

## **Indian Film Festival of Melbourne 2013 to pay tribute to Bollywood Legend Yash Chopra**

One of India's leading film actors, Vidya Balan, will return to Melbourne as the ambassador for the 2013 Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, the Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business and Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Louise Asher announced yesterday.

Speaking at an Indian Film Festival of Melbourne Industry event in Mumbai, Ms Asher said Vidya is one of Indian cinema's most respected actors and a genuine box-office drawcard.

"Securing such a high profile actor as our brand ambassador adds to the prestige of the festival and Vidya's attendance at next year's festival will be sure to delight our local Indian film fans," Ms Asher said.

To be held in April 2013, the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne showcases the diversity and breadth of Indian film culture to Victorian audiences and will once again be delivered by Mind Blowing Films.

The industry event also paid tribute to legendary film maker Mr Yash Chopra, with the Minister announcing that the Festival will pay a rich tribute to the veteran film maker next year.

"Mr Chopra had a deep relationship with Victoria given he was a Patron of the Festival and that he shot two major blockbusters in Victoria, Salaam Namaste and Chak De India. The Festival is honoured to be showcasing Mr Chopra's masterpieces as part of the Festival," Ms Asher said.

"Delivering an Indian film festival in Melbourne is a key part of the Victorian Coalition Government's commitment to closer engagement between India and Victoria," Ms Asher said.

"The inaugural Indian Film Festival of Melbourne was held in 2012, delivering on the Government's election pledge to develop an Indian film festival and bring the best of Indian cinema to Victorian audiences and screen practitioners."

Ms Asher said the festival will also play a significant role in promoting Victoria as a cosmopolitan multicultural centre for screen excellence – strong in skills, infrastructure, locations, languages and cultural understanding.

"Mind Blowing Films is thrilled to deliver another Indian Film Festival of Melbourne and engage Victorian audiences with the best that Indian cinema has to offer," Ms Lange said.

Speaking at the event, Ms Balan said she was delighted to be the ambassador for such a vibrant and exciting festival showcasing the best of Indian cinema. "Melbourne is like a second home to me and I look forward to being back," Ms Balan said.

Minister Asher is in Mumbai as part of Victoria Week, a program of activities to showcase Victoria's cultural, creative and business strengths in India.