

Rain consumes India-NZ match too

Unrelenting showers lend little scope for even a truncated contest and forces abandonment



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
NOTTINGHAM

India and New Zealand stepped in with an all-win record so far in the World Cup and when the teams left Trent Bridge, their unblemished stature remained intact. Rains lent an ironic twist and washed out the match without a single ball being bowled and the rivals, thanks to the no-result, shared the points at one each.

Earlier, a dull Thursday eased in with grim skies. A conch's rumble was heard and the road adjoining the venue was milling with Indian fans. The drums got thumped, face-paint was dabbed, placards were held high and Indian restaurants did brisk business. Rotis and *balti* chicken warmed fine cutlery, poppadoms were crunched with a dash of mango chutney and all of them were washed down with frothing glasses of locally-brewed ale.

There was a merry air among the followers but the weather gods preferred their melancholy. Umpires Marais Erasmus and Paul Reiffel did their rounds, staring at the pitch and quizzically peered at the damp spots on either side of the centre-square. The two gentlemen trooped in at 10.30 a.m., 11.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. but their scheduled 1.30 p.m. inspec-



All over: Umpires Paul Reiffel and Marais Erasmus had no choice but to call off the match at 3 p.m. local time. ■ REUTERS

tion was marred by a sudden shower.

Announcements

In the press box, regular announcements were made about these appraisal-journeys and weary sports writers lost between boredom and smoke-breaks, broke into tired applause. The fans though were made of sterner stuff. Every time a television camera panned towards them, the decibel levels went up and "India jeetega" (India will win) cries ensued. Posters of Virat Kohli and M.S. Dhoni were displayed and when Vijay Shankar and In-

dia's fielding coach R. Sridhar, clad in windcheaters and with their cold hands tucked into pockets, sauntered onto the ground, a loud cheer emanated from the stands.

Meanwhile, near the commentary box, Sunil Gavaskar and selector Sarandeep Singh had a chat about the damp climate and discussed the possibility of more rain. It was that kind of day when eyes gazed at ominous clouds and the believers muttered their prayers. If there was any semblance of hope pertaining to a truncated game, even that vanished

once an afternoon liquid burst forced the rapid unfolding of umbrellas around the fringes.

Final word

All that remained for the die-hard followers was to congregate near the Indian team's dressing room and yearn for a few selfies with some of the stars. And out in the middle, a cameraman wiped the water off the drone. His work was done and it was time to retreat into an ancient pub or a warm room. But the final word had to come from Erasmus and Reiffel and it did when they

officially abandoned their pursuit of a comatose contest at 3 p.m.

Kohli's men will now head to Manchester for their Sunday's clash against Pakistan. And as always the build-up has been laced with dollops of history, drama and angst besides the jingoistic promotional advertisements that lack class.

Next assignment

INDIA: June 16, vs Pakistan, Old Trafford, 3 p.m.

NEW ZEALAND: June 19 vs South Africa, Edgbaston, 3 p.m.

Sridhar happy with India's fielding

Says poor conversion rate of direct-throws remains a worry

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
NOTTINGHAM

"I am a rainy-day candidate," quipped R. Sridhar, India's low-profile fielding coach. He broke into a laugh before sitting down for a media interaction at Trent Bridge here on Thursday. After answering the initial queries around wet weather and describing the damp outfield as being akin to a skating rink, Sridhar buckled down and gave a candid report-card on India's fielding.

It is pretty cold in an alleged summer in England and fielding with frozen fingers can be a pain. Catches do get shelled and Sridhar offered his solutions: "Hand-warmers are the first option. Also, if you are running around in the ground between overs or between field positions and throwing the ball around, that also keeps you warm. We also train in the same weather and that gives us a heads up."

With focus now centred on Shikhar Dhawan's recovery from a left-thumb injury, Sridhar threw light on how



R. Sridhar. ■ FILE PHOTO

there with our best intensity."

Asked about his squad's fielding standards, Sridhar lauded the attitude: "I am very happy with the resources. We have a terrific slip catcher in Rohit (Sharma) and we have two guys, Virat (Kohli) and (Ravindra) Jadeja, who are very intimidating. To complement that, we have Hardik Pandya, who can really help. We also saw (Yuzvendra) Chahal and (Jasprit) Bumrah crank it up in the last game, diving after bowling long spells. The biggest thing was the attitude of the fielders, where they put the team ahead of themselves"

But it is not all roses for the coach as direct-throws and their poor conversion rate remains a worry: "I would say converting one in three or four throws is a good conversion rate. But we failed to do that in the last game (against Australia). We had over 10 strikes and we hit only once. We should get better, especially from the next game."

the opener's fielding standards need to be assessed too when he returns. "He stands in the slips in the initial phase of the innings. That can be an issue. We will test him with lighter balls first and gradually move on to the cricket ball and see how it goes from there but, yeah, that will be a challenge," Sridhar said.

