

Anwar disagrees with Penang's stand on Tanda Putera, says decision is flawed
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Opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (pic) disagrees with the Penang government's advisory to cinema operators in the state not to screen the controversial film, Tanda Putera.

"The Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng is only advising, not banning the screening of Tanda Putera. I personally do not agree with the Penang government's move," he said today after giving his Merdeka Day address at the PKR headquarters in Petaling Jaya.

He said the Penang government's decision is flawed as "Malaysia is an independent country and everyone was entitled to their views."

The state government requested cinema operators in Penang not to screen the film because, it said, it was full of lies and demonised minority groups.

Lim, however, has made clear that no action will be taken against cinemas that decide to screen it. This, he said today, was in line with upholding freedom of expression.

Anwar agreed with Lim's contention that the film was made to help Barisan Nasional.

"What is regretful is that the film promotes Barisan Nasional propaganda and even the director herself, Datin Paduka Shuhaimi Baba, admitted that the film is a work of fiction.

"It is overly done, the film is promoted in Felda schemes, schools, universities and probably in every lesson in the National Civics Bureau (BTN).

"We are a free country, but you don't promote it like it is a communist-style propaganda," the Permatang Pauh MP said.

Lim explained in a statement that the reason his state government had issued an advisory against the screening of the movie in Penang was because the film has crossed a red line when it used public funds to propagate lies that promote hatred instead of harmony between the various races in Malaysia.

Lim said those aligned with the Barisan Nasional government had taken the opposite approach, by threatening to close down cinemas and taking legal action if the movie is not screened.

However, the film had a dismal opening day at the box office in Kuala Lumpur with most cinemas reporting near empty halls.

The Malaysian Insider visited the Mid Valley Megamall where all five screenings at the GSC cineplex had an average turnout of some 20 patrons while at the TGV cineplex in KLCC, ticket sales for the movie were just as poor. There were 23 patrons for the 6.50pm show and 21 for the 9.30pm show. - August 30, 2013.

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-on-tanda-putera-decision-is-flawed