

Indian Idol Is Back - Alisha Chinoy, Anu malik and Udit Narayan to host Indian Idol - 3

The new series will witness two new judges; Alisha Chinai better known as the 'Kajra Re' girl, who made the nation dance to her tune with this chartbuster. Our second judge, is an extremely talented male playback singer who is known for his silken voice. Udit Narayan not only sings in thirty languages but also has been acclaimed for every kind of melody - be it soulful, romantic, fast-paced and recently, even pop.

New Delhi, Delhi, February 15, 2007 /[India PRwire](#)/ -- Indian Idol, the hugely popular adaptation of the blockbuster 'Pop Idol' format took the nation by storm in its very first season and followed that with an equally popular season 2. While **Indian Idol** served as the ultimate platform for budding singers from across the nation, to realize their dreams the show went on to become the most entertaining and involving show to hit Indian television. In keeping with its philosophy of offering innovative and distinct content, Sony Entertainment Television, now announces the launch of the **third series** of this groundbreaking phenomenon, with an even bigger bang!

Indian Idol is a 'made-for-television phenomenon' that combines drama and reality with music, humour, thrill and glamour. The last two seasons of the show experienced a collage of emotions, raising levels of viewer frenzy and excitement coupled with the contestants' tears and joys, heartbreak and jubilation, learnings and achievements. With its immense popularity, **Indian Idol** will continue to showcase exceptional talent on the nation's biggest platform. The Indian Idol journey in search of - '**Ek Awaaz Jispar Ho Desh Ko Naaz**' promises to become an integral part of the viewers' lives drawing ardent support and a voting frenzy.

This year too, **Indian Idol** will give the people of this nation the opportunity to chase their dreams and the power to make one talented aspirant '**Bharat Ki Shaan**'. In addition to a **recording contract with Sony BMG**, the '**Indian Idol**' will be awarded a **contract with Sony Entertainment Television worth Rupees One Crore**, thus catapulting him/her to unparalleled stardom, fame and fortune.

Highlighting the essence of this worldwide phenomenon, geared to hit India once more, **Albert Almeida, Executive Vice President & Business Head, Sony Entertainment Television**, said, "As

witnessed in the last two seasons of Indian Idol the third season too promises to take viewer engagement and interactivity to even greater heights while catapulting the Indian Idol into ultimate stardom. This year too, the channel will give talented singers from across the nation the platform to realize their dreams and put fame and fortune within their reach while offering distinctive and breakthrough entertainment."

The new series will witness two new judges; **Alisha Chinai** better known as the 'Kajra Re' girl, who made the nation dance to her tune with this chartbuster. She is one of the pioneers of pop music in India. Her album 'Made in India' created history and ushered new trends in pop music thereafter.

Our second judge, is an extremely talented male playback singer who is known for his silken voice. **Udit Narayan** not only sings in thirty languages but also has been acclaimed for every kind of melody – be it soulful, romantic, fast-paced and recently, even pop. He is known for his versatile tone, which appears to flawlessly suit every Indian hero on screen today. With 3 National awards and scores of other awards to his credit, **Udit Narayan** possesses one of the largest arrays of hit songs in the industry.

Last but not the least our third judge, **Anu Maliik** is one of the most successful and multi-talented music directors of today. His straight talking coupled with his 'singing shayari comments' has always managed to keep the contestants at ease, making him one of the most talked about judges of Indian Idol. Together they are all set on a journey to ultimately find that '**Woh Ek Awaaz Jispar Ho Desh Ko Naaz**' .

Commenting on the new judges, **Sandiip Sikcand, Chief Creative Director, Sony Entertainment Television**, said, "Indian Idol aims to showcase the biggest singing talent from across the nation in the most entertaining and involving manner. This season, the focus of the judges would be to help us find that "One Voice" that will be the pride of the nation. Indian Idol third season will offer a combination of great singing talent and entertainment for our viewers."

Talking of the anchors, the third season of Indian Idol presents a new face – the dashing actor **Hussain Khuwajirwala**. Young and talented with a huge fan following, also known for his dancing skills and histrionics, he will be able to connect with the 16–30 year old contestants and at the same engage the viewers.