Be it next opponent Pakistan or other rivals, Sridhar wanted India to excel on the field: "We should look to out-field our opponents in all games. We should go out

It's out of our control: Stead

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NOTTINGHAM

New Zealand coach Gary Stead felt that there is no point obsessing about the rain that forced the abandonment of the World Cup match against India at Trent Bridge here on Thursday.

"It would have been lovely to play. It's always tough mentally when you come prepared to play and it doesn't happen. But it's out of our control and we got to move on quickly against South Africa," Stead said and

added that "having reserve days will be a logistical nightmare."

Stead pointed out that no one has a grip on the weather: "It can rain anywhere in the world. My first tour was in Dubai, and it rained there in the desert, and I never thought it was going to rain there."

No bearing

The pragmatic coach, however, refused to read too much into New Zealand's victory over India in an ear-

lier practice match: "Warm-up games were a chance for us to get back together as a team but we are acutely aware it had no bearing on what was going to happen today."

The next few days would be all about rest and recuperation for the Kiwis and Stead said: "The first thing we are going to do is have a couple of days off. We don't play again for about six days now and I think it's important that you manage your breaks."

Can the England-Windies game break the weather-bind plaguing this edition?

Buttler boost for the hosts; Gayle will look reprise his best form

PREVIEW

SHAYAN ACHARYA
SOUTHAMPTON

Cold, wet and windy are the three words that have dominated the World Cup so far. More than the players and the results, the weather has become the talking point.

Both England and the West Indies would want to shift the focus back to cricket, when they face off at the Hampshire Bowl on Friday, even with the ominous forecasts of rain.

So far, England has four points in its kitty from three games, whereas West Indies is one behind – its last game against South Africa was washed out – and for both the teams, the fixture at Southampton is crucial as a couple of points here could prove decisive in the longer run.

Shocking defeat

After a shocking defeat against Pakistan earlier in the tournament, England delivered an all-round show against Bangladesh to bring its campaign back on track. With Jason Roy – who hammered a breezy 153 – in prime form, England will be bolstered by the positive news on Jos Buttler, who had



In good shape: Jos Buttler with England batting coach Graham Thorpe in the nets. ■ REUTERS

THE FACE-OFF					
England vs West Indies					
SOUTHAMPTON					
HEAD-TO-HEAD					
	MORGAN	Holder			
	Matches	Eng	WI	Tied	NR
Overall	101	51	44	0	6
World Cup	6	5	1	0	0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.

suffered a bruise in the hip in the earlier match.

With rains leading to abandonment of games, the teams clearly aren't enjoying the English summer. And West Indies too bore the brunt in its previous fixture.

The Jason Holder-led side, which started the tournament with much promise, thanks to its bowlers, lacked application in the batting department, costing it the game against Australia.

While fast bowlers like

Sheldon Cottrell and Jason Holder have done their bit, it's time for the batsmen to step up.

The last time the two teams met in February this year, the ODI series ended at 2-2.

But the series saw Chris Gayle in fiery form as he amassed 424 runs and hammered 39 sixes.

In the World Cup so far, the seasoned campaigner has not been in its element and could only manage 71 runs in two innings. Now, with the team needing some steel in the batting, over to the 'Universe Boss'!

Parts with award, wins hearts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TAUNTON

In a heart-warming gesture, David Warner gave away his Man-of-the-Match award to a young Australian fan after the win over Pakistan in the World Cup here.

Warner scored his first international hundred after serving out his ball-tampering ban and guided Australia to a 41-run win over Pakistan on Wednesday.

On his way back from the stadium, Warner posed with fans and on meeting a boy in Australia jersey, the opener gifted his Man-of-the-Match award to the young fan.

Awesome

"It's really awesome, it feels cool to have that [MoM Award]. We were just waving the flag. He just came over and gave it to us," the young fan said.



Good on ya! David Warner made a young Aussie fan's day by gifting him his Man-of-the-Match trophy. ■ COURTESY: FOXSPORTS

"We were way outnumbered by Pakistan fans, then it went quiet, then it got noisy again when Pakistan made some runs, and then [Mitchell] Starc came on in the end," said the boy's father.

