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The Iglesias beach party that wasn't

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THE time was 7pm, the venue the Surf Pool at the Sunway Lagoon Theme Park in Petaling Jaya. The occasion was the "live" performance of heart-throb Enrique Iglesias, 21-year-old son of famous Spanish singer Julio Iglesias.

The man-made beach was ready for the showcase-cum-beach party to promote Iglesias' second album, Vivir. Fans were either swimming, surfing or sitting on the benches.

The stage itself looked cool, with the specially-made wooden backdrop costing RM1,700 to complement the bronze-coloured stone stage.

Fans held their breath for THE moment. But, THE moment never came. An hour later, it was announced that Iglesias was down with food poisoning and unable to perform.

Needless to say, the cancellation was a big disappointment to his fans. Some had actually gone straight to the venue from the New Straits Times' YouthQuake Party where Iglesias had made a brief appearance earlier.

The Press statement issued later by Universal Music Ltd Malaysia said that Iglesias didn't have food poisoning as thought but was suffering from exhaustion.

Ahh, such is the life of a star... it's not easy being one. Iglesias, who just broke up with his gal pal, Miss Universe 1996 Alicia Machado (the break-up, reportedly, was due to their hectic work commitment), had been on tour since March to promote Vivir.

Having jet-set across three continents (Europe, South America and then Asia), gone through some drastic climate changes and heavy promotional schedules, the pressure had obviously taken its toll.

Though Iglesias did not perform, he did do radio, television and via-the-phone interviews as well a meet-the-fans session at Sungei Wang Plaza, Kuala Lumpur. He arrived here on Sept 4.

During his Press conference at the Sunway Resort Hotel attended by the President of the Malaysian AIDS Council and chairman of the Malaysian AIDS Foundation, Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir, Iglesias autographed his own blue denim shirt to be auctioned at the Fashion Aid '97 - A Charity Sale For AIDS.

The two-day event begins on Oct 4 and will be held at Lot 10 in Kuala Lumpur.

Iglesias's Vivir (which means "to live" in Spanish) is a 10-track album that combines powerful romantic tracks with rhythmic soppy numbers. Recorded in Madrid, Spain, Fort Lauderdale in Florida and Los Angeles, Vivir is available in both Italian and Portuguese.

Iglesias' self-titled debut album, released last October, sold 12,500 copies in Malaysia while Vivir has sold 6,000 copies since it was out in June.

Worldwide, the debut album sold five million copies while fans snapped up four million units of Vivir on its first day of release. The figure is now approaching six million.

Last year, the singer-cum-lyricist won a Grammy for Best Latin Pop Performance, an Ace Award for Best Singer, plus four Lo Nuestro Awards for Best Singer, Best Pop Artist (Ballad), Best Album and Best Song of the Year (for the track Si Tu Te Vas).

He was also named Best New Male Artist for 1996 by the Association of Entertainment Critics (ACE) in New York. This year, Iglesias won the Billboard Award for Hot Latin Track category and Best New Artist of the

Year in the Pop category.

Iglesias left Malaysia two Sundays ago to return home to Miami before going to Paris for more promo work. He will be holding a concert in South America at the end of this month.

Future plans for the 1.8-metre singer include a Spanish album next year, an English album soon and a duet with local singer Camelia for her upcoming album which will be released by next August.

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