

Quadrennial event's spicy sub-plot brewing

Come Sunday, there will be no dearth of drama when India and Pakistan face off



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

In an industrial metropolis where the local football derby pits two teams with the town's name as the common prefix (Manchester) and their respective different secondary names – United and City – the stage is set for another gladiatorial clash. But this time, it pertains to cricket as the World Cup's most-awaited match featuring India and Pakistan, will dish out some Sunday spice here at the Old Trafford.

The previous games involving India witnessed a sea of blue sweep across the stands, be it at Southampton's Hampshire Bowl, the Oval or Nottingham's rain-swept Trent Bridge.

The raucous presence validated what tennis star Sania Mirza once said while referring to the emphatic support that the Indian athletes get across the globe – "There are so many of us." But this time around, there could be a strong counter-punch too as Manchester is also home to people from either side of the Wagah border.

Largely sunny day

And for those curious about the fickle English weather, Friday turned out to be a largely sunny affair, though a few showers have been fore-



Maestro at his marauding best: Sachin Tendulkar's assault on the Pakistan bowlers, especially Shoaib Akhtar, in the 2003 World Cup league encounter is still being spoken about. ■ AFP

cast for the weekend. Pakistan trained at the venue, while it was a travel-day for Virat Kohli's men.

The build-up has been marked by a refreshingly measured approach by the two squads, keen to pipe-down the chatter on the sidelines. But off the field, marketing managers have dipped into needless war-symbology and excess hype.

Just as it is tempting to peer into the crystal-ball and

figure out what the future holds, it is also time for the retrospective gaze because the India-Pakistan rivalry has been an astonishing subplot in the World Cup's matrix.

The two have clashed six times, starting with the 1992 edition, and in all the encounters, India prevailed. Even in the 2015 championship, the script remained unchanged as Kohli's 107 and Mohammed Shami's four for

35 unhinged Misbah-ul-Haq's men at Adelaide.

Contrarian narrative

It was a contrarian narrative to the one seen in the desert sands of Sharjah where Pakistan had a vice-like grip with the most soul-numbing blow being the last-ball six that Javed Miandad hammered off Chetan Sharma in the Australasia Cup final during a hot April day in 1986. There was an equally disrupt-

tive innings, a 36-ball 72 that Salim Malik bludgeoned in an ODI at Kolkata's Eden Gardens in 1987.

Magnificent assault

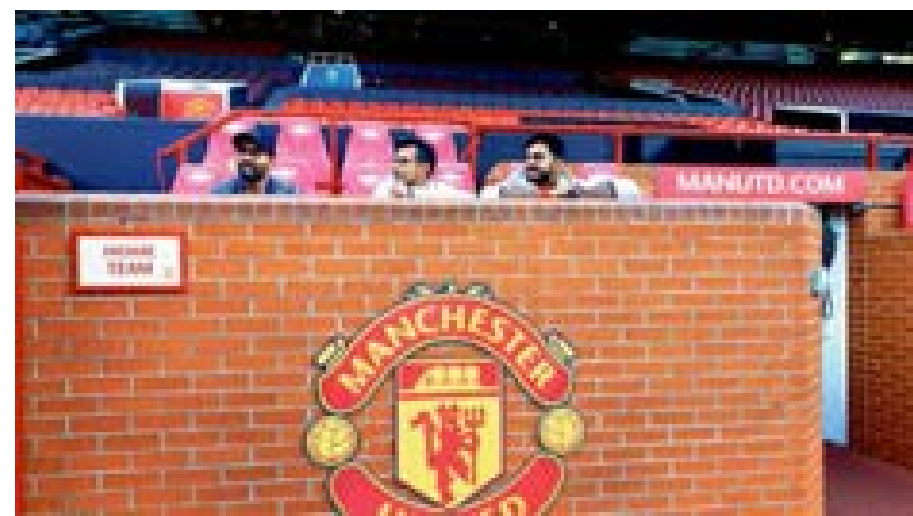
India's retaliation, much to the delight of its fans, happened in World Cup tussles. Miandad's strike to the solar-plexus was gradually forgotten as there was Ajay Jadeja's magnificent assault on Waqar Younis in the 1996 quarter-final at Bangalore's Chinnaswamy Stadium. And the acme was the upper-cut six that Sachin Tendulkar launched off Shoaib Akhtar at Centurion in the 2003 event in South Africa. The stroke blended audacity and mayhem, and deflated Pakistan. The dominance spilled over into the 2011 and 2015 events too and India has stayed ahead. The results may seem skewed but there is no denying the combative fires that flare up when India and Pakistan face off on the turf. None will forget the showdown between Aamer Sohail and Venkatesh Prasad in 1996.

