

# Star SPORT

DHAKA, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2013, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## From ball boy to star goalie

South Africa goalkeeper Itumeleng Khune became a shot-stopper by accident and is now considered among the best on the continent ahead of the 2013 Cup of Nations. Desperate to support his family financially, he moved from north-western town Tshing to Johannesburg when only 12 for trials with popular and successful football club Kaizer Chiefs. Fielded as a defender, the teenager developed chest problems during an age-limit trial and was ordered to stand beside a goalpost and become a ball boy. As he dived spectacularly to block balls that missed the target, Khune caught the attention of a youth coach and a career that



## Premier Bank to sell BPL tickets

SPORTS REPORTER

The tickets for the second edition of Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) will be sold at Premier Bank counters in three cities from today. The online sale has already begun yesterday at [www.easy.com.bd](http://www.easy.com.bd) and [www.activeservices.net](http://www.activeservices.net).

Twenty-one branches of the bank -- 17 in Dhaka, two in Chittagong and one in Khulna -- will sell the tickets.

The lowest-priced ticket for a day's play -- two matches -- has been set at Tk 350 and each person will be allowed to buy two tickets a day. Students and Airtel users will receive a 30 per cent discount upon presentation of their ID card or SIM card.

Officials of Active Services, the company that bought the ticketing rights of the T20 competition, informed that 30 per cent of the tickets will be sold through Airtel's mobile network, another 30 per cent through banks, 10 per cent will be available online and 10 per cent will be sold at the venues. The remaining 20 per cent have been reserved for officials of the Bangladesh Cricket Board.

## Rising TT champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Rising Table Tennis Club emerged champions in the First Division Table Tennis League after beating Dhaka Southeast Club 3-0 sets at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Table Tennis Academy finished runners-up with a 3-1 win over Boys Club. In the women's Premier Division League, Destiny Table Tennis Club set up the title-deciding clash with Abahani today when they defeated Dhaka Youngs 3-1.

Abahani, in a bit to retain the title, have already flown in Indian 2011 sub-junior champion Sumona Saha.

A class eleven student, Sumona, while training at the venue yesterday,

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Champion Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan bats in the nets at the BCB Academy ground yesterday. Shakib is set to return to competitive cricket after nearly two months' injury layoff for Dhaka Gladiators in the second BPL that kicks off on January 18.

PHOTO: BANGLARCHOKH.COM

## PREVIEW: SYLHET ROYALS

# Will their makeover change fortunes?

SPORTS REPORTER

Having won only two of their ten matches in the first edition of the Bangladesh Premier League, Sylhet Royals went for a complete makeover at the players' auction this year. Their most expensive buy, Mushfiqur Rahim, who was bought for 205,000 dollars, has been given the responsibility to lead a side that has a good mix of players. Sylhet have had to find a couple of replacements on their side right before the competition as the West Indian duo of Tino Best and Andre Russel will be touring Australia in February and are unavailable. They have been replaced with Australian Dirk Nannes and West Indian Shivnarine Chandernepaul, both of whom were initially unsold in the players' auctions.

### KEY PLAYERS

While Mushfiqur may not exactly follow the 'slam-wham-bang' theory with the bat, he does, however, clear the park with ease when set. The captain of the national team, Mushfiqur knows the strengths and weaknesses of most of the local players. It'll be a plus point for the captain, who will be leading a comparatively inexperienced T20 side. Shohag Gazi has seen his

value increase by a huge margin in a year's time. From being in the 'Group C' in last year's auctions, to being catapulted into the same category as that of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shohag's performances against the West Indies has done wonders for him. While he did excel in 50 overs cricket and the five-day version of the game, he still needs to get experienced in the shortest format of the game. He, along with Suhrawardi Shuvo, will have to lead the spin department for the Royals. Known as a T20 specialist, Nannes is perhaps the most experienced player in the Sylhet side. His late entry into the team is bound to strengthen Sylhet's bowling attack.

### STRONG POINT

The Royals this year are a more balanced side as compared to last year's team. While their bowling attack has a good balance between spin and pace, their batting side has a mix of aggression and caution. Dwayne Smith, Hamilton Masakadza and Mominul Haque, apart from the captain, will be expected to bat at the top-order.

### POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS

With five national players present in the side, the local spots on the team are

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## Azad defeat Wanderers

SPORTS REPORTER

An attractive 87 by Rana Hossain led Azad Sporting Club to a 22-run victory over Dhaka Wanderers in a First Division Cricket League match at the Jahangirnagar University ground yesterday.

Batting first Azad Sporting finished on 242 for 8 in 50 overs. In reply, the Wanderers were bowled out for 220 in 46.4 overs, with Mehedi Hasan being the chief destructor as he finished with figures of 4 for 35.

In the day's other matches, Orient Sporting Club defeated Tasin Hasin Cricket Academy by 31 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. Kathalbagan Green Crescent Club defeated Magnum Cricketers by 33 runs at the City Club Ground.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**AZAD SPORTING CLUB:** 242 for 8 in 50 overs (Rana 87, Sumon 54; Saddam 1-30) v **DHAKA WANDERERS:** 220 all out in 46.4 overs (Faruq 62; Mehedi 4-35)

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## Badminton sans Biman

SPORTS REPORTER

The 32nd National Badminton Championships get underway tomorrow at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium sans Bangladesh Biman.

The national flag career has been a dominant force in the age-old event but will miss the colourful indoor sport for the first time after being associated with it for over 34 years.

