



Headline	SHA hold open trials to select players for 2014 Malaysia Games		
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Fighting display: Muhd Izzat Ikmal Mohd Kamal (right) was one of those who showed potential at the tryout. THE Selangor Hockey Association (SHA) are planning ahead for the Malaysia Games next year. They conducted open trials to identify players for the state team recently. About 50 players showed up for the two-day tryout at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil. SHA secretary P. Kuganeson said the short-term goal was to have a pool of players for the Under-21 Championships but their overall focus was to start building the Selangor team. The Under-21 tournament has not been confirmed but we want to be fully prepared. Usually, we only get a short time to assemble the team. The players only get about 10 to 14 days to train together. With the open trials, everyone gets a chance to try out for the team. By the time the Games comes around, these players would have trained together and understand each other better, he said. Selangor head coach Azlan Saufi Ahmad Supian, 34, said they were looking for players with speed and strength. The game has changed a lot and now its not only about their dribbling skills. Its more of a passing game now. They need to have good basic skills but being fast is an advantage, he said. After the two-day event, Kuganeson said that they have shortlisted 19 players but ideally, they would want to have a pool of about 30 players. We are still on the lookout for players and we have also identified several players from the MSSM team. Having a pool of players also means that they will have to fight for a place on the team and that would hopefully give them motivation to work harder and play better, he said. Azlan added that they would put the players through some training sessions before the fasting month and enter them into as many tournaments as possible after Hari Raya to expose them as a team. Among the players who turned up for the selection were schoolmates Tengku Alif Aiman and Mohammad Naquiddin Mohd Mazde, both Form Three students from SMK Seksyen 27 Shah Alam. We both play for the school and our coach brought a few players here for the selection, said Alif, who plays in the centre-half position. UniKL forward Mohd Izzat Ikmal Mohd Kamal, 18, made an impression on the coaches with his speed and passing skills. Ive played for Selangor in the MSSM Under-18 tournament while I was studying in SMK Tengku Ampuan Rahimah, said Izzat.