Comical underpinning

At times, this fierce focus had its share of comical underpinnings too. And it was evident when Miandad mimicked wicketkeeper Kiran More's mannerisms with a series of exaggerated jumps in the 1992 skirmish at Sydney. The Pakistani legend drew censure from an angry Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin and all these vignettes are part of YouTube's popular videos.

Come Sunday, there will be no dearth of drama and if the weather stays dry, this World Cup might get a welcome shot of adrenaline.

The Red Devils



Theatre of dreams: Dinesh Karthik, Yuzvendra Chahal and Vijay Shankar soak in the atmosphere at the home of Premier League's most successful team. ■ COURTESY: TWITTER.COM/BCCI

Champions Trophy win an inspiration: Babar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANCHESTER

It is adulation that spills across the border. Babar Azam, Pakistan's talented batsman, draws inspiration from India captain Virat Kohli.

"I watch his batting and the way he bats in various conditions and try to learn. His [Kohli's] winning ratio is higher [for India] so I am trying to achieve that as well," Babar told the media at Old Trafford here on Friday.

But on Sunday, when Pakistan takes on India in a World Cup game, Babar and his teammates would remember their ICC Champions Trophy final victory over India at the Oval in 2017. Pakistan had won that match by a whopping 180 runs.

"The Champions Trophy win gave us confidence and will help here as well because the team is mostly the



Babar Azam. ■ AFP

same and that win is always an inspiration," Babar said.

Positive

Looking ahead at Sunday's clash, Babar said: "The whole team is positive so we are looking forward to the match. Not only me, but all the players want to finish on a high.

"No doubt, India has a good bowling attack but we have played well against England, which also has a very good pace attack so all of us are confident."

'Chacha Chicago' sure Dhoni will give him a ticket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The bond between M.S. Dhoni and Karachi-born Mohammad Bashir aka 'Chacha Chicago' blossomed during the 2011 World Cup semifinal between India and Pakistan and it has only grown stronger since then.

Bashir has flown in from Chicago for Sunday's India-Pakistan contest without a ticket. He knows that Dhoni will ensure that he is at Old Trafford when the first ball is bowled. "I arrived here yesterday and saw that people are ready to pay as much as £800-900 for a ticket. A return ticket from Chicago costs the same. Thanks to Dhoni, I don't have to struggle for a match ticket," the 63-year-old told PTI.

Bowlers and Root help England rout West Indies

The hosts restrict the Caribbeans to 212 before crossing the finish line in the 34th over



No ordinary Joe! Root's second hundred of the tournament took England home with plenty to spare. ■ REUTERS

SHAYAN ACHARYA
SOUTHAMPTON

After days of incessant rain, the Hampshire Bowl witnessed a bright and sunny Friday with England registering an eight-wicket win over the West Indies.

The host, which opted to bowl, restricted the formidable West Indies batting lineup to a below-par 212, thanks to three-wicket hauls by Jofra Archer and Mark Wood.

England comfortably chased down the total in just 33.1 overs, with Joe Root slamming his second century of this edition. The 28-year-old remained unbeaten on 100 off 94 balls to emerge as the top-scorer (279).

The victory helped England climb to the second spot, but the day was marred by injuries to skipper Eoin Morgan (back spasm) and opener Jason Roy (hamstring).

With the rules suggesting that Roy could only bat at No. 7, England had to rejig its batting order, with Root joining Johnny Bairstow at the top. The new pair, however, had no difficulty in adjusting to

Next assignment

WEST INDIES
June 17 vs Bangladesh, Taunton, 3 p.m.