The no-show is part of a sagging Biman Bangladesh's policy of a gradual withdrawal from domestic sport on financial grounds. They did not form the women's team in the ongoing Table Tennis League, their cricket team had been relegated to the First Division last season while their mediocre chess team only managed to stay at the Premier Division following Biman Bangladesh's decision not to patronise any sport teams.

"Last year, the board had decided not to sponsor its different sports teams as they can't bear the expenses. And that is why Biman is not taking part in the national badminton championships this time," said Biman's former badminton manager Noor Islam yesterday.

Biman has been taking part in any badminton meets since 1979 and have won a total of 27 singles titles in both men's and women's events.

"We are very disappointed with such decision," said 2010 national champion

Mohammad Rois Uddin who played for Biman for the last 10 years.

"Every player dreams to play for Biman, who pays handsomely. Their withdrawal will adversely affect the game," said Rois who joined Bangladesh Railway this year.

"Biman is still managing its cricket team but they have decided to part ways with badminton. It's unfortunate. It needs a lot of money to run a cricket team. But one can easily form a badminton team with an amount of money that can buy only a cricketer like Mashrafe (Bin Morataza)."

Ahsan Habib Parash, who won six consecutive men's singles titles for Biman, hoped that Biman would return to badminton again for the betterment of the game.

A total of 262 shuttlers including 35 women from six divisions, 54 districts, three educational boards and one organisation are taking part in the meet, sponsored by Internet provider Qubee.

The championships feature five events -- men's singles and doubles, women's singles and doubles and mixed doubles.

Bangladesh Badminton Federation general secretary Jobaidur Rahman Rana, at a pre-event press meet, informed that all rating players including no-rated but former champions Enayetullah Khan are taking part in the meet. He also said that they are offering a cash award of over Taka one lakh for the winners.

## Novak chasing treble

### Year's first Open begins today

AFP, Melbourne



Novak Djokovic bids for an unprecedented third straight Australian Open title from Monday, with growing rival Andy Murray and the great Roger Federer shaping as his biggest challenges.

Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro is the only man besides Djokovic, Rafael Nadal, Federer and Murray to win a Grand Slam tournament since 2005, but the Serb said there were plenty of others who could threaten their dominance.

However, the odds favour Djokovic who is targeting a third straight Australian title, a feat which has not been achieved in the professional era.

Nadal is not playing due to illness, robbing Melbourne Park of a repeat of last year's epic final, when Djokovic finally tamed the Spaniard at 1:40 am after a record, 5hr 53min final which left him with bleeding toes.

But Djokovic will face a stiff challenge from the newly assertive Murray, fresh from his first Grand Slam win and keen to avenge his final and semifinal defeats to Djokovic in

Melbourne in 2011 and 2012. Also pressing hard will be Federer, holder of an unmatched 17 Grand Slams and still hungry for more even

him up perfectly to build on the best year of his career.

Murray, the world number three, was thrashed by Djokovic in the 2011



Serbian world number one Novak Djokovic will be chasing an unprecedented third title in a row when the Australian Open, season's first Grand Slam, starts in Melbourne today.

PHOTO: REUTERS

though, at the age of 31, he is conceding six years to his younger rivals.

Murray, 25, said the Grand Slam breakthrough at Flushing Meadows in 2012 eased the pressure and set

Australian Open decider, and narrowly lost out in their thrilling five-set semifinal last year.

But the Scot then beat Djokovic on

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Sri Lanka's Lahiru Thirimanne (L) celebrates his century with a teammate Kusal Perera during the second one-day international against Australia at the Adelaide Oval yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## SL level powerfully



AFP, Adelaide

An unbeaten maiden one-day century from Lahiru Thirimanne drove Sri Lanka to a series-levelling eight-wicket victory against Australia at the Adelaide Oval on Sunday.

The feisty opener hit a boundary for the winning runs and remained unbeaten on 102 for his first ODI ton. Tillakaratne Dilshan plundered 51.

The tourists, who suffered a 107-run defeat in Melbourne on Friday in the first of the five-match ODI series, reached the target of 171 with 59 balls to spare.

Australia had Upal Tharanga caught behind off Clint McKay in the third ball of Sri Lanka's innings with no runs on the board.

The hosts mixed up spin with speed but failed to make another breakthrough until Glen Maxwell caught Dilshan off Ben

Cutting with the score already on 137.

Debutant Kusal Perera, who held four catches behind the wickets, clobbered 14 quick runs with Thirimanne in cruise control.

Sri Lanka's seamers led by slinger Lasith Malinga had skittled out Australia setting the stage for an ultimately easy victory.

Mahela Jayawardene won an important toss after heavy rain delayed the start and notched his first triumph on the tour after a 3-0 whitewash in the Tests.

Veteran wicketkeeper Brad Haddin top-scored for Australia with 50 while Malinga claimed three wickets for 32.

Sri Lanka effectively shackled Australia from the outset and picked up regular wickets. Opener Aaron Finch was first to go, caught off Angelo Mathews for just four.

Nuwan Kulasekera then had opening match centurion Phillip Hughes plumb lbw for three and Australia in trouble

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Dear Sir,  
During all these years I have worked even after regular office hours with dedication and sincerity. Last year I had submitted an application for early leave from office to watch BPL. But you did not grant my request and I was disappointed. This year BPL is coming again. And this time I want to watch it at any cost. So please acknowledge my request. I am even ready to accept Leave Without Pay to meet my hunger for cricket at its best.

Yours sincerely,  
Caved Habibur Rahman

যে বসু বিপিএল এর উত্তেজনা বোধে না  
সে কেমন ভাল বসু হলো!

Prime Bank  
BPL T20

আসছে...