

DAP wants Tanda Putra producer to acknowledge it is a work of fiction
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"Go ahead and screen the movie, but first acknowledge that it is a work of fiction."

This was the reaction from DAP National Organising chief Tony Pua (pic) on the announcement that the controversial movie, Tanda Putera, will hit cinemas nationwide on August 29.

Pua said that although a scene, which shows a man urinating at the base of a flag pole at the residence of the Selangor Menteri Besar, has been denied by its director as depicting DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang, the film is still "very much inflammatory in nature".

Datin Paduka Shuhaimi Baba, the movie's director had last year, denied reports that the re-telling of the May 13, 1969, riots had depicted DAP's then secretary-general Lim Kit Siang.

Lim, however, refuted Shuhaimi by claiming that a photo of him being "manhandled" with a caption saying he had urinated at said flagpole "was posted in the album in the 'Tanda Putera' Facebook page entitled 'Peristiwa-peristiwa yang dimuatkan di dalam filem ini' (events depicted in this movie)".

Lim also lashed out at Shuhaimi, over her explanation that the creators of the film had received many photographs from netizens which were shared over the Facebook page, including the offending picture, criticising Shuhaimi's take as "neither credible nor acceptable".

The director said that the photos were removed after complaints were received about it.

Lim claimed that the "defamatory and baseless allegation was made by Tanda Putera's official Facebook page itself, and not a 'shared information' from netizens", also adding that this gave a "clear impression" that the photo was taken from the movie.

Shuhaimi yesterday told The Malaysian Insider to give the movie "a chance as it is a portrayal of the country's history based on true facts".

She expressed her disappointment at the Film Censorship Board for the way the movie was edited.

Pua, however, said that the movie would still arouse anger among the public as Tanda Putera is supposedly based on history.

"Now that is the problem here, obviously, viewers will watch it thinking that the events shown in the movie are entirely true. And this is wrong," Pua told The Malaysian Insider today.

"It is alright if it is a work of fiction but when it is said to be made based on true events, we are faced with a bigger issue," he said.

He said The New Village, another controversial movie which is a love story, had triggered so

much uneasiness prompting the Home Ministry to suspend its premiere, which was originally slated for today.

The locally produced Chinese movie was said to glorify communism.

Home Minister Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the decision was made following a furore created by social media bloggers and non-governmental organisations over the movie's content.

He said that the ministry had to call for the suspension of the movie's premiere date pending "another thorough look into the movie's plot".

"The issue concerned is the same here...one which revolves around community sensitivities but there seems to be a void of good sense in the government to view this fairly," Pua said.
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