

# Diaz: Panorama to go international next year

KALIFA CLYNE

Pan Trinidad president Keith Diaz says this year's Panorama competition will be an exciting year for steelband and will lead to the introduction of Panorama as an international pan competition in 2014.

Though Diaz divulged little details about the event, he said competitors could begin registration as early as March 15.

This year's competition also will see a change on the final night as the usual prize-giving, which takes place on the night of the finals, will be postponed to an award ceremony on February 22.

Another change is that there would be no more access from the North Stand, Queen's Park Savannah, to the Northern Greens area during the semi-finals of the competition on January 27.

Those announcements were made by Diaz and Pan Trinidad vice president Byron Serrette yesterday at the Savannah during a news conference to discuss the 50th anniversary of Panorama this year. The pan competition began in February 1963.



Chairman of the Carnival Commission Allison Demas, centre, is greeted by president of Pan Trinidad Keith Diaz, right, while vice president Byron Serrette looks on, during yesterday's media conference. PHOTO: SHIRLEY BAHADUR

Serrette said the access change from the North Stand to the Northern Greens was one of the measures being used to deal with security during the competition.

Last year, police and security officials stopped patrons from crossing over to the greens from the North Stand because it was overcrowded.

This resulted in patrons breaking down the fence to gain access.

This year, Pan Trinidad hopes to eliminate a repeat by making the space in the "Greens" big-

ger.

Serrette said Pan Trinidad had consulted with stakeholders, including various patron groups or "posses".

He said the organisation had received criticism over the "Greens" from pan lovers.

Serrette said despite making allowances for non-pan lovers, the entire space was a steelpan space.

"We must give them the opportunity to come into a steelband space. Eventually they will be the audience in the Grand Stand in the future," he added.

## Pan Trinidad gets drum-making factory from NP

The National Petroleum Company (NP) has donated its drum-making factory to Pan Trinidad to be used for the manufacturing of the steelpan.

President of Pan Trinidad Keith Diaz said so yesterday during a media conference at the Queen's Park Savannah, Port-of-Spain.

"Just yesterday (Wednesday) NP donated its drum-making facility to us," Diaz added.

The steelband fraternity had faced a drum shortage in 2011 when the machine being used at NP's facility stopped operating due to mechanical problems.

Diaz described the donation as a tremendous show of sup-

port to the national instrument.

Another show of support came from Arts and Multiculturalism Minister Lincoln Douglas who said he would focus on "legitimising" all the pan-yards in T&T.

Douglas said most of the pan-yards were situated on state lands with some using

### THIS YEAR'S PRIZE MONEY

#### Large bands:

First place: \$1 million.  
Second place: \$700,000.  
Third place: \$650,000.  
Fourth place: \$600,000.  
Fifth place: \$550,000.

#### Medium bands:

First place: \$600,000.  
Second place: \$550,000.  
Third place: \$500,000.  
Fourth place: \$450,000.  
Fifth place: \$400,000.

#### Small bands:

First place: \$400,000.  
Second place: \$350,000.  
Third place: \$300,000.  
Fourth place: \$250,000.  
Fifth place: \$200,000.

### Activities on "The Greens"

Serrette said: "The Greens" space will be widened and lengthened to accommodate between 15,000 and 20,000 people.

"There will be screens and speakers in 'The Greens,' broadcasting the entire competition."

February 22 was the date of the first pan finals in 1963.

The celebration of 50 years of pan has been dedicated to the memory of Bertie Marshall, an icon in the pan fraternity. Marshall died last October.

## NCC going after more \$\$ for kings and queens of mas

A note has gone to Cabinet requesting an increase in prize money for both the junior and senior Kings and Queens of Carnival competition.

This increase is proposed for Carnival 2013.

This was revealed yesterday by Allison Demas, new chairman of the National Carnival Commission (NCC) as she spoke to the media after Pan Trinidad's news conference on 50 years of Panorama.

She said if competitors continued with plans to boycott, there are others waiting for the opportunity.

Demas told reporters she was in full agreement with members of the mas fraternity that the prize money for the competition was not enough.

Last week the T&T Carnival Bands Association (TTCBA) called on the NCC to increase the prizes for the King and Queen competitions, to reconsider holding the finals of the competition on Carnival Friday, and arrange a more efficient and comfortable event.

She said in exchange for the increase, Arts and Multiculturalism Minister Lincoln Douglas would expect the winners to make themselves contractually available to represent the country throughout the year.

Demas said she felt the bacchanal surrounding the competition was unfortunate. She said the NCC had been meeting with the executives of the various Carnival stakeholders, including the TTCBA.

Changing the day of the event from Carnival Friday to the Wednesday before Carnival was impossible, she said.

Demas said the dates could not be shifted because the NCC also represented the Trinidad Unified Calypsonians Organisation (Tuco) and there was a TUCO event at the Savannah venue on that Wednesday.

Asked what would happen if the Kings and Queens were to go ahead with their boycott, Demas said: "I am instructed that if there is a boycott by certain Kings and Queens, there are a lot of new people waiting in the wings to be given an opportunity and a chance."

In a meeting at St Mary's College last night members of the TTCBA expressed their dissatisfaction with Demas' response.

"They have given us no details and until they are able to let us know what is going on then the boycott will continue," said TTCBA Director Gerard Weekes. KC

"unknown" properties.

He added: "They do not have the authority to use the real estate they are on. We are looking to invest those properties into the hands of the panmen."

Diaz said he expected Douglas to look at security in the pan-yards as well as deeds to lands for bands. KC