

International Stars make beeline for Indian Badminton League

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NEW DELHI: Top badminton stars, including two-time All England champion [Tine Baun](#) of Denmark and world No. 4 Indonesian [Sony Dwi Kuncoro](#) will participate in the inaugural edition of the \$1 million [Indian Badminton League](#) (IBL), scheduled to be held from June 24-July 11.

Sony Dwi Kuncoro, who will begin with a base price of \$50,000 for the 'Players Auction', and compatriot world No. 10 Simon Santoso will be the stars from [Indonesia](#), while Europe will be represented by continental champion Marc Zwiebler of Germany and Danish world No. 11 Jan O Jorgensen.

Olympics men's doubles silver medalist and world No. 1 [Mathias Boe](#) and Carsten Mogensen from Denmark have also sent their confirmation to go under the hammer.

Among others, men's world No. 8 Tien Minh Nguyen of [Vietnam](#) and the 2012 Olympics bronze medalist in doubles, Lee Yong Dae, have also confirmed their availability for the biggest prize money badminton tournament in the world.

Besides world number seven Tine, the women's circuit will witness top players such as German world No. 4 Juliane Schenk and world No. 9 Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese [Taipei](#).

Sony, who was just 20 when he won the bronze medal in the 2004 Olympics, said the IBL will raise the quotient of badminton across the globe.

"It is a great thing that the Badminton Association of India (BAI) has come up with a concept like this. It is a one of a kind initiative and will provide a rich learning experience for all the players and allow the fans to witness the creme-de-la-creme of the badminton world on a single platform. I feel it will bring fans closer to the sport," said the Indonesian.

German star Schenk said she was excited about playing the IBL and the league could be a turning point for the sport.

"I'm looking forward to playing the IBL. It will be exciting and interesting for sure," said Schenk, who clinched the women's singles bronze in the 2011 World Championship.

BAI president Dr Akhilesh Das Gupta feels the presence of world-class players will make the league more competitive and interesting.