



ENTERTAINMENT

Best of times for Malaysian films

By MUMTAJ BEGUM, KENNETH CHAW and SETO KIT YAN

THE cumulative earnings of this year's Top 3 films surpassed RM100mil, a figure that the local film industry has never seen before ... ever. At the top of this list was horror film *Munafik 2* with a box-office earning of RM43mil. The 10th film from director-actor Syamsul Yusof, broke all kinds of records too. It was the highest earning on its sneak preview (RM2.05mil) and highest opening weekend (RM5.2mil). In just four days, it earned RM21.6mil, thanks to screenings in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

Mamat Khalid's *Hantu Kak Limah* took second spot with RM36mil, and the horror-comedy was momentari-

ly the highest-grossing film Malaysian film of all time, having earned RM20.5mil in just 11 days. At No. 3 was *Paskal The Movie* which earned RM30.5mil and featured impressive action sequences on par with Hollywood productions.

Another big moment this year for the local film industry after a 12-year long wait was the release of *Dukun* in April, the horror thriller flick filmed in 2006 by director Dain Said starring Umie Aida. Meanwhile, Vimala Perumal's *Vedigundu Pasangge* became the first local Tamil and most successful movie to pass the RM1mil with its final number of RM1.3mil.

Asian success in Hollywood



CRAZY Rich Asians was a commercial success, raking in US\$173mil (RM720.5mil) in the United States and US\$237mil (RM987mil) worldwide, making it the sixth highest-grossing romantic comedy in the United States ever. It also scooped up two Golden Globe nominations – best motion picture, musical or comedy, and best actress in a motion picture, musical or comedy, for Constance Wu. Her nomination is a historic one as she is the first actress of Asian descent in over 40 years to be nominated in the category. What all this means is Asian actors, Asian characters and Asian-centric stories have a place in Hollywood.

Local TV shows get gritty



KL Gangster Underworld pushed the envelope this year when it let quite a few expletives fly – a rare sighting in local TV landscape. The creators of the six-episode gangster-set series on iFlix, say the coarse language was used to give a more accurate and realistic depiction of the life of a gangster.

Online platforms aren't the only ones breaking new ground. Traditional platforms like TV3 took a risk with the highly controversial and successful drama *Nur*, in May, about the relationship between a pious man and a prostitute, played by Syafiq Kyle and Amyra Rosli respectively.