Warner revealed that his

innings, which laid the foundation for Australia's win, filled him with both joy and relief after wondering whether he would ever get the chance to enjoy a similar moment.

"Yes, definitely, there was always that going through my mind," nodded the left-hander when asked about the possibility that his hundred in the Boxing Day Test against England in December 2017 might have been his last in the baggy green.

"That's what drove me to keep being as fit as I can, to keep scoring as many runs as I can in the T20 tournaments I played in, and really enjoy playing in grade cricket. I think going through these tough times and regrouping put myself in the best way to come back into international cricket," Warner said.

'Sheldon Salute': Bayliss unimpressed

IANS
SOUTHAMPTON

West Indies bowler Sheldon Cottrell has been creating a buzz, not just because of his brilliant bowling but for his flamboyant celebrations, known as the 'Sheldon Salute'.

However, England coach Trevor Bayliss is not amused by it. According to ESPNcricinfo, Bayliss said the signature celebratory salute annoys him more than anything else.

"But every team has their way of celebrating and I'm sure other teams might not like the way we celebrate. In the end, it's a young man's game. It's all entertainment. If it gets a bit of a laugh or a smile on people's faces, so be it," he added.



Sheldon Cottrell. ■ AFP

From zing and wooden to no bails!

N. SUDARSHAN
HUBBALLI

At a time when the electronic 'zing' bails have attracted much controversy for refusing to come off even after being clipped, the fourth one-dayer between India-A and Sri Lanka-A here on Thursday saw the removal of bails altogether!

Strong gusty winds that blew across the field ensured that the wooden bails – which are said to be much lighter than the 'zing'

bails – couldn't be used.

Law 8.5 of the MCC rule book does permit this, allowing the umpires "to dispense with the use of bails, if necessary." But the rules put the onus on the umpires to decide whether the ball has struck the wicket or not.

Section 29.4.1 says that "after a decision to play without bails, the wicket has been put down if the umpire concerned is satisfied that the wicket has been struck by the ball, by

the striker's bat, person or items of his/her clothing or equipment."

But it comes with its own challenges, said a senior umpire. "It's one of the rarest of rare cases. We are used to not having bails in league cricket, but it doesn't happen much at the First Class level. It is very tough to decide if the ball has hit the wicket. The challenge is when a batsman is bowled and the ball just brushes the stumps. It's the same with run outs."



No bails... a rare sight.

Washouts can impact approach: Kallicharran

S. DINAKAR
CHENNAI

"After these washouts, we could see a hectic scramble for points in the remaining games. Sadly, the best teams might not qualify," said West Indian great Alvin Kallicharran.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Thursday, Kallicharran, who has vast experience in the English county cricket, said, "Teams will be under pressure because they don't know how many games are going to be washed out. This could impact their approach."



Alvin Kallicharran. ■ M. VEDHAN

Till now, three matches have been washed out while just over seven overs were

bowled in the West Indies-South Africa game.

Kallicharran said, "The organisers might not have expected this kind of weather but I know it can rain in any part of the year there. Since the format of this edition is long, it's difficult to have the reserve day. In the older format, we could have found time."

Logistical challenge

While it is easier to travel across venues in England by road or train for the cricketers, the distances are not long, it can be hard to move

the television equipment at a short notice if there's a change in scheduling.

Having the entire ground covered could have helped but it would have been an expensive proposition for the counties felt Kallicharran.

The nimble-footed Kallicharran had played on challenging uncovered pitches in England till the mid-70s but cricket has changed since.

Kallicharran saw 'hope' in this West Indian team but said it needed to be lucky with the weather. India, he said, was at the "Top of its game."

India starts favourite against Japan

Forwardline still a concern as the hosts take on the Asiad winner in the semifinals

HSF

UTHRA GANESAN
BHUBANESWAR

It was a match that was expected to be played at the very end, India and Japan taking on each other in the title clash of the Hockey Series Finals here.

The smallest of slip-ups has meant the game arrives a day earlier with the two Asian sides meeting in the semifinals on Friday.

Both have been below-par in their outing so far, even though Japan managed a comprehensive win against Poland in the quarterfinals.

Little rest

That, however, has meant just a day's rest for the side even as India had three off days. Neither team, though, is looking at the past to plan

for the future.

