



Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars in action at Panorama 2011 finals.

There's a kinda hush

...all over our multicultural world

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Apparently nothing was questionable enough to create healthy dialogue, as to whether this year's Carnival was the biggest and best ever.

There seems to be no doubt that it created, or at minimum, triggered the desired levels of economic diversity, generated the foreign exchange revenues, covered all the expenses and made a profit, after several \$2m payouts, new and improved Grand and North Stands, and upgrades to facilities and prizes etc for municipal Carnivals throughout T&T.

We have not seen or heard from our economists or political analysts, got their stamp of approval, or their labelling of this investment as rape or pillage of the treasury, wastage of taxpayers' monies, or why invest in Carnival in these global economic times?

The perceived success of this venture has not been backed by empirical evidence, and every concern about the biggest and best ever has been swept under the carpet.

For instance, they say the power soca monarch winner was politically planted in the contest to win, and the band of the year prize should also be \$2m.

Given several facts, including the higher seating capacity and larger stage, which met international entertainment standards, the bottleneck and waiting to go on stage has worsened.

Weren't we supposed to enjoy a smoother flow, something more cutting edge and world class than the lowly ranked street parade outside NAPA?

Many people believe that the quality and creativity of the mas has to be elevated to the level of Minshall or McFarlane to earn million dollar prizes, one or two bands of this calibre, versus endless made in China bikini and beads presentations should not be rewarded in such a manner.

Additionally, the people's band buss. Investing in this band was rated as unique and destined to succeed. In acceptance of failure, it was analysed as a case of growing pains.

It's okay to fail on the first try, we've learnt from our mistakes, but after the

fact. Marketing and private sector support is the best way forward for continuity of the \$2m prizes.

Don't you think paying the pannists their original \$1,000 each stipend, and having them play exclusively for the people's band in the respective Carnivals, may have been the brighter idea, and not the devaluation of a pan player's services?

One should shudder to think that the discounted amounts were used to offset the people's band DJ expenses. Nonetheless, it seems as though all's well with respect to the outcomes of the Calypso Monarch and Panorama.

Could it be that the millions have supposedly gone to deserving crime and poverty stricken areas?

With Panorama and Pan Trinbago, the silence is deafening. Renegades attempted to get the attention of the nation, but conceded to their elimination without really kicking up much dust.

Exodus, on the other hand, literally settled out of court with the governing body, over a 2009 panorama issue.

Many of us may or may not be aware that, in local newspaper and whensteeltalks Internet releases earlier this year, the X band claimed that in the interest of the future of pan and Panorama, they settled for TT\$1, and that the plan for the dismantling of the big five—Renegades, All Stars, Desperadoes, Exodus and Phase II—under the Arnold administration, was executed via the miscommunication and lack of consensus re: the 100 players maximum rule.

It seems that those developments led to their demise in the 2009 final, and in their subsequent elimination in the 2010 semifinal round.

Isn't it therefore very coincidental that a DJ caused the Renegades debacle in 2K11, and the X band regained their position on the Panorama food chain?

On a positive note, however, the music and the live performances of the calypso, soca and chutney artistes, and the steelbands, were exceptional.

To me the motivation of the \$2m prizes produced the excellence, and made this year the biggest and best musically, and not Carnival in its entirety.

Or, perhaps it was in fact, simply the biggest investment by a T&T government in Carnival ever.