PHOTO: STAR

Shakhawat Sohel tees off during the BTI Golf Championship at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

Sohel leads Siddikur

BPGA makes its debut

SPORTS REPORTER

From the onset of the BTI Professional Golf Championship, the race has been confined to two golfers, Siddikur Rahman and Shakhawat Hossain Sohel, but it was newcomer Sohel who put his more illustrious opponent Siddikur behind by two strokes at the close of the third round at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

Sohel, who just qualified for the Professional Golf Tour in India last month, scored two-under-par 69 in the third round to finish with an overall score of 11-under-par while Siddikur struck a one-under-par 71 to finish with an overall score of nine-under-par after the third day.

Jamal Hossain Mollah, who was a member of Bangladesh's gold winning squad in the South Asian Games and entered the professional circuit seven months ago, lifted himself to third position from fifth after scoring a six-under-par 66 to have overall four-under par.

Golf is one of the more lucrative sports in the world in terms of money spinning but for Bangladesh golf has a long way to go even though Siddikur is already a pioneer and has captured the belief of a nation with brilliant performances at the international level.

Nevertheless, golf is a less popular sport in Bangladesh as it is still confined to a specific class of the society but it is a good thing that the game of golf is gradually gaining popularity through the success of country's professional golfers, who once were all ball boys or caddies.

To give country's professional golfers a perfect stage and make the game popular among the young generation, the Bangladesh Professional Golfers' Association (BPGA) has introduced the first-ever professional golf championship, sponsored by Building Technology and Ideas Limited, with the participation of 56 golfers including four amateurs.

"In the start of 2009, golfers like Siddikur, Sohel had pushed me to form a golfers' association which would work with country's professional golfers and the dream of the golfers came true through launching of the first-ever professional golf championship," said Arshi Haider, the president of BPGA, adding that the current batch of golfers would dominate the country's golf arena in the next six to seven year before the new generation comes in.

Arshi, a leading amateur golfer, believes that the country's professional golfers would get an opportunity to fine-tune themselves before taking part in tournaments like PGTI as the BPGA is determined to hold at least six professional tournaments every year.

The BPGA president believes that the success of Bangladesh's professional golf tournament would depend on the support of the sponsors who can make it a well-known tournament like in India's professional tour.

Siddikur sees the introduction of the professional golf tournament as a remarkable step to take country's golf a further step forward.

"We have a number of talented players but their performance is not reflected due to a lack of tournaments. They will now get the exposure through tournaments as this one," Siddikur said. Sohel thinks the tournament will help the golfers overcome their shyness before taking part in pro-tournaments outside the country.

Jamal, who played 13 professional tournaments to earn Tk 12 lakh last year, said the tournament would help produce more players as well as keep golfers in the game.

Zakiruzzaman, one of the four amateur golfers taking part in the tournament, said the introduction of professional tournament has inspired amateur golfers as they are now thinking of turning professional to earn some money for living as well deposit some to take part in the professional tour in India.

Top 25 finishers of the tournament will have a pie of total prize money of Tk 10 lakh, with the winner bagging Tk 2 lakh followed by Tk one lakh for the runner-up.

Eng closing in on Aus total

Cricket

AFP, *Sydney*

England closed to within 113 runs of an innings lead over a battling Australia on Tuesday, edging an engrossing second day of the final Ashes Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The tourists, chasing their first series win Down Under in 24 years, got off to a blistering start with a 98-run opening partnership before Australia struck back with three wickets, including the prize scalp of Kevin Pietersen.

Michael Clarke's Australians, playing to level the series after failing to regain the Ashes, could have been in an even better position at stumps had they not had a crucial fourth wicket taken off them by an umpire's referral.

At the close, England were 167 for three in reply to Australia's 280, with Alastair Cook unbeaten on 61 and nightwatchman James Anderson not out one.

Andrew Strauss and Jonathan Trott were out seven balls apart and Pietersen threw away his wicket on 36 when he was caught hooking.

England could have been four down at close after debutant Michael Beer celebrated what he thought was his first Test wicket when Cook, then on 45, skied to Ben Hilfenhaus at deep mid-on only for umpire Billy Bowden to ask for the third umpire to check on a suspected no-ball.

Replays showed spinner had overstepped and Cook stayed.

It was the second time in the series that England have benefited from such a reprieve after Matt Prior was recalled following a slip catch in the fourth Melbourne Test. Prior was on five at the time, and eventually scored 85.

