PUBLICATION : HINDUSTAN TIMES; EDITION : MUMBAI; DATE : OCTOBER 13, 2006

ON THE JAAN-E-MANN JAUNT: Two jovial leading men, a more-late-than-ever leading lady, an upbeat producer, a pensive director and the entire Khan clan

Careless whispers over a piece of cake

What's funny? Shirish Kunder (centre) watches as Salman Khan (left) and Akshay Kumar joked and whispered to each other

The Khan clan: The close ties between producer Sajid Nadiadwala and Salman Khan were evident from the presence of almost the entire Khan khandaan. Brothers Sohail (above left) and Arbaaz and sister Arpita (centre) trooped in late, as did Malaika Arora Khan (left), but lingered on till the end

From left: BR Patil, Chunky Pandey, Govinda, Sajid Nadiadwala

The other Khans: Feroze and Sanjay were missing, but the rest were there. Fardeen with wife Natasha (below), Malaika (right) minus Zayed, and Zarine Khan, Farah Khan and husband Dil Aayeil (above) made up the other Khan-clan

Me, late? Preity Zinta

Vajir Singh

Monday night saw who's who of the film industry descend on JW Marriott. The reason: United Film Organisers (UFO Moviez), a digital cinema network, was celebrating the installation of 300 digital screens across the country and the release of Shirish Kunder's directorial debut *Jaan-e-mann*. State home minister RR Patil, who landed too early for the stars, left before they dropped in. The star of the show for the initial hour or so was Chunkey Pandey, who kept mediapersons busy.

It was only after 12pm that producer Sajid Nadiadwala and Kunder arrived with the film's leading men, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar. But Preity Zinta was one of the last to arrive. After cutting the cake, Salman joked: "Sajid please wipe the cake from your face." The actor, who was in a good mood, added: "I can see a huge crowd gathered here and hope there will be also be a crowd to watch the film." And that was not all. He spent most of the evening chatting with Akshay. The duo was mostly whispering to each other and laughing. Recollecting sweet memories of the shoot perhaps? Kunder maintained the same expression throughout, except for a faint smile when the cake was being cut.

Farah Khan, who earlier in the evening attended Shah Rukh Khan's book launch with buddy Karan Johar and Deepika Padukone, came with brother Sajid. The other celebs who graced the occasion were Boney Kapoor, Shreeram Kumar with wife Divya, Kishen Kumar with wife Tanya, Gulshan Grover and Rami Jaffrey