

spotlight **GROOVE**

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DA'I has been airing on TV3 since August and there is stiff competition among its three finalists — Ahmad Fuad Mohamad Mokhtar (Da'i Fuad), Nur Hidayu Mohd Kamil (Da'i Hidayu) and Hamidah Ab Razak (Da'i Hamidah).

Now in its third season, the winner (to be named millennial preacher) will receive RM50,000, an umrah package, a trophy and a RM5,000 investment plan with Perbadanan Nasional as well as opportunities to work with Media Prima.

The show kicked off with 10 contestants who wowed the audience with their knowledge on religious and current issues and public speaking skills, with each displaying a level of confidence that transcended well beyond their age.

Coming from various educational backgrounds, the show was a tough fight right from the start.

HARDEST MOMENT

Two million viewers waited excitedly as the top three finalists of the reality show were announced recently.

Penang-born Luqmanul Hakim Joohari (Da'i Luq Man) was the last to be eliminated from the competition which is hosted by Datuk Rosyam Nor. The elimination has left Fuad as the only male contestant in the show.



(Left) Topping the chart for weeks, Hamidah says it doesn't guarantee her winning in the competition. (Right) Hidayu hopes to pursue her ambition to become a preacher after her stint in Da'i.

PICTURES BY MUNIRA ABDUL GHANI

FINAL COUNTDOWN FOR DA'I

The competition between the three finalists in the third season of Da'i is heating up, writes **Nur Aqidah Azizi**

"We have been together for months. We are like brothers now. To see anyone being eliminated from the show has been hard, not only for me but also for the rest of the contestants," says Fuad.

Looking forward to the final battle, Fuad says he is preparing himself mentally and physically to deliver his best. "At the moment, besides attending classes, I also try to absorb as much as I can from reading materials to polish my knowledge on religious and current issues. I hope it will help me in the final challenge," says the 20-year-old.

Currently pursuing a degree in Islamic and Preach Management at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Selangor-born Fuad says he is grateful to receive encouragement from his lecturers and colleagues.

He is also watching his health closely to ensure that he will be fit for the final competition. "For me, health is an important factor that can influence my performance. I hope everything will turn out smoothly," says Fuad.

SMALL SACRIFICE

Hidayu, who is married with a 3-year-old child, says it was not an easy decision to stay apart from her loved ones.

"At first, I didn't know that all contestants had to be confined for two months. I was a little hesitant initially

and almost gave up my chance to be in Da'i," she says.

"After much discussion with my husband and family members, I decided to make this small sacrifice so that I will be able to contribute in spreading positive messages to more people in future," says Hidayu, who also put her degree studies in psychology from the International Islamic University on hold to concentrate on Da'i.

"My lecturers and friends have been really supportive and encouraged me to give my best for Da'i. This motivates me to do well in the final stage," she adds.

Win or lose, Hidayu hopes her dream to become a religious preacher will materialise.

"As for now, I have already received offers to give motivational talks at various universities but I have to turn them down since I am still attached to Da'i. God willing, I hope I will be able to accept other offers once the programme ends," she says with a smile.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Judging from her consistent performances which has put her at the top of the results chart every week, it is no surprise that Hamidah, 23, has made it to the final stage of the competition.

"I try to give my best every week. I leave the rest in God's hands. But I am

Fuad is the only male contestant in the final stage of Da'i this year.



The final round of Da'i airs tonight at 9pm on TV3.

so grateful to be able to get this far," she says.

Kedah-born Hamidah, who exudes confidence and maturity way beyond her age, has easily become the favourite with viewers who have been voting for her since day one.

Perhaps her experience as a part time counsellor at the Pokok Sena prison centre for two years has helped her be more comfortable in front of people — something that is apparent every time she takes to the stage.

"I believe my working experience is

one of the factors. But the experiences and challenges of talking in front of the judges for a live television show like Da'i are very different. I am thankful for the guidance from the *murabbi* (teachers) and the whole production team who have helped us in building our confidence onstage," says Hamidah.

On her chances to win, Hamidah says that at this point, all the finalists stand an equal opportunity of winning.

"To be able to come this far, I think it's already a huge achievement for all of us. Win or lose, my passion to spread the positive message of Islam will continue," she says.

The final stage of Da'i will be judged by three professional juries led by Datuk Ustaz Kazim Elias. nur@nst.com.my