Australia did not let the Cook decision knock their concentration and removed the dangerous Pietersen, who failed to keep down a hook shot off a Johnson bouncer and was caught by Beer at deep backward square.

Hilfenhaus got the first breakthrough of the innings bowling Strauss for 60 with an unplayable ball that collected his off-stump.

Strauss and Cook had put on 98 in 92 minutes with skipper Strauss leading the charge in an aggressive innings, hammering eight fours and a six off 58 balls.

Trott was out for his first Test duck in Johnson's next over, getting a thick inside edge on to his stumps.

Earlier Johnson and Hilfenhaus salvaged the home side's first innings with some lusty hitting after lunch in a lively 76-run partnership for the ninth wicket.

In three balls, Hilfenhaus smashed Tim Bresnan for a six over long-on and Johnson lofted spinner Graeme Swann into the stands and followed up by coming down the wicket to clobber Swann for four.

Their rear-guard heroics boosted Australia's score after the home side had teetered at 189 for eight.

Johnson was eventually bowled by Bresnan for 53 off 66 balls and Hilfenhaus was caught behind off Anderson for 34 from 58 balls.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 280 (Watson 45, Khawaja 37, Hughes 31, Hussey 33, Smith 18, Johnson 53, Hilfenhaus 34; Anderson 4-66, Bresnan 3-89)

ENGLAND: First innings 167 for 3 (Strauss 60, Cook 61 not out, Pietersen 36; Johnson 2-42)

Kumble pulls out of IPL

AFP, *New Delhi*

Former India captain Anil Kumble has pulled out of this year's Indian Premier League (IPL), citing personal commitments, India's cricket board said Tuesday.

Kumble, captain of the Royal Challengers Bangalore franchise, had been instrumental in his team's turnaround in the 2009 edition, leading the side to the final of the money-spinning Twenty20 tournament.

The leg-spinner was not retained by his franchise for this season and was among those players put up for auction with the highest reserve price of 400,000 dollars.

PAK WC PROBABLES NAMED

Kamran in, Malik out

Cricket

AFP, *Lahore*

Pakistan selectors Tuesday included spot-fixing suspect Kamran Akmal in a preliminary 30-man squad for the World Cup but left out former captain Shoaib Malik and leg-spinner Danish Kaneria.

The committee twice deferred announcing the squad as they sought clearance from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on players who were reportedly under suspicion of match-fixing during Pakistan's tour of England last year.

Shahid Afridi is expected to retain the one-day captaincy for the World Cup.

The 10th World Cup will be hosted jointly by Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka from February 19 to April 2, with 14 teams competing.

Pakistan will miss former opener Salman Butt and pace bowlers Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer, who are suspended on spot-fixing charges.

They appear before an International Cricket Council (ICC) tribunal in Doha from January 6-11 and could face life bans.

A squad for six one-days against New Zealand will be announced next week.

Teams now have until January 19 to announce a 15-man squad.

SQUAD

Shahid Afridi, Ahmed Shahzad, Mohammad Hafeez, Taufiq Umer, Nasir Jamshed, Mohammad Yousuf, Younis Khan, Misbahul Haq, Umar Akmal, Azhar Ali, Asad Shafiq, Naved Yasin, Kamran Akmal, Sarfraz Ahmed, Salman Ahmed, Abdul Razzaq, Yasir Arafat, Rana Navedul Hasan, Abdur Rehman, Saeed Ajmal, Yasir Shah, Zulfiqar Babar, Shoaib Akhtar, Umar Gul, Wahab Riaz, Sohail Tanveer, Tanveer Ahmed, Junaid Khan, Aizaz Cheama, Asad Ali.

PHOTO: STAR

Chittagong youngsters are in a festive mood during the Catch Bangladesh Catch road show in honour of the 2011 World Cup at the port city yesterday.

Sachin ton

FROM PAGE 16

hostile overs. He dismissed Cheteshwar Pujara and Mahendra Singh Dhoni to reduce India to a precarious 247 for six and had concerted appeals for catches against Tendulkar and Harbhajan turned down.

Umpire Ian Gould rejected both appeals, which came during the space of four balls, and television replays indicated he was correct both times. Steyn seemed furious when the appeal against Harbhajan was turned down but it appeared the ball deflected off the off stump, remarkably without disturbing a bail.

