of competition stress, "ramajaying" at their best.

We wait to see what will happen at the National Semifinals and at Friday's finals. Poor turn-outs may force steelband aficionados and the representative organisation, Pan Trinbago to consider, in these money-strapped times, whether they should contract the Panorama programme into fewer shows. They may even consider eliminating zonal finals entirely.