But while a win would be essential for India to advance in its quest for an Olympic spot, its Japanese counterpart, Siegfried Aikman, can breathe easier. Already qualified twice over – as Asian Games champion and host – Japan has no such pressures.

“We came here to win. If we want to do well at the Olympics, we have to beat the top-10 teams, and the only top-10 team in Asia is here,” he shrugged.

Rankings matter little as has already been proven in the tournament so far. Still, India is expected to start favourite but needs to up its game in every department to make sure Japan doesn't spring a surprise.

India's forward line would be the biggest concern for the coach. The team has

created enough chances, even though it has messed up a lot more, but not converted them.

Despite early attacks, the team has taken time to get into the scoring rhythm and its penalty corner conversions remain an issue, even against a weaker side like Uzbekistan.

Testing time

The defence and the goalkeepers have had little to do but the one time it was tested – against Poland – they were caught unawares and that would be the biggest challenge on Friday.

Japan would be coming on far more strongly than any of the three opponents India has played so far and the defence and goalkeeping, untested so far, would have to stay alert and prepared.

At the other end, Japan's scoring too has been wayward but its defence has held up. Aikman admitted that possession was the key and that his team messed up in the group but also insisted that doing well was no guarantee for success and that the team had planned for the game.

Given India's poor recent record in knockout games – Asian Games semifinals, World Cup quarterfinals and the Azlan Shah final – Friday's game would be a test as much for the players as Reid.

The other last-four clash would see USA take on South Africa in a repeat of the opening game of the tournament that saw the African champion being upset.

In the morning, Russia and Poland would fight it out for the fifth place.



Prep time: Indian skipper Manpreet Singh, left, and Simranjeet Singh honing their skills ahead of the all-important encounter. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUTH

Gaikwad punts on batting long and in an unhurried manner

Says that wham-bam T20 hitting is not his style

N. SUDARSHAN
HUBBALLI

When at the crease, Ruturaj Gaikwad is unhurried in his batting. Manic T20 style hitting is not his thing. “I am not used to hitting many sixers,” says the 22-year-old Maharashtra batsman. “I don't have that much of power also. I play the gaps.. look for singles, doubles and boundaries. I want to bat for long periods and remain not out in every innings.”

In the ongoing series against Sri Lanka-A, he has lived by these words. Following two big centuries in the first two games (187 n.o. and 125 n.o.), he made another 84 on Thursday, almost carrying his bat in a match that was ultimately called off because of rain and will be replayed on Friday.

However, a year ago things weren't this rosy. Gaikwad first made his name in the Vi-

jay Hazare one-day tournament in 2016-17, when he finished the third highest run-getter (444 runs from seven matches). But he couldn't match the performance in the subsequent two seasons. “I wasn't able to convert 30s into 50s and 70s into 100s,” he says.

He did feature for India-A in the Emerging Teams Asia Cup and against the visiting England Lions and performed well. But, ironically he credits the IPL stint with Chennai Super Kings this season for helping him grow. CSK can be a tough team to get into and expectedly he didn't play a single game. But learning from the sidelines was great he says.

“I don't think I had done much in the domestic scene to earn to place in the eleven. But the learning was important. CSK is one of the most experienced teams.

Even practise sessions used to be like proper matches and I worked on the mental aspects with coaches like Mike Hussey.

Consistency

“I learnt that T20 is not just about hitting big shots. It is about maintaining a good strike rate of 130 or 140. How you do it, is up to you. If you hit a six and play four dots, it's not of much use. Instead you hit a boundary and take a double. These things have helped and now I am able to play the long innings.”

Even as he says he hasn't idolised anybody, Virat Kohli has been an inspiration. “Even after a century in the previous innings, he will come with the same determination. I want to be that consistent. There is hunger to perform in each match and each innings. Other than that I have no other goals.”



Upward swing: Ruturaj Gaikwad has credited his stint with IPL side CSK for his growth. ■ N. SUDARSHAN

Itinerary of India's tour of Windies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ST. JOHN'S (ANTIGUA)

India will begin its World Test Championship campaign against the West Indies in a two-match series starting here on August 22, while the tour begins with a couple of T20 Internationals in Florida, USA, from August 3.

The tour of West Indies will be India's sole away Test assignment in 2019. Besides two Tests and three T20s, both teams will also play a three-match ODI series during the five-week tour.

The first Test, from August 22 to 26, will be played at the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground here and the second one starts on August 30 at Sabina Park in Jamaica.

