

Big B's Unforgettable Tour attracts Indians across Caribbean

Ethnic Indians from all over the Caribbean flocked to the Queen's Park Oval here to watch Amitabh Bachchan, son Abhishek and daughter-in-law Aishwarya dance to the tunes of their hit songs as part of their Unforgettable Tour.

Trinidad was the second leg of the tour which kicked off in Toronto, Canada, July 18. Since Trinidad was the only Caribbean stop, Indians flew in here for Sunday's show by chartered planes from Suriname, Guyana and Jamaica.

After a short delay caused by an electrical outage, the show was put on the road by the Caribbean's noted master of ceremonies Shamoon Mohammed. Seventeen-year-old Shivanna Ragoonanan held the audience's attention with her renditions of both Trinidad and Indian's national anthems on the steel pan.

After that there was no looking back as Preity Zinta and Akshay Kumar prepared the crowd for an enthusiastic song and dance extravaganza with their brilliant performances. Preity set the tone with a couple of scintillating renditions, including 'Pretty Woman' from her film 'Kal Ho Na Ho'. Large screens had been put up at the Oval to ensure everyone was able to see their favourite stars perform.

Riteish Deshmukh and Vishal Shekhar took over from Preity and Akshay. Then Abhishek was on the frontline, interacting with the crowd, which included former prime minister Basdeo Panday, MP Kamla Persad Bissessar, cultural activist Ajeet Prainsingh and acting director of the Gandhi Cultural Centre Shantosh Misra.

Abhishek recalled that he had come to Trinidad 25 years ago with his father and had a very memorable stay. He thrilled the audience with his electrifying performance of songs from 'Dus' and 'Bunty Aur Babli'.

Aishwarya Rai got a standing ovation as she took to the stage. She came. She saw. She conquered. She sang and danced, ably supported by her cast on stage and from the audience. The former Miss World was dynamic, thrilling and decisive. She knew what the audience wanted and came prepared to deliver it.

The audience jumped to their feet when the Big B took control of the show. Some danced while others sang along as he performed several hits, including 'Rang Barse' and 'Pichkaree'.

It was truly Amitabh's show. His mesmerizing presence on the stage would continue to linger in the hearts and minds of all those who came to see him perform.

Indian entertainers are very popular among the more than 500,000 people of Indian origin in Trinidad and Tobago. As soon as the dates of shows by Indian performers are announced, the tickets get sold out.

For the Unforgettable Tour, VVIP tickets were sold at \$400, VIP ones for \$250, special reserve tickets at \$160, reserved area tickets at \$90 and general admission for \$50.

Since 1964, Indian musicians, dancers and singers have been performing here and this is viewed by cultural thinkers and sociologists as an in-depth initiative to fully re-link with the Indian diaspora who came here mainly from two Indian states - Uttar Pradesh and Bihar - between 1845 to 1917 to work on agricultural farms.

Some of the film artistes who have performed here over the years include Hemant Kumar, Manna Dey, Mohammed Rafi, Mukesh, Asha Bhosle, Kishore Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar, Abhijeet and Shah Rukh Khan.

Paras Ramoutar (© IANS / India eNews)