

Fawad blinder gives Rajshahi first win

SPORTS REPORTER

Catches win matches and Pakistan player Fawad Alam took a stunning catch to propel Duroto Rajshahi to their first win by beating Sylhet Royals by 16 runs in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

It could have been a different story and Sylhet Royals might not have suffered their third consecutive defeat if dangerman Alok Kapali's lofted shot against Pakistan paceman Mohammad Sami sailed over the extra cover fence in the last ball of the 18th over with Sylhet needing 28 runs from the last 13 balls.

Fawad leaped to take the catch, which he completed in the second attempt to send back Kapali and ensuring his side's much-desired victory. Requiring 28 runs from the last two overs, Sylhet could manage only three runs from the penultimate over and eight runs from the last before completing their 20-over quota for 155-4

in reply to Rajshahi's 171.

Marlon Samuels was adjudged man-of-the-match for his sparkling 72-run knock but the West Indies batsman said after the match that the stunning catch was the turning point.

"I must say it was the turning point of the match. It was a brilliant catch taken by Fawad in the deep," said Samuels in the post-match briefing.

Kapali, who scored 14 runs off 9 balls with one four and a six, also echoed the sentiment, saying that: "The fantastic catch dashed our hopes of securing the first victory in the tournament. It was an achievable target and the wicket was also very nice for batting."

Rajshahi got off to a poor start, losing their openers for 25 runs in 4.5 overs but captain Mushfiqur Rahim joined Samuels to strengthen their position before Mushfiqur was dismissed for 33 runs from 23 balls with the help of three fours and one six.

It was however Samuels who put the opposition attack to the sword by hitting five huge sixes and three boundaries during

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Dhaka Gladiators captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza bowls during the BPL T20 match against Barisal Burners at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Gayle blitz in vain

SPORTS REPORTER

Chris Gayle's second BPL T20 century could not avert Barisal's second defeat in two days as they went down to the Dhaka Gladiators by 21 runs at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Chasing 209 to win, Barisal got off to what has become the customary quick start, thanks mainly to Gayle who kept swinging from one end while three wickets fell at the other end by the eighth over -- Mashrafe accounting for Ahmed Shehzad and Mominul Haque and Darren Stevens catching Brad Hodge off his own bowling. With the score on 60 for three, the Gayle assault began as he utterly dominated a 103-run fourth-wicket partnership with Mithun Ali.

While the Jamaican laid about the bowling it seemed no total would be high enough, as six boundaries and an astonishing eleven

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Sheikh Jamal striker Kester Akon leaps over the Feni goalkeeper to head the ball in for the opening goal in their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

AFC U-22 ASIAN CUP

Bangladesh find easy group

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh have been drawn in a comparatively easier group in the inaugural AFC U-22 Asian Cup when the draw for the qualifying stage was held at the AFC Head Quarters in Malaysia yesterday.

Bangladesh were pitted in Group D along with Uzbekistan, Jordan, Yemen and Nepal as 41 nations, split into seven groups, will play the round robin format before top two finishers of each group and the best third finishers advance to the 16-team final round where the hosts will get the automatic entry.

All the qualifying matches will be held from June 23 to July 3 and the final round will be held in 2013, according to the official website

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Only left-armers won't do: Murali

SPORTS REPORTER

After seeing six left-arm spinners in action during Monday's Bangladesh Premier League matches, Muttiah Muralidaran was left wondering if there's more to come.

The record-breaking off-spinner from Sri Lanka, who is in town to play in the T20 tournament for the Chittagong Kings, could expect a few more as left-arm spinners are a dime a dozen in the country, but he said that it was not helpful if diversity was not sought.

"Most spinners in Bangladesh are left-armers so you need variety in bowling. If you want to do well outside the country, fast bowlers, leg-spinners and off-spinners are needed," he said yesterday. "You can't just rely on left-arm spinners; I can see there are 4-5 left-arm spinners in each BPL squad. It might work here, but not in other countries."

Muralidaran also said he reckons the spin stock of world cricket is in good hands. "There's Daniel Vettori, Saeed Ajmal, Shahid Afridi, Shakib Al Hasan, Graeme Swann, Harbhajan Singh and Ravi Ashwin. Sri Lanka has Ajantha Mendis and Rangana Herath while from West Indies Sunil Naraine is also coming up," he said.

"I am telling Bangladesh that you can't make do with left-arm spinners only, get some variety."

"But I am also worried about the spinners. They have to bowl flatter and faster in Twenty20 cricket while it is a different game in Tests. The coaches have a role here, they have to

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LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

Armanitola Govt High School recorded a 4-0 win over Fatullah Pilot High School in the Super League match of the Shah Sports 2nd Dhaka Metropolis School Hockey Tournament at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Armanitola led the first half with a strike from Shihad, who also struck another goal in the second half while Sabbir and Anik netted one goal apiece to join leaders Fatullah Pilot School on three points each.

Women's Handball

RN Sports Home ended their Cute 1st Division Women's Handball League campaign on a winning note as they defeated Jatrabari Krira Chakra 22-8 at Shaheed M Mansur Ali National Handball Stadium yesterday.

The title-deciding match between Mohammedan SC and Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club will take place today at the same venue.

Div-II Football

PWD SC and Bangladesh Police won their respective matches of the Destiny Group Dhaka Metropolis 2nd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

PWD SC defeated Matuail Udayan Sangsad 2-0 with

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Feni hold Sk Jamal

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club suffered another jolt in the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League when they were held to a 1-1 draw by visitors Feni Soccer Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian striker Kester Akon put the Dhanmondi Club ahead early in the first half before Feni's substitute Iqbal Hossain snatched the equaliser at the fag end of the match to earn a valuable point in their second away match.