The Tests open the new ICC World Test Championship which will be played over

The schedule

T20Is
Aug. 3, Florida
Aug. 4, Florida
Aug. 6, Guyana
ODIs
Aug. 8, Guyana
Aug. 11, Trinidad
Aug. 14, Trinidad
Tests
(PART OF WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP)
Aug. 22-26 Antigua
Aug. 30 to Sept. 3, Jamaica

er the next two years and has been introduced to give greater context and competition in the “Ultimate Test” of the game.

The series starts with the T20Is, with the first two matches being contested back-to-back on the weekend of August 3 and 4.

Lee Chong Wei not game for another fight

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PUTRAJAYA (MALAYSIA)

Cancer-hit badminton star Lee Chong Wei announced his retirement on Thursday, ending a brilliant career in which he collected a swathe of honours but never won a World or Olympic title.

Lee, who spent a total of 348 weeks as World No. 1 but lost six World and Olympic finals, wept as he called it quits months after fighting off nose cancer. Lee was diagnosed with early-stage nose cancer last year and after intensive treatment in Taiwan had said he was keen to play again.



Emotional farewell: Lee Chong Wei cannot control his tears as he announces his decision to retire. ■ AP

But he hasn't trained since April and after missing a series of self-

imposed deadlines to return to competition, his hopes of being eligible for

next year's Tokyo Olympics were remote.

The three-time Olympic silver medalist said he now wanted to rest and spend time with his family, and even take his wife on a “honeymoon”, a trip that has been delayed since their marriage in 2012.

He finishes his career with 705 wins and 69 titles, including five Commonwealth Games gold medals, four All England victories and a record 47 Super Series triumphs.

His last shot at the Olympic title at Rio 2016 ended when he lost out to China's Chen Long.

Women's WC: Australia shocks Brazil, stays alive

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MONTPELLIER (FRANCE)

Australia fought back to beat Brazil 3-2 and keep its women's World Cup hopes alive here on Thursday.

Veterans Marta, from the penalty spot, and Cristiane, with her fourth goal of the tournament, put Brazil 2-0 up after 38 minutes. But the team cracked under the Matildas' relentless barrage of crosses.

Caitlin Foord scored in first-half added time before two Brazilian misjudgements gifted Australia the lead. Barbara reacted too late to Chloe Logarzo's low cross, allowing it to bounce into the net. Monica headed a long, hopeful Australian punt into her own net after 66 minutes with the goal

Friday's schedule

■ Japan vs Scotland (6.30 p.m.); Jamaica vs Italy (9.30 p.m.); England vs Argentina (12.30 a.m., Saturday)

standing after a VAR review.

On Wednesday, Eugenie Le Sommer fired France to the top of Group A after scoring the winning penalty to see off Norway.

The results: Group C: Australia 3 (Foord 45+1, Logarzo 58, Monica 66-og) bt Brazil 2 (Marta 27-pen, Cristiane 38).

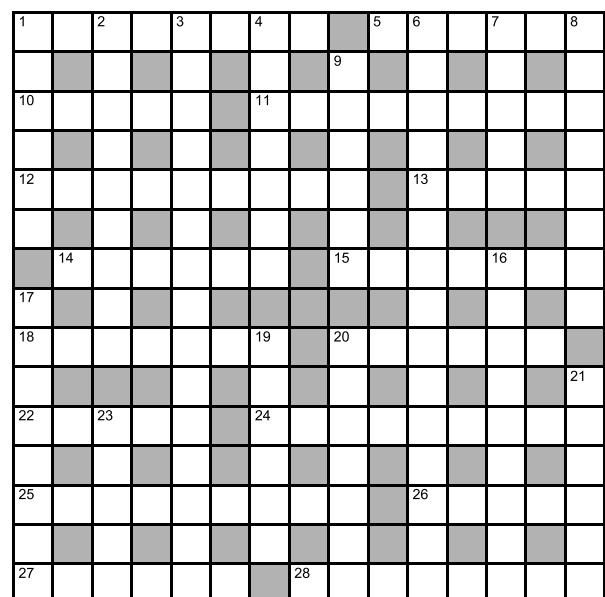
Group B: Germany 1 (Daebritz 42) bt Spain 0.

Group A: Nigeria 2 (D.Y. Kim 29-og, Oshoala 75) bt South Korea 0; France 2 (Gauvin 46, Le Sommer 72-pen) bt Norway 1 (Renard 54-og).



