

# Pan Trinbago to meet with PM on Friday

## CORDIELLE STREET

PRIME MINISTER Patrick Manning is scheduled to meet with the newly-elected executive of Pan Trinbago on Friday, however discussions on a new home for Panorama may not be on the cards.

Pan Trinbago president Patrick Arnold yesterday, confirmed that the PM has requested a meeting with the ten-man executive but insisted it was more of a "courtesy call" than a round table discussion on Carnival 2007.

He said the meeting was originally scheduled for last week and had nothing to do with the recent announcement by Minister of State in the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs Eddie Hart that Carnival celebrations would not be held in the Queen's Park Savannah (QPS).

Hart claimed that the Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs Joan Yuille-Williams was currently considering a proposal by Pan Trinbago to host Panorama semi-finals and finals at Skinner Park, San Fernando.

Arnold has countered that Skinner Park for the semi-finals would only be feasible if the Government planned to absorb the exorbitant costs involved with relocating Panorama.

"We had two proposals sent to the National Carnival Commission (NCC). The first was for us to use a paved area of the Savannah and we drew up plans for that.

"If the Savannah was not available then as a last course we were considering Skinner Park but only for the finals not the semi-finals! Who knows maybe if the Government would like to pick up the cost then we may have to con-

sider Skinner Park (overall)," said Arnold.

He added: "We can't see ourselves with any other alternative. I mean really, we can't see ourselves going to Jean Pierre or the stadium."

Arnold admitted being in the dark concerning Manning's agenda for Friday's meeting but he did not completely dispel the idea that Carnival 2007 might be a major talking point.

Meanwhile, UNC deputy political leader Jack Warner has criticised the Government's decision not to utilise the QPS for Carnival as "untimely and provocative."

"In fact, the decision reeks of pure spite, a vindictive reprisal against those who identify budget-speech promises on which Government fails to deliver.

"Worse, the Carnival Centre, proposed to replace existing facilities at the Queen's Park Savannah, is evidently proceeding without promised consultation and hence disregard for the opinion of the people on whose behalf the festival is staged," said Warner.

He claimed Hart's statement, that mas belongs on the road, was bordering on the "ludicrous" and "demonstrates a patently simplistic approach to solving the bundle of problems created by the Government's arbitrary decision to cavalierly tamper with a long-standing cultural tradition."

Warner added that the current situation was a "political face-saving" even as the Government had yet to source new venues for events traditionally held at QPS.

The NCC board is also scheduled to meet on Friday to address issues arising out of Carnival 2007.