Sheikh Jamal, who started the campaign with a 1-3 defeat against newcomers Team BJMC, are now in the third position with four points from three outings, two behind joint leaders Abahani and Muktioddha Sangsad, who however have played a match less than the defending champions.

Compared to their previous two outings, Sheikh Jamal played better football and created a good number of chances to score but failure to capitalise on those chances resulted them dropping points against a side who came to this match on the back of a 2-0 thrashing at the hands of Muktioddha Sangsad.

Feni fielded five defenders against the heavyweights in a bid to thwart the attacks from a four-pronged forward line of Sheikh Jamal. Feni put on a terrific display of ball control and kept possession in the midfield

which actually brought them back in the match after conceding an early lead.

Sheikh Jamal coach Saiful Bari Titu put his four foreign recruits upfront keeping Ghanaian defender Yussif Issah on the bench and his decision was vindicated when Kester gave them an eighth minute lead.

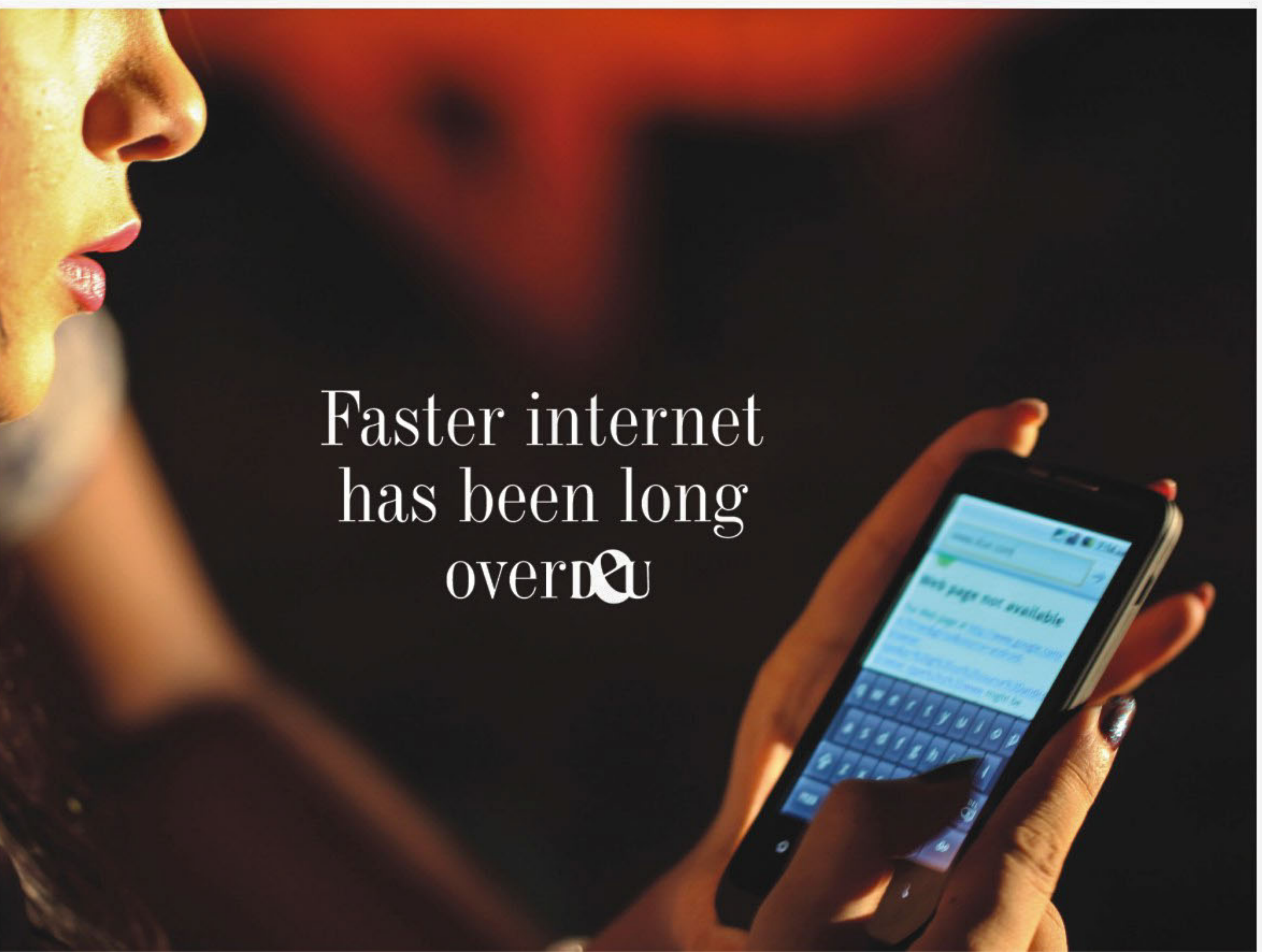
The Nigerian hitman slapped a glancing header on a Femi Orunnimi corner to give Sheikh Jamal an eighth minute lead. But after taking the lead, the Dhanmondi Club struggled for possession as Feni found their feet in the midfield.

Sheikh Jamal created two chances before the breather but Yoko Samnick's a bicycle kick and a close-range header from Kester narrowly missed the target.

Sheikh Jamal went close to doubling the lead on the hour mark when Kester's effort went narrowly wide while three minutes later Feni's Yasin drove the ball miles off target from inside the box.

Sheikh Jamal defender Mintu Sheikh left the pitch with a head injury which weakened their backline and Feni pounced on the opportunity to draw level on the 76th minute.

Substitute Iqbal, who had been on the pitch for four minutes, found himself unmarked inside the danger zone when a Rowland header off a free-kick fell kindly for him. Iqbal grabbed the opportunity with both hands to slot in past Sheikh Jamal keeper and salvaged a valuable point for Feni.



Faster internet has been long overdue