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12 entries will be selected for finals

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Twelve participants will make it to the finals of the International College of Music's Millennium Patriotic Songwriting Contest.

The college's spokesman said they would be picked on June 30 from 40 entries which had been shortlisted so far from a total of 670 entries.

Entries closed on June 15.

The participants had sent in lyrics, containing the essence of the four basic tenets of "patriotism of the new millennium" - love for the country, spirit of unity, resilience, pride in being a Malaysian and spirit of loyalty to the nation.

Contestants are between 15 and 25 years old.

They will perform their own compositions as soloists or in groups but must avoid political, religious or racial slants.

Each will be given 15 minutes to perform their songs which can either be in Bahasa Malaysia or English.

The songs will not be confined to the traditional march style of patriotic songs but can be from any musical genres such as pop, jazz, nasyid, reggae, hip-hop and rock.

The competition offers cash prizes worth RM100,000 including a grand prize of RM50,000.

The contest is co-organised by the Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry, Youth and Sports Ministry and Education Ministry. The New Straits Times is the official newspaper.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will attend the finals at Istana Budaya on Aug 25.

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