On the other hand **Mini Mathur** is the continuing factor on the show. She has earned viewers' trust by being a close confidante of the contestants over the last two seasons. Her bubbly and vivacious nature not only helps her build a strong bond with the contestants, but with the viewers too.

Hunt for 'Bharat Ki Shaan' across the nation

To bring to the viewers the best singing talent from across the country, auditions are held in 12 cities— Jodhpur – Bhubaneswar (Feb 15th), Hyderabad- Amritsar (Feb 18th), Srinagar- Nagpur (Feb 21st), Baroda (Feb 27th & 28th), Bhopal (March 7th & 8th), Kanpur (March 12th & 13th), Delhi (March 17th, 18th & 19th), Kolkata (March 24th, 25th & 26th), Mumbai (March 31st, 1st & 2nd April)

To make participation universal and allow easy registration the channel has set up multiple gateways. Budding aspirants between the ages of 16-30 can realize their dreams by calling to register for a place in any of the above audition centers. The following are the numbers for registration:

--SMS Idol to 2525

--call 5052525 and say Idol (available only on select networks)

--Dial 1255525 (BSNL landline & mobile users which is applicable to all cities)

A production of such magnitude warrants only the best in the industry to make it happen. Sony Entertainment Television is once again partnering with one of the country's leading production houses – **Miditech Pvt Ltd**, the international company – **FreMantle Media** who are the license holders to the format **Indian Idol**. Their expertise in producing successful, top quality format shows along with the unparalleled success of **Indian Idol 1 & 2** in the past two years will ensure that this year too **Indian Idol** is the slickest and most magnificent production on Indian television.

Commenting on the new season of Indian Idol, **Patrick Schult, Managing Director, FreMantle Media Asia** said, "Idol has been produced in almost 40 countries worldwide. It is the most recognizable TV brand in the world and is considered a worldwide cultural phenomenon. We are very excited with the return of Indian Idol this year. We share a solid partnership with **Sony Entertainment Television** and **Miditech**. Together we hope to produce a blockbuster that is bigger and better than anything the Indian viewers have seen before. We will cover the length and breadth of India, be it the mountainous regions, the desert, the deep interiors of India or the urban hubs - all to find that one pride of India ... our Indian Idol."

Join us as Indian Idol sets out on its journey in search of the 'one voice'

'Chahiye Woh Ek Awaaz Jispar Ho Desh Ko Naaz!'

Notes to Editor

About 'Idols'

The international '*Idols*' format was conceived in the United Kingdom by Simon Fuller's company 19TV and leading global Production Company, FreMantle Media. Produced by Thames and 19TV, the format premiered on UK's ITV in 2001 as 'Pop Idol' and has been rolled out across 28 countries to date with an overwhelming response leading to national frenzy and a massive ratings success. In the USA alone, *American Idol 4* regularly gained audiences of over 30 million viewers and an incredible 65 million phone votes were recorded for the final episode. The winner of the 4th series of American Idol - Carrie Underwood stood head and shoulders above more than 100,000 contestants as the best undiscovered voice in America and with a new single rocketing up the charts

and a debut album on the way, Carrie joins Kelly, Ruben and Fantasia as American Idol-made chart toppers. In the UK, 'Pop Idol 2' outperformed the award-winning premiere series with the final episode, breaking voting records with in excess of 10 million votes recorded.

About FreMantle Media

FreMantle Media is one of the largest international creators and producers of programme brands in the world, with leading prime time drama, serial drama, entertainment and factual entertainment programming in over 40 territories. International drama programmes include Germany's top rated serial drama, Gute Zeiten, Schlechte Zeiten (Good Times Bad Times), UK's most successful police drama - The Bill and Australia's top soap - Neighbours. Entertainment and factual entertainment successes range from the award winning international format - Idols, broadcast as prime time show, American Idol, on FOX in the US, to the grime busting format - How Clean is Your House? and factual entertainment series starring celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver, Jamie's Kitchen. FreMantle Media has production offices in over 20 countries worldwide, providing local sales and production support for its international TV brands such as Idols and the world's longest running game show, The Price is Right. The company's licensing operation, FreMantle Media Licensing Worldwide, exploits FreMantle Media many strong brands across multiple off-screen platforms including merchandising campaigns, interactive and wireless support, home entertainment and music publishing. FreMantle International Distribution, the company's international distribution division licenses over 19,000 hours of programming to 150 countries worldwide including the outrageous antics of Mr Bean: The Animated Series, moving drama - The Return, starring Julie Walters, landmark documentary - The World at War and the hugely popular special, Britney Spears: In the Zone. FreMantle Media is the content arm of the RTL Group, Europe's largest television and radio broadcast company.

