

## **Tanda Putera bombs at box office in 2nd week**

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Without a doubt, 'Tanda Putera' can be conferred the title of being the most controversial movie in Malaysia's recent cinematic history.

Directed by Shuhaimi Baba, the film that touches on the bloody racial clashes of May 13, 1969, was delayed for more than a year before it finally hit cinemas on Aug 29 - the Merdeka weekend.

But despite the widespread publicity, the movie, which initially clinched the sixth spot in the top 10 box office slot, has since failed to sustain the interest of moviegoers.

NONEAccording to the latest list (for Sept 5 to Sept 8) published on cinemaonline yesterday, the movie has slipped out of the race in its second week.

On the other hand, another local movie - the flesh-eating tale 'KL Zombi' - has continued to enthral Malaysians, with the movie taking the second spot in the latest top 10 list.

Moviegoers also seemed to prefer Hollywood summer blockbuster 'Riddick', which clinches the No 1 spot, and even action-comedy 'Kick-Ass', which is in seventh spot.

Previously, even Shuhaimi had said that she expects 'Tanda Putera' to bomb at the box office, and that she is not surprised that Malaysians prefer zombies.

Huge losses expected

According to the National Film Development Corporation (Finas), 'Tanda Putera' - produced with a RM4.2 million grant by Finas and the Multimedia Development Corporation - had collected RM410,000 in ticket sales in its first four days.

Meanwhile, 'KL Zombi', made at a cost of RM1.8 million, bagged RM2.15 million over the same period. Both movies were released the same week.

Critics have denounced 'Tanda Putera' as celluloid propaganda, with the sole aim of vilifying the DAP - portraying its members as the catalyst behind the May 13 riots - while the Chinese Malaysian community is branded as communists.

Many took offence with the scene of a group of Chinese youths urinating on a flagpole outside then Selangor menteri besar Harun Idris's house.

The director has since defended herself, saying she had used "creative licence" to stitch the film together as a whole.

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