



De Announcer placed third with his National Carol Festival. (LJS)



Raanan, doing What Dey Want, is an asset to traditional calypso. (LJS)



The Courtesy Pic O De Crop was sold out on Friday night. (SLD)

# MIR BLOOD RUNS HOT



Mr Blood during his presentation with the Mighty Grynner. (LJS)

By John Sealy

**M**r Blood broke seven years of national calypso famine when he won the title of monarch in the **Courtesy Pic O De Crop Finals at the National Botanical Gardens, Waterford, St Michael, on Friday.** It was back in 2018 when he was crowned monarch after performing **Stars And Stripes** and **Sexual Harassment** at a time the two-song competition was the norm at **Kensington Oval.** This year, **Mr Blood, of De Big Show,** was in the mix for placement in the top five. He is the type of act that wows his audience. He did not disappoint as he rendered **Don't Wait**, somewhat of a self-fulfilling prophecy that called for the honouring of calypsonians before they died. The theme is not a new one, but to **Mr Blood's** credit he held the attention with a refreshing treatment of the lyrics and set

a good pace early in the show.

Appearing at number three, he mastered every expectation of the criteria: rendition and lyrics, which carried 30 points each; melody (25), which was singable, and his arrangement (10 points) complemented the melody. Chances are he took the full five points for the presentation. It was set against stained glass church windows; lowering of a coffin in a cemetery with all the trappings of a burial ceremony. A real-life appearance of **Mighty Grynner**, symbolic of giving flowers while alive, was touching.

The show started on an even keel. Eighteen calypsonians were champing at the bit to dethrone defending monarch **Adrian Clarke.**

However, there was a buzz for **Shining Stars Calypso Tent's De Announcer** when he appeared at number six.

He came to the **Botanical Gardens** on a wave

of popularity with his satirical piece **National Carol Festival**, a poke at the **National Cultural Foundation** which is responsible for managing **Crop Over.** He did not disappoint. Dressed in all African print splendour, **De Announcer** recited all the changes injected into the "Carol Festival". In keeping with changes of the "Carol Festival" he even personified the changes with a new-look hairstyle from curly to straightened.

## Spontaneous reaction

The reaction of the audience was spontaneous and the applause was deafening. Who would be the runners-up? He was their winner. That scenario did not play out according to their fancy. He landed 101.5 points to secure third spot at the sold-out venue.

**Ian iWeb Webster, also of De Big Show,** came in second position with his number **Twisted.**

The lyrics are topical and reflect societal dysfunction. However, arrangements were overloaded with horns; elaborate and upstaging. **iWeb** is a smart lyricist and covers himself well, but tends to shout. His presentation was cerebral. He scored 106 points.

Defending champion **Clarke** came fourth with 90 points. He began confidently, but started to wander lyrically as he progressed through the song **Wuhloss.** Some of the pionic lines did not hit as accustomed, creating a natural expression of "wuh loss".

**Mr Blood,** as the new monarch, has a choice between a 2025 Nissan X-Trail e-Power or \$100 000 cash for winning the 2025 **Courtesy Pic O De Crop Finals.** He also gets a trophy. **i-Web,** also of **De Big Show,** got \$40 000 for his second place, while **De Announcer,** of **Carters Shining Stars,** took home \$20 000 for his third position and **Clarke** got \$15 000 for

fourth place.

Fifth through ten places received \$8 000 each and 11th to 18th \$6 000 each. Other awards include **Best Arranged Song:** \$1 000; **Best Nation-Building Song:** \$500 for the composer and \$500 for the contestant. All finalists got an appearance fee of \$1 500.

The evening's contest was keen. However, some patrons would be curious about their favourites like **Colin Spencer** with **Singing For Jesus**, **Donella - Behind Closed Doors**, **Queen Karen - My Condolences**, **Classic - Spot De Light** and **Jamal Slocombe - Don't Forget Me.** Other finalists were **Teri**, who did **AI, Biggie Irie** with **How You Get In Dis**, **Chrystal's Partying**, **Raanan** with **What Dey Want**, **Billboard's Golden Crown**, **Doyenne's Anger Problems**, **Dynamo** with **Write Uh Wrong**, **Quon's Mr Architect** and **Sir Ruel** with **Second Dat.**