

# Speak up!

Here's a chance for young people to voice their views and show off their speaking skills.

**W**ITH the prevalence of Facebook and Twitter, youngsters are becoming braver every day in voicing their views.

To the young people out there: instead of just ranting away on social networking sites, why not bring that voice to the stage?

For the 11th consecutive year, *The Star*-ESU (English Speaking Union) Malaysia Public Speaking Competition is serving as a platform for you to be heard.

This year's competition is organised in partnership with PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd.

It tests the verbal prowess of students and aims to promote the use of English among secondary and tertiary level students aged 16 to 20. It also nurtures their confidence in public speaking.

Through the years, the competition has complemented the government's efforts in increasing English language proficiency among the youth; it has also helped cultivate an interest in public speaking and made Malaysian students internationally competitive.

Last year, Malaysia was represented by Marina Tan Hsien Wei, 18, who made history by becoming the first Malaysian champion of the



ESU International Public Speaking Competition in London, bringing home one of the most coveted titles in the global English public speaking circuit.

This year, the national finals will be held in April in Petaling Jaya. Before that, training workshops will be held simultaneously in Menara Star, Petaling Jaya, and Star Northern Hub, Penang, on March 23 followed by the preliminary/semifinal rounds on April 6 at those venues.

In the preliminary round, participants will start with a three-minute impromptu speech on topics provided 15 minutes in advance. They will then have to deliver a five-minute prepared speech on the theme "A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand".

Those who qualify for the semifinals and finals will be required to speak for five min-



**Promoting the use of English:** (From left) SEGi Education Group group development senior vice-president Kang Ching Hong, Star Publications (M) Bhd chief events officer Iris Tan, English Speaking Union of Malaysia chairman Tunku Dara Tunku Tan Sri Naquiah Tuanku Ja'afar and 2012 national competition champion Marina Tan Hsien Wei posing for a group photo after Marina won the spot to represent Malaysia at last year's International Public Speaking Competition in London.

utes on the theme "Ideas Are Our Greatest Weapons".

Contestants will be judged on the substance of their speech, style and technique, general effectiveness and the ability to answer questions from the panel of judges. Other essential elements of a good public speaker such as body language, facial expressions and self-confidence will also be taken into consideration.

The winner will go through a champions training camp before proceeding to represent the nation in the international competition in London in May.

So what are you waiting for? It's time to speak up! - **Amanda Soo**

■ Learn the finer art of public speaking from experienced trainers at *The Star*-ESUM-PKT Logistics Group

*Public Speaking Workshop. Open to students aged 16 to 20 and all who are keen to pick up tips on public speaking, it will be held on March 23, from 9am to 5pm at Menara Star, Petaling Jaya, and also at Star Northern Hub, Bayan Lepas, Penang. Places are limited, so register by Wednesday (March 20) to secure your seat. Call 03-7967 1388 ext 1237/1240.*



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