

# Munni rocks Melbourne!

Indian Film Festival guest and Bollywood dance specialist Malaika Arora Khan leads 1235 Melbournians into the Guinness Book of World Records



BY  
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Munni's notoriety has led to more fame and name. The super-hit song *Munni Badnaam Hui* this month entered the Guinness Book of World Records for being part of the World's Largest Bollywood Dance Class.

The glamorous 'Munni' Malaika Arora Khan led 1235 Melbourne dancers to record breaking fame with this chart buster song from her home production *Dabangg*. Her son Arhaan and husband Arbaaz Khan also joined the crowd of hundreds that sang, swayed and danced in Melbourne Park on the banks of the Yarra River. The event was organised by Indian Film Festival 2011- Bollywood and Beyond, supported by Moomba and Shiamak Davar International.

It was an afternoon bathed in glorious sunshine over a long weekend and Melbournians were in the right mood to revel in the March madness and get a taste of Bollywood music. Many in the crowd

had probably never heard *Munni* before but no one could go past its infectious beats or not be tempted with the free Bollywood lesson. The Bollywood dance competition that was held prior to this event had already generated enormous interest amongst participants of Moomba festival. They were game to be included in the headcount and dance for 3 continuous minutes to the peppy Bollywood number.

Malaika looked seductive in an ivory dress and her killer heels did not deter her from performing to the racy number that revived her 'item girl' career again. Many fans in the crowd would have followed Malaika to the moon and back if required, so their enthusiastic participation was expected. But even more remarkable was the participation of the local visitors to Melbourne Park who hitherto had no exposure to Bollywood. They were people from all walks of life, of all ages and vocations. Their common goal was to be part of record making history.

Prior to the formal attempt the Shiamak Indo Jazz Dance Movement (SIJDM) instructors sorted the crowd into smaller groups and taught them the basic steps

of the song. While some struggled with the unfamiliar moves, others took to it like duck to water. A few practice sessions later the crowd was ready. The adjudicators from the Guinness Book of World Records were also present. The goal was to beat a similar attempt made in Singapore which had 1080 participants. SIJDM instructors then took to the stage and were joined by Malaika and son Arhaan while Arbaaz chose to dance with the crowd instead.

The excitement was palpable as the *Munni* song boomed over the audience and everyone attempted to imitate the instructors on stage. It was heartening to see the rows and rows of people joining in to get Australia into the record books. Three minutes of non-stop dancing was a mandatory requirement to be counted and people did not disappoint. The sizzle quotient rose as *Munni* Malaika Arora fell in step with the instructors. Cheery was an understatement as the crowd positively reveled in the rock concert like atmosphere. As the official from Guinness Book of world records declared later to thunderous applause, "I have seen many

records being broken in the last few years but this is the most sensational record I've ever seen".

Festival director Mitu Bhowmick Lange wept with joy and emotion as she thanked the film stars, public, volunteers and festival staff. The celebration continued till later that evening when the film stars attended a gala awards night at BMW Edge in Federation Square. It was an invitation only event where the Shiamak dance group performed again, this time to fully choreographed segments. Dressed in a dazzling cream designer outfit Malaika briefly joined them recreating some of the magic of the afternoon.

Addressing the audience that evening Malaika shared how this whole thing came about. According to her Mitu and she have been friends for many years and when Mitu invited her to Melbourne for the festival together they decided that *Munni* should Rock Melbourne. And true to her words the combination of Mitu, *Munni*, Mind- Blowing films, Moomba and Moves from SIJDM, not only created a new record, they generated a whole new crop of Bollywood aficionados in Melbourne.