Tendulkar's innings lasted for 465 minutes. He faced 313 balls and hit 17 fours and two sixes. When he eventually fell it was to Morne Morkel, Steyn's fast bowling partner, who had been largely unimpressive up to that point.

But Morkel produced a superb delivery, which slanted in to Tendulkar and straightened just enough to beat the bat and hit the top of the off stump.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 362 (Petersen 21, Amla 59, Kallis 161, De Villiers 26, Prince 47; Zaheer 3-89, Sreesanth 5-114, Sharma 2-77)

INDIA: First innings 364 (Gambhir 93, Sehwag 13, Tendulkar 146, Laxman 15, Harbhajan 40, Zaheer 23; Steyn 5-75, Morkel 2-106)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 52 for 2 (Smith 29, Petersen not out 22; Harbhajan 2-4)

Little change in ticket

FROM PAGE 16

almost the same as only a few lucky ones bought the tickets while most left empty-handed.

Also at City Bank's New Market branch at Dhanmondi Road 2, some complained that many individuals came 'posing' as bank clients and went inside to get the tickets. There were numerous scuffles throughout the day as the ones standing outside prevented anyone from entering the building. The ones who could not enter retorted that they could not do their banking.

Many fans expressed grievance as the booths were not increased till yesterday despite Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's directive to increase the number of authorised bank booths to ensure smooth sale.

Meanwhile, Agrani Bank authorities are thinking of increasing booths for selling tickets in the designated branches, said Kazi Mostafizur Rahman, public relation officer of the bank. But it could not be known immediately weather City Bank are considering it as this correspondent could not reach bank officials in the head office despite repeated attempts over phone yesterday afternoon.

When asked about increasing the ticket selling booths, BCB media committee chairman Jalal Younus said that this information has been passed on to KyaZoonga.

"Hopefully from tomorrow (Wednesday) KyaZoonga will do something about increasing the booths at the ticket selling branches," he said.

Stand with Nannu

FROM PAGE 16

Sujon bhai struck 110 not out and he blasted (England off-spinner) Peter Such out of the park!

DSS: You took Bangladesh's first World Cup wicket. Tell us about the particular wicket.

MI: Of course I remember that wicket. It was of Nathan Astle and Bulbul bhai took the catch at mid-off (laughs). It was an altogether different feeling.

DSS: You were also part of the 2003 campaign. Can you compare between the two?

MI: I think the 1999 was the better campaign, if you consider preparation and the togetherness between the players.

DSS: So what was your favourite World Cup memory?

MI: It was the game against Scotland and I came out to bat with Nannu bhai in the 47th over, with our score around 160-odd. He told me not to worry and instead focus on playing out the balls so that we can play all 50 overs.

I think we added 21 runs that took our score to 185, a fighting total those days. We won that game and I realised the importance of playing the full quota of overs. I think more about it now as I am working as a coach.

Grant Flower retires, again

AFP, *Harare*

Zimbabwean batsman Grant Flower has retired from match cricket for the second time to focus on his job as the country's batting coach, said a statement posted on the Zimbabwe Cricket website on Tuesday.

CCS clip

FROM PAGE 16

Dhanmondi giants' innings through an 80-run fifth wicket stand. Riyad played a good hand, making 88 off 96 balls with the help of four boundaries and three sixes as Abahani reached a competitive 218-9 from 50 overs.

Victoria went ahead through a 67-run opening stand between Myshukur Rahman and Fazle Rabbi but once Riyad had Rabbi's wicket in the 17th over, Abahani waded in.

Rafique took three wickets while Riyad and Saqlain Sajib picked up two each as Victoria were bowled out for 151 runs in 38.2 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

CCS: 120 all out in 31.3 overs (Shahbaz 28; Elias 4-14, Mosharraf 4-30).

BIMAN: 111 all out in 37.1 overs (Jahurul 27; Bishwanath 5-20, Waqas 2-14).

Result: CCS won by nine runs.

MSC: 279-8 in 50 overs (Moeen 113, Shakib 59; Shafiul 3-54, Forhad 3-59).

OLD DOHS: 213 all out in 43.3 overs (Aftab 67, Nurul 41; Mukhtar 4-40, Noor 3-45).

Result: MSC won by 66 runs.

ABAHANI: 218-9 in 46 overs (Riyad 88, Marshall 24; Arsalan 2-16).

VICTORIA: 151 all out in 38.2 overs (Myshukur 46, Rabbi 39; Rafique 3-33, Riyad 2-23).

