

Panmen plea for early prize money

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THE STEELBAND fraternity is calling on corporate sponsors to make payments of prize money available to competitions winners as early as possible after events are completed.

Richard Forteau, secretary of Pan Trinbago, issued the call during an address last Tuesday at the prize distribution ceremony for winners in the Berger Las' Lap Steelband Competition, held on the company's compound in Sea Lots, Port-of-Spain.

Sponsored by Berger Paints for the past 16 years, the steelband competition takes place on Carnival Tuesday night at the Harvard Roundabout, St Clair, where several of the country's top steel orchestras participate.

"Recently we have been seeing a downturn in the number of bands taking part in organised steelband contests and the reason advanced for non-participation always has been the lack of money," Forteau said.

"What we are saying is that if sponsors could try and make payments earlier, some bands may be able to use their winnings to prepare themselves for other competitions. The recently concluded Steelband Music Festival is a case in point," he added.

Forteau lamented

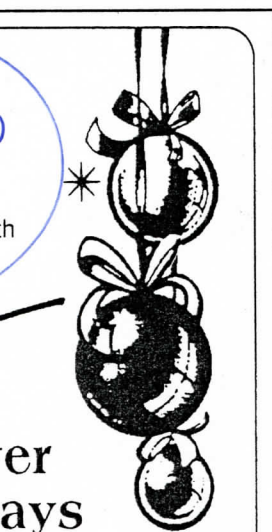
the fact the entertainment industry's appeals for financial support has traditionally been placed on the back burner of Government's budgeting plans.

He noted that the Steelband Festival budget was in the vicinity of \$800,000 yet financial support from the Ministry of Culture amounted to just \$10,000.

"It would seem that because of that particular approach, Pan Trinbago is heading on a collision course with the Culture Ministry," he warned.

Collecting the \$7,000 cash and \$1,000 in prize paint offered as first prize in the conventional bands category was Phase II Pan Groove. Petrotrin Invaders placed second and Silver Stars was third.

In the traditional bands category, Scrubbers Pan Groove was presented with a similar winner's prize. La Creole Pan Groove was second and Laventille Pasphonics placed third. The prize offered for "best flag waver" was won by Claude Forde of Exodus Steel Orchestra.



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Ballroom
6 - 7:00 pm
7:00 pm