

25 make it through semi-finals

Now, they hold their breath over whether they'll be in the finals

GEORGE TOWN: Twelve confident and outspoken young adults spoke their minds to impress the judges in the Penang semi-finals of The Star-ESU (English Speaking Union) Malaysia Public Speaking Competition. Whether or not they will be in the finals will be known later.

T. Thevesh, 17, is no stranger to public speaking, having won the national-level public speaking competition by the Ministry of Education last year. He was among those competing in the semi-finals here.

At the semi-finals in Kuala Lumpur, 13 made the grade.

With his speech titled 'To Play Or Not To Play' on integrating ideas in real life, Thevesh said although his previous win provided him an advantage in terms of experience, it did not make him over-confident.

"That was a competition between secondary schools, whereas now I am competing against college-level students," said the SMK Bukit Jambul student.

College student Nursyazana Syifaa Kahary, 20, who delivered a speech on fandom and fantasy titled 'It Comes To Life', said it was her first time participating in a public speaking competition.

Her collegemate Venetia Chan, 20, delivered a speech titled 'The Fun Theory' about how to make boring activities fun.

Although it was her first experience in public speaking, Venetia said



Good job: Venetia, Thevesh and Nursyazana, three of the 12 who made it through the semi-finals held in Penang, posing for a photo. At the semi-finals in Kuala Lumpur, 13 made the mark.

she felt good about her performance.

The semi-finalists will be short-listed for the finals based on their performance at the semi-finals, which assessed the substance of their speech, style and technique, general effectiveness and the ability to answer questions from a panel of judges.

The finalists will be announced next week and the national finals will be held on April 27 in Kuala Lumpur.

The winner will represent the nation at the international competition in London next month.

The Malaysian segment is jointly organised by *The Star* and ESU Malaysia, with PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd as the co-organiser.



Rosmah did not buy ring, says jeweller

PETALING JAYA: US-based fine jeweller Jacob & Co has issued a statement on a ring worth RM24.5mil that Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor denied purchasing.

In a 3.5 minute video posted by blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin on his *Malaysia-Today.net* site, Jacob & Co director Philip Nassimi said the 30.11-carat natural fancy blue grade cushion diamond ring valued at US\$8mil (RM24mil) was for viewing purposes by Maira Nazarbayev.

Nazarbayev is the mother of Daniyar Nazarbayev, who is the fiance of Rosmah's daughter Nooryana Najwa.

"The ring was not purchased by Madam Rosmah nor Maira Nazarbayev," he said in the video.

In showing a slew of documents, including the House Airway Bill and US Customs and Border Protection papers, Nassimi said the ring was shipped into Malaysia on April 15, 2011 and returned to the jeweller on May 13, 2011.

"It was shipped for exhibition and inspection purposes only, not for sale, to the attention of Maira Nazarbayev in care of Madam Rosmah Mansor," he said.

He said Rosmah's name was stated in the House Airway Bill because the rules stated that valuables have to be shipped in the care of a Malaysian and not a foreigner.

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