

## CARNIVAL CONCERNS

Stakeholders worry about SoE impact

■ Verdel Bishop

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THE DECLARATION of a state of emergency on Monday, aimed at addressing rising crime concerns, has left bandleaders, event organisers, and other Carnival stakeholders questioning how it will impact preparations for the upcoming Carnival 2025 season. Promoter Randy Glasgow said the SoE could possibly affect his shows.

'There could be a reduction in the number of people attending events. We hope that it would not lead to promoters having to cancel their shows because of the inconveniences like the traffic and roadblocks. Our target demographics are women, with shows like Ladies Night Out. Women may not want to come out in an environment with an SoE in effect,' he said.

Glasgow added, 'We understand the need for heightened security measures, but the Government must engage with us to find ways to keep the spirit of Carnival alive while ensuring public safety.'

Promoter of the Soca Chutney Monarch Competition and Southex CEO George Singh described the situation as a catch-22. 'It is too early to determine how things will go this Carnival season. I am still observing and I am aware that there were a series of fetes leading up to New Year's Day that were all very well attended. I really hope that the SoE doesn't affect the Carnival fetes. Hopefully, people will feel safer to party in an SoE environment, but then it's a catch-22 situation because some might feel safer and some might not,' Singh said.

The Trinidad and Tobago Promoters Association (TTPA) said it is focused on investing in the personal safety of its patrons, staff, and all stakeholders when producing events. TTPA advocate Paige De Leon said, 'The TTPA has a history of collaboration and dialogue with the members of the protective services in the lead-up to the Carnival season and to other periods of heightened event activity. We are committed to doing all we can to ensure the safety of our fellow citizens; in that vein, we look forward to our next meeting with our stakeholders in security, like the TTPS and the TTFS, to ensure alignment with that objective. We are clear that one of the most cherished brand promises as event producers in Trinidad and Tobago is that of a safe and enjoyable experience; we remain committed to fulfilling that promise,' De Leon said. One businessman and mas designer who asked not to be named said the SoE could cause foreigners to think twice about coming to enjoy Trinidad's Carnival. 'The global Carnival community looks forward to Trinidad's Carnival, and as we all know, this is a major economic driver in Trinidad and Tobago. Even without a curfew, there could be problems. We hope that it will not dampen international interest and discourage tourists from making plans to visit,' the mas designer said.

**STATE  
OF  
EMERGENCY  
DAY 8**



CAN'T STOP THE PARTY: Patrons at Brunchin - Cocktails & Bites Inclusive move to the music yesterday during the event hosted by Winer Boy Entertainment at Jamboree Park, Valsayn.

—Photo: JERMAINE CRUICKSHANK

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