

# Casino bosses expecting the worst

The casino industry in Trinidad and Tobago is bracing itself for next Monday's Budget. Yesterday, President of the Association of Members' Clubs (AMC) Brian Phillips, said that he was not optimistic about the upcoming presentation, but called on Government to stick by promises it made to the workers of the casino industry, if it does indeed go ahead with plans to shut the industry down.

Specifically, Phillips called on Government to reveal plans to retrain the thousands of workers in the casino-industry who will be on the breadline if the industry is shut down.

"I feel that the Budget is coming with the worse for us...But government is yet to put a programme in place to train the staff (who will be retrenched)," Phillips told Newsday.

He said that the stress of the situation had reached such a level that the AMC was considering adopting plans for a counselling programme for casino-employees across the country.

"The situation is very stressful," he said, "some people cannot get loans. They go to the bank and are refused loans because of the uncertainty."

In last year's Budget presentation, Prime Minister Patrick Manning said that Government was strongly against the proliferation of casinos in Trinidad and Tobago. "The emerging trends in casino-type gaming activities are of great concern to the Government, particularly its rapid spread in urban, rural, and semi-rural communities," Manning said.