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What a show of stars!

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HUNDREDS of Broadway cast members sing New York, New York for a public service announcement shot on Sept 28 in New York's Times Square.

The commercial is an effort to bring tourism back to New York after the World Trade Center disaster. In the front row (from left) are Bebe Neuwirth, Susan Lucci, Joel Grey, Michele Lee, Valerie Harper, Bernadette Peters, Betty Buckley, Elaine Stritch, Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick.

* POP diva Mariah Carey was checked into a New York hospital's psycho ward on July 25. The 31-year-old singer was rumoured to have attempted suicide when, earlier that day, she was practically carried by two security men from the Tribeca Grand Hotel in Manhattan, where she'd trashed her room and was bleeding badly from her left arm. The emotional collapse was apparently triggered by her being jilted by jealous Latin boyfriend Luis Miguel.

* HOLLYWOOD'S golden couple Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman ended their 10-year marriage in February, when he filed for divorce in Los Angeles, citing irreconcilable differences. In November, Cruise declared he still had feelings for his ex-wife in a candid US television interview. The two eventually settled on a divorce settlement out of court.

* AFTER six years in the recording studio, self-proclaimed King of Pop Michael Jackson returned from his self-imposed exile in October with a new, record-setting US\$30 million (RM114 million) album, Invincible.

Also, in conjunction with his 30th anniversary as a recording artiste and his year 2000 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Sony Music re-released four of his back catalogue albums - Off The Wall, Thriller, Bad and Dangerous.

Meanwhile, more than two decades after a "mysterious illness" started turning Jackson's skin white, people started to wonder if he was turning black again. The American Press reported that Jackson, who is obsessed with his physical appearance, spent over STG500,000 (RM2.75 million) to have his skin "air-brushed" several shades darker in a recent film of him performing with his brothers.

US gossip columnists claim that every frame was adjusted with the aid of a British-made computer known as Henry.

The sell-out show celebrating Jackson's 30 years in show business was filmed in New York in early September.

* NING BAIZURA and Siti Nurhaliza became the "toast" of Malaysian men when they were voted the sexiest and second sexiest female respectively in Malaysia, based on a Global Sex Survey poll conducted by Durex Condom Manufacturer SSL International Plc. While Ning decided to let it be, Siti had to make a statement denying she was sexy!

* FORMER local recording artiste, M. Sani, resurfaced after a long hiatus, making headlines for the wrong reasons! He was brought to court on charges of raping his step-daughters.

* Singer Jamal Abdillah finally gave his first solo concert, after being in the music industry for 22 years, at the Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur.

* Entertainer Anita Sarawak, 49, got married (for the fourth time!) to British businessman, Martin Cox @ Mohamed Mahathir Abdullah, this year. Her previous husbands were Singaporean Mohamed Abdul Samad, the late Indonesian singer Broery Marantika and American J.D.Nicholas of The Commodores.

* AFTER 20 years, Malaysia's longest-surviving rock band Search was officially disbanded on Jan 16. The announcement was made by the group's recording company of 12 years, BMG Music (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd. During its glory years, Search which comprised frontman Amy, Yazit, Nasir, Kid and Din, churned out a string of infectious tunes including Isabella, Rozana, Meniti Titian Usang, Bulan Madu Di Awan Biru.

* IN July, the black metal issue "clouded" the local entertainment scene. This resulted in rock bands being banned from performing "live". What made it worse was that the negative reports (that followers of this genre of music indulged in anti-establishment/anti-religion activities) had been blown out of proportion!

* HIP hop gigs and immorality? This issue came about after a Malay tabloid ran a frontpage story which stated that hip hop gigs induced immoral behaviour among youth.

The report, headlined Seks Bebas Hip Hop, was reported after the anniversary concert celebration of a local entertainment magazine at a club in Kuala Lumpur. The allegations caused uproar among several local hip hop groups in the country.

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