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Starry night at AIDS concert

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KONSERT Riben Merah '97, held at Stadium Negara last Sunday night, was a significant event which emphasised the need for everyone to be informed and united in overcoming the dangers posed by AIDS.

Held in conjunction with World AIDS Day the two-hour concert, hosted by TV3's Aidiel Abdul Ghafar and singer Seha, featured popular singers Awie, Ziana Zain, Farra, Camelia, Ramli Sarip, Prema Lucas, Shahrizan, Ruhil and Ella.

The opening act saw Farra belting out one of her new songs, an upbeat number called Bukalah Pagarmu. It was a very good beginning because her well-choreographed act sent spirits soaring.

This was followed by Shahrizan who sang Whitney Houston's popular ballad The Greatest Love Of All.

Awie did not go wrong with his song Terima Kasih while his movie (Sembilu) co-star Ziana Zain delivered a catchy modern joget number Kalau Mencari Teman.

The other songs were by Prema Lucas with Alive Again, Ruhil with her new number Bila Mentari Menyinar Kota and Nora with Teristimewa.

Rock king Ramli Sarip took over next with a song from his new album titled Senandung Pengkhayal while Camelia and rocker Ella sang Bersama and Demi respectively.

As a grand finale of sorts, all the singers joined hands to deliver a stirring Setulus Harapan (which sounds like the Bahasa Malaysia version of the hit That's What Friends Are For).

The hosts, the ever-bubbly Seha and Aidiel, did spark off some magic too. Their winning point is their ability to interact well not only with the singers but the audience as well.

The concert, jointly organised by the Malaysia AIDS Foundation, Persatuan Akademi Industri Muzik Malaysia and TV3, began with speeches by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Malaysian AIDS Council president Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng, Agriculture Minister Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Daud and his wife Datin Naemah Hasbi.

The major snag to this otherwise fairly good concert was that only a small number of people took the trouble to attend. The stadium looked deserted. Let us hope that this is no indication of indifference on the part of our people to noble causes.

The night was a culmination of a one-day fiesta called The Red Ribbon Carnival which began with a walkathon titled Walk Of Hope from Dataran Merdeka to Stadium Merdeka.

The carnival itself was held from 10am to 6pm at the stadium with numerous activities including street soccer, martial arts and aerobics demonstrations, go-karting and mountainbike-related sports.

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