

Dhaka, July 30: Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra Limited started their Saif Power Battery Bangladesh Premier League 2017 campaign with a bang beating Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangshad Krira Chakra 3-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Sunday.

It was Muktijoddha who created the first notable chance of the match in the 23rd minute with overlapping defender Monir Alam dancing down the right flank before unleashing a power-packed right footer that missed the far post by a few inches.

Sheikh Russel went ahead in the 34th minute with an opportunistic strike of midfielder Khalequzzaman Sobuj. Left back Atikur Rahman Mishu curved a cross from the left flank that dipped at the top of the box and Sobuj's reaction-header beat the outstretched hands onrushing Muktijoddha goalie Uttam Barua (1-0).

Sheikh Russel then grabbed a two goal cushion within two minutes. A neat through ball from skipper Shahedul Alam paved the way for Gambian forward Dawda Ceesay at the top of the box and the Gambian kept his cool to go past his marker before hitting the top of net with a cracking left footer (2-0).

Muktijoddha however was unfortunate in the dying stages of the first half with Ziaur Rahman, the Sheikh Russel custodian producing a fine save to deny Motiur Rahman in the 40th minute. Their woes continued in the 44th minute when midfielder Saikat Mahmud Munna saw his tricky placing shot rebound off the sidepost.

After the restart, Muktijoddha tried hard but failed to break down the Russel defence. However, in the 79th minute, Russel scored their third courtesy of Dawda Ceesay's second strike. Midfielder Alamgir Kabir Rana ran down the right flank and cut the ball back to Ceesay who slammed home from the top of in the six yard box (3-0).

In the last minute of the stipulated time, Ceesay saw his left footer rock the Muktijoddha side post leaving the Gambian rue the lost opportunity of a hat-trick.