Result: Abahani won by 67 runs.

School football

FROM PAGE 16

a single-goal defeat to AK International with Rimu scoring the decider in the 35th minute while A Latif defeated St Joseph's High School by 1-0 the same margin, thanks to a penalty converted by Bijoy Sarkar.

CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*

ACROSS

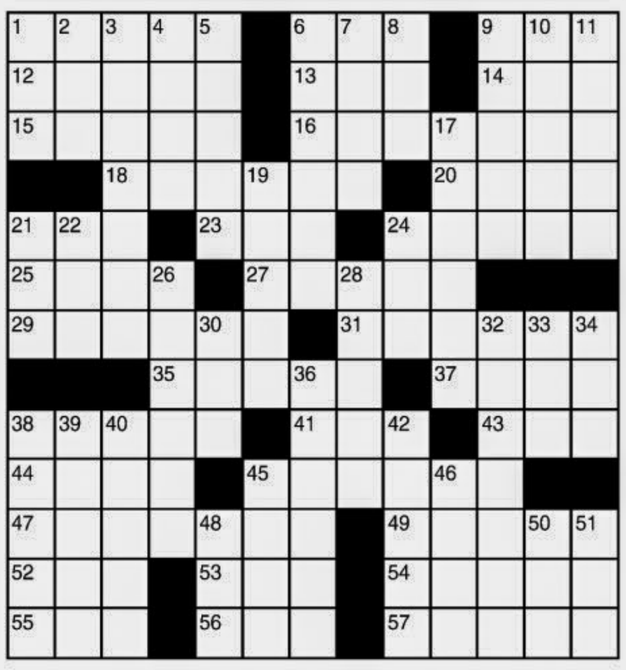
1 Notes from the boss
6 Couric's employer
9 Vacationing
12 Open-mouthed
13 Exist
14 Clay, after 1964
15 Lost cause
16 Dugong's cousin
18 One
20 Approach
21 Jewel
23 Backing
24 Low singer
25 Satan's forte
27 Twangy
29 Most updated
31 Beta-carotene, e.g.
35 Hacienda brick
37 Ready for action
38 People
41 Eggs
43 Gist
44 One of HOMES
45 Appetite ruiners?
47 Authoritative command
49 Hotel accommodation
52 All-purpose truck
53 Round Table address
54 Bassoons' kin
55 Roulette bet
56 Snoop
57 Trousers

DOWN

1 Periodical, for short
2 Id counterpart
3 Set free
4 Admitting customers
5 Helvetica lack
6 Movie lot necessity
7 Actor Pitt
8 Sun Yat- —
9 Author Joyce Carol —
10 Dog bane?
11 1980s Pontiac model
17 Not digital
19 Scout master?
21 Come together
22 Actress Longoria Parker
24 — -relief
26 Couldn't keep a secret
28 Colander
30 1960s campus org.
32 Huge home
33 Ostrich's relative
34 CSA soldier
36 Derelicts' domain
38 Leg bone
39 Give a speech
40 Queued (up)
42 Man of morals?
45 Commotion
46 Brass instrument
48 Venomous viper
50 Asian holiday
51 Curvy character

Solution time: 25 mins.

M	A	R	A	■	G	A	S	■	S	H	A	M
E	V	E	N	■	R	U	N	■	H	A	L	O
N	O	N	O	■	U	F	O	■	E	N	O	S
U	N	T	R	U	E	■	B	L	A	D	E	S
■	■	■	A	S	S	■	■	I	T	S	■	■
B	A	L	K	■	O	F	F	S	H	O	O	T
O	N	O	■	■	M	O	E	■	■	M	A	O
P	A	N	A	T	E	L	A	■	Z	E	R	O
■	■	E	T	A	■	R	O	E	■	■	■	■
F	A	S	T	E	N	■	S	N	A	T	C	H
O	B	O	E	■	A	G	O	■	L	O	R	E
A	L	M	S	■	V	I	M	■	O	R	A	L
M	E	E	T	■	E	N	E	■	T	E	M	P



CRYPTOQUIP

R F D K H F L K Z O L S S E U F H C H T L S S Z X G R H T H S H V L Z H R U G Z F D V "E H R ," F C G O S T R L E F C L R L D L E H - C F Z D H R R .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF FORMER SENATOR BOB SUPPORTS SOMEBODY FINANCIALLY, COULD YOU SAY THAT PERSON IS ON THE DOLE?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals A