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Shakir not resting on laurels

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Shakir not resting on laurels

Newly crowned world
silat champion has
already set sights on
the SEA Games crown

THE STRAITS TIMES STAR OF THE MONTH

Presented by **100PLUS**

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The lyrics to his favourite song Titanium by David Guetta suggest: "I'm bullet-proof, nothing to lose, fire away, fire away."

Shakir Juanda was dodging blows, not bullets, at the 15th World Pencak Silat Championships in Chiang Rai, Thailand, last month. But by taking home the world title in the "I" Class (85-90kg) against bigger and beefier European opponents, he proved he could take a hit – any kind of hit.

Beating nine other fighters to the prize, the 24-year-old finally had the crown he craved. His two previous appearances were in 2007 and 2010, when he was fourth and third respectively.

Shakir's silat story began much earlier. As an overweight primary school pupil, he could not escape the attention of bullies, who taunted him and forced him carry their schoolbags.

Today, it would take a very

brave man to pick a fight with The Straits Times' Star of the Month for November.

Packing 85kg of muscle on a stout frame, the 1.73m-tall Shakir can bench press 110kg – the weight of a baby elephant – and squat 140kg.

Passion, dedication, and humility: These attributes took Shakir to the top, according to head coach Hidayat Hosni, a 1994 world champion. Said his coach of over five years: "People complain about training, but he never did. He is very dedicated and from day one, he never stopped trying.

"In the arena, he is selfish because he needs to be. But outside, he is always willing to learn and always ready to share his knowledge with his team-mates."

Shakir began honing his body into a weapon when he joined the national squad in 2004. At the peak of his training, he was practising five times a week, and heading to the gym thrice weekly.

He can call himself a world champion now, but Shakir's fight is not yet over. He is now focused on retaining his title at the next Championships and securing his first SEA Games gold at next year's edition in Myanmar. The motivation is to

complete his medal collection, after winning a SEA Games silver in 2009 and a bronze in 2011.

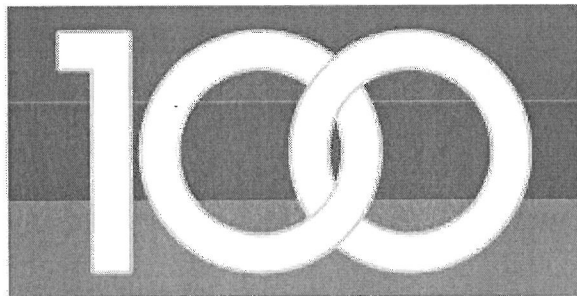
"I may be a world champion, but I have to put that aside to focus on the upcoming Games," he said.

"I can't sit on cloud nine. I have to go back down to zero and win more golds. It's not the end. I start

Dedication

"People complain about training, but he never did. He is very dedicated and from day one, he never stopped trying."

HIDAYAT HOSNI, Shakir's coach



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OUTDO YOURSELF

again."

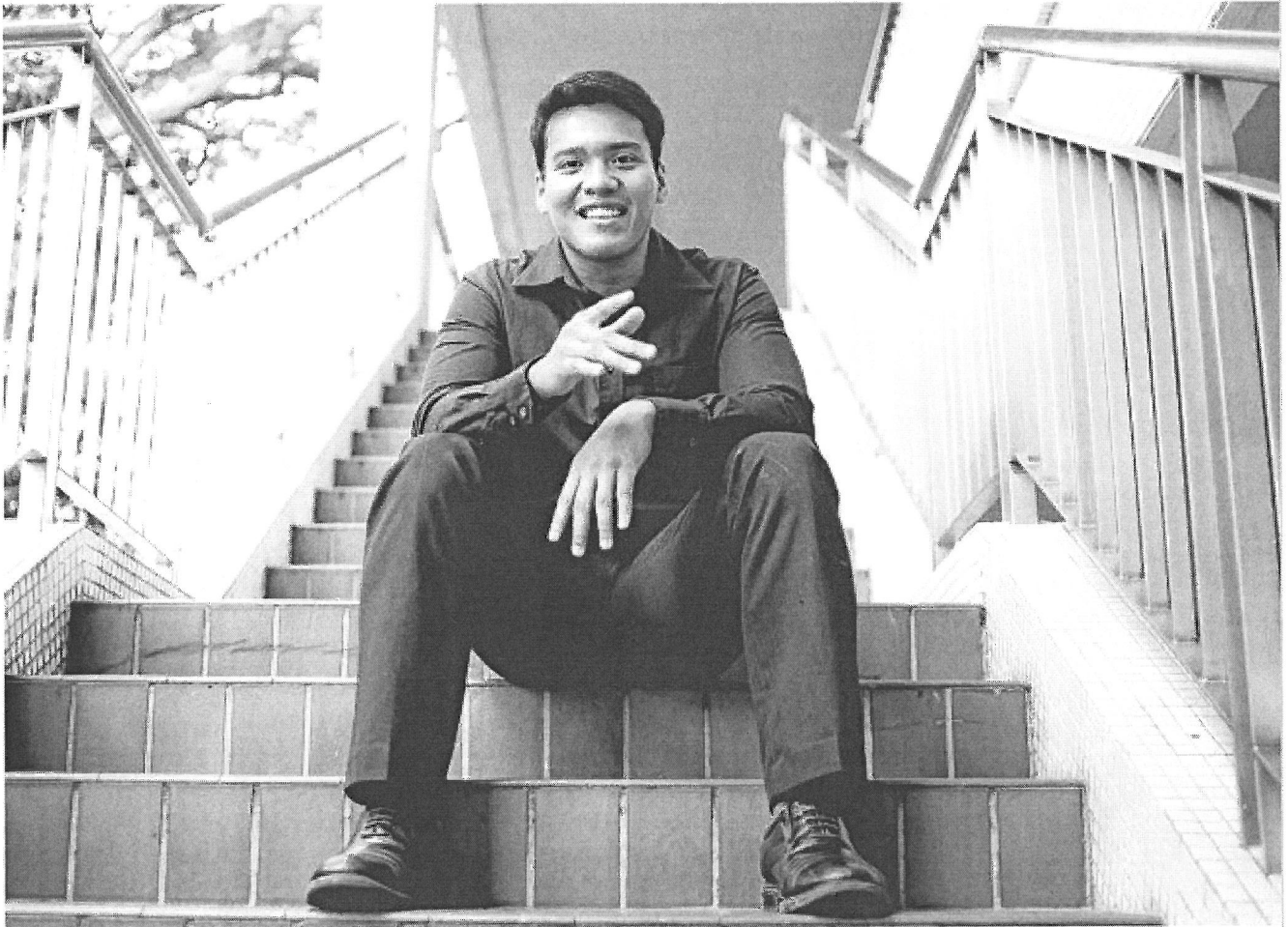
There is another new beginning for the former ITE Simei student. He will be engaged to his girlfriend Nur Shafiqah, 20, at the end of the week.

Cupid's arrow was the one thing he could not dodge.

Humility

"I can't sit on cloud nine. I have to go back down to zero and win more golds. It's not the end. I start again."

SHAKIR



According to his coach, newly crowned world silat champion Shakir Juanda's secrets to success are his passion and dedication
PHOTO: MARK CHEONG FOR THE SUNDAY TIMES