About Miditech Pvt. Ltd

Miditech is one of Asia's leading independent production companies that create a wide range of programming. From award winning documentaries to international format game shows, Miditech has earned a reputation for producing programs to meet the exacting standards of international broadcasters with over 400 hours of programming in 2005-2006.

Till about 3 years ago, Miditech focused almost entirely on documentaries and factual programming. It built a formidable reputation in these genres with hit shows like 'Living on the Edge', India's first environment series in 1996. 'Wheels' - a weekly auto show, 'The Great Escape', 'Off the Beaten Path' and 'The Real India Travel Show' helped make Miditech the largest producer of travel content in India. Then 'Hospital', 'Commando' and 'R.A.A.A.H.' established it firmly as a market leader in the fledgling 'reality' space on Indian television.

In 2003 Miditech made an aggressive foray into the entertainment and fiction space with hit shows like 'Saara Aakash', 'Roadies', and 'India Ka Sabse Favourite', an interactive show where the nation voted each week for its favorite Bollywood stars. And there were many more.

When it comes to adapting and localizing International formats for the Indian market, Miditech is clearly the leader. Miditech first produced 'Khelo Number Khelo' and 'Kaarvaan Kismat Ka' two game show formats developed by Zeal Television in the United Kingdom, followed that up with 'Indian Idol' the local version of the international hit show 'Pop Idol'; 'Dance Dance', the local version of the Australian show 'Strictly Dancing'; 'Fame Gurukul', based on 'Fame Academy'; the telenovella 'Complices Al Rescate', which became a daily kids soap called 'Hum 2 Hain Na'; 'Play House Disney' more recently the long running hit pre-school show 'Sesame Street' as 'Galli Galli Sim Sim' for telecast on the Turner Network and Doordarshan.

Miditech is promoted by the Alva Brothers Niret and Nikhil, who own 75% of the company with the other 25% held by ICICI Venture the largest private equity and venture capital Management Company in India with aggregate funds under management in excess of USD 650 mn. Over the years Miditech has won many national and international awards. Amongst them are the 'Green Oscar' or the 'Panda', Asian Television Awards, Indian Telly Awards, Indian Academy Awards, The Silver Tree, The Pinnacle, etc.

About Sony Entertainment Television:

Sony Entertainment Television (SET) India, India's No. 2 general entertainment television channel, is backed by Sony Pictures Television International (SPTI). Its channels include Sony Entertainment Television, MAX, SAB, AXN, PIX and ANIMAX.

Launched in October 1995, Sony Entertainment Television is a Hindi General Entertainment Channel, focused at providing quality and innovative entertainment to viewers across India. Over the years, the channel has created significant marquee properties through an impressive line up of programs ranging from the light hearted to the supernatural, exploring various genres complimented by an explosive mix of glamorous events and Bollywood blockbusters. Known for its innovative concepts and exciting formats, Sony Entertainment Television has been providing strong platforms for over 700 brands to reach over 38 million households in India. In addition, Sony Entertainment Television is also available in US, UK, Africa, Middle East, Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Maldives, Malaysia, Indonesia, Fiji Islands and Seychelles.

Sony Entertainment Television is a part the network of channels distributed by The *One* Alliance - a joint venture between SET India Pvt. Ltd. and Discovery Communications India. Other channels in The *One* Alliance network include MAX, Discovery, Discovery Travel & Living, Pix, MTV, Animal Planet, AXN, ANIMAX, NDTV 24X7, NDTV India, NDTV Profit, NICK and Ten Sports.

For further information on Sony Entertainment Television, please log onto <http://www.setindia.com>

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