Firing away: Australia's Foord, right, was in fine form. ■ REUTERS

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12652



ACROSS

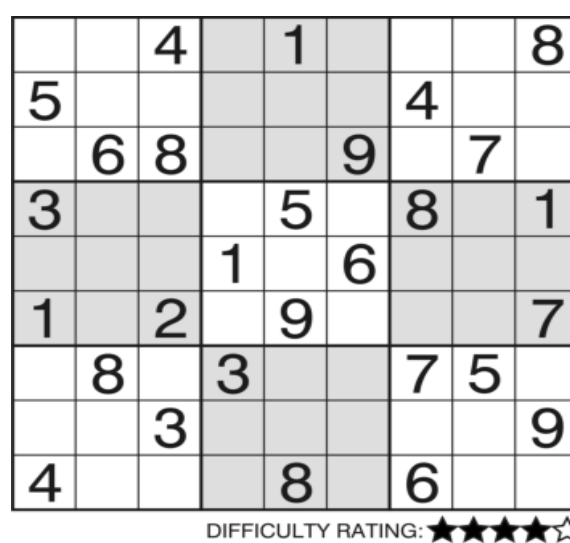
- Endless socialise in co-operative residency (8)
- Shocked by story going around about husband and model (6)
- President wanting hot love in Mediterranean city (5)
- Hysterics and fury before wife breaks cutlery (9)

- Where sailors might be on trial (2,3,4)
- Surgeon essentially excised mighty diseased glands (5)
- I proceed to enter place and eat greedily (3,3)
- Lots follow nationalist blockheads (7)
- Take a siesta essentially to be most relaxed (7)
- Roman general avoiding maiden? Just the opposite (6)
- Part of arena was horribly flooded (5)
- Tries to interrupt heartfelt recital (9)
- Adversities resulting from couples having blown a fuse (9)
- Combined square root of -1 with zero (2,3)
- Ready to conceal gangster in carriage (6)
- Bounty in flatboats left for Britain on schedule mostly (8)

(set by Dr. X)

- Removed thermal socks partly and waited? (6,4,5)
- Overlooked consequence of Communist Party's defeat? (4,3)
- Be self-evident to leave silently? (2,7,6)
- Show in topless joint alongside stream (5)
- Try to pick up a white wine that's most savoury (8)
- Couple of knights about to hunt legendary sea monster (6)
- Slim chances but hopes to meet sultry sirens finally (4,5)
- Pompous prince, tad unhinged, kills dissenter at last (8)
- Pretentious, dense boy ditched for good (6)
- Disorder resulting from a mishap, a terrible loss of memory primarily (7)
- Assert member's overwhelmed by alcoholic spirit (6)
- Very upset, chases associate for help (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12651

1	8	5	3	9	7	2	6	4
7	4	2	5	1	6	8	9	3
3	9	6	4	2	8	1	7	5
5	1	7	8	4	3	9	2	6
6	3	9	1	5	2	7	4	8
4	2	8	7	6	9	5	3	1
2	5	1	9	3	4	6	8	7
8	6	4	2	7	5	3	1	9
9	7	3	6	8	1	4	5	2

FAITH

Karma binds and frees

Krishna explains how karma works both ways, like the key that can lock or unlock depending on what one wants to achieve during one's lifetime. By judicious handling of karma, that is by converting it into detached action, one can attain chitta suddhi that becomes the springboard for liberation, pointed out Sri V. Abhiramasundaram in a discourse. Chitta suddhi is the inner purity when the mind and heart remain unswayed by the influence of the senses.

The Gita advises training oneself to control the senses that have a powerful sway. The sense objects constantly enter the mind through the senses and instigate the mind to indulge in satisfying the desires. For instance, one sees an object and may get drawn to it. The mind goes back to it often, and the desire to possess the object takes root. When desires are thwarted it turns into anger. When in the grip of anger, one gets deluded and the sense of right and wrong, good and bad, etc is lost. Desires cause disturbance in the mind and there is only restlessness and yearning. This is the pattern in the lives of the worldly minded keen on material pursuits. They think these to be of great value for them.

In contrast, a yogi who has controlled his senses looks at the objective world as one constituted of Maya. He lives in this world, no doubt, but his mind is trained to be unattached. His vision is directed to the Lord and the permanent since he knows the ephemeral value of worldly enjoyments. He aims to do his work well and with utmost sincerity and hence all his acts are done as a penance with no attachment. He is not affected by success or failure, having overcome anger, pride, ambition, etc. In this effort of cleansing the mind, it is left to each one to assess the level of purity attained.