ENGLAND
June 18 vs Afghanistan, Old Trafford, 3 p.m.

the conditions as it accumulated 95. After Bairstow was caught by Carlos Brathwaite at third man off Shannon Gabriel for 45, Root stitched a 104-run partnership with

Chris Woakes (40 off 54 balls) that sealed the issue. Root, who had made 105 against Pakistan in Nottingham last week, played a flawless knock.

Earlier in the day, West Indies suffered a batting collapse, losing three wickets for 55 runs. Woakes dismissed Lewis for two before Wood dropped opener Chris Gayle. The batsman, however, failed to make the most of his fortune, falling for 36.

Some sensible batting by

Nicholas Pooran, who played a gritty knock of 63, and Shimron Hetmyer (39 off 48) helped Windies cross 200.

Fitness issues

Roy's World Cup future could be determined on Saturday when the England batsman undergoes a scan. Morgan, clearly in discomfort, addressed the post-match media interaction standing up and admitted it was not clear whether he would be able to play against Afghanistan.

SCOREBOARD ENGLAND VS WEST INDIES

WEST INDIES

Chris Gayle c Bairstow b Plunkett 36 (41b, 5x4, 1x6), Evin Lewis b Woakes 2 (8b), Shai Hope lbw b Wood 11 (30b, 1x4), Nicholas Pooran c Buttler b Archer 63 (78b, 3x4, 1x6), Shimron Hetmyer c & b Root 39 (48b, 4x4), Jason Holder c & b Root 9 (10b, 1x6), Andre Russell c Woakes b Wood 21 (16b, 1x4, 2x6), Carlos Brathwaite c Buttler b Archer 14 (22b, 1x6), Sheldon Cottrell lbw b Archer 0 (1b), Oshane Thomas (not out) 0 (11b), Shannon Gabriel b Wood 0 (3b); Extras (lb-5, w-12): 17; Total (in 44.4 overs): 212.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-4 (Lewis, 2.6 overs), 2-54 (Gayle, 12.6), 3-55 (Hope, 13.2), 4-144 (Hetmyer, 29.5), 5-156 (Holder, 31.6), 6-188 (Russell, 36.2), 7-202 (Pooran, 39.4), 8-202 (Cottrell, 39.5), 9-211 (Brathwaite, 43.4).

ENGLAND BOWLING

Woakes 5-2-16-1, Archer 9-1-30-3, Plunkett 5-0-30-1, Wood 6.4-0-18-3, Stokes 4-0-25-0, Rashid 10-0-61-0, Root 5-0-27-2.

ENGLAND

Jonny Bairstow c Brathwaite b Gabriel 45 (46b, 7x4), Joe Root (not out) 100 (94b, 11x4), Chris

Woakes c sub b Gabriel 40 (54b, 4x4); Ben Stokes (not out) 10 (6b, 2x4); Extras (lb-2, nb-1, w-15): 18; Total (for two wkts. in 33.1 overs): 213.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-95 (Bairstow (14.4), 2-199 (Woakes, 31.5).

WEST INDIES BOWLING

Cottrell 3-0-17-0, Thomas 6-0-43-0, Gabriel 7-0-49-2, Russell 2-0-14-0, Holder 5-1-0-31-0, Brathwaite 5-0-35-0, Gayle 5-0-22-0.

Toss: England.

Man-of-the-Match: Root.

England won by eight wickets with 101 balls remaining.

Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
New Zealand	4	3	0	1	7	2.163
England	4	3	1	0	6	1.557
Australia	4	3	1	0	6	0.570
India	3	2	0	1	5	0.539
Sri Lanka	4	1	1	2	4	-1.517
West Indies	4	1	2	1	3	-0.311
Bangladesh	4	1	2	1	3	-0.714
Pakistan	4	1	2	1	3	-1.796
South Africa	4	0	3	1	1	-0.952
Afghanistan	3	0	3	0	0	-1.493

*till the England-West Indies match on June 14

Did not expect Bumrah to be this good: Kapil

Says the Indian team has reached the top because of the bowlers

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

The rise of Jasprit Bumrah to the top of the world rankings (he leads the ODI charts) has been meteoric and surprised many. And India's first World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev was no exception to this view.

Speaking here at an event got up to unveil the world's largest cricket bat, Kapil said, "When I saw him for the first time, I never thought he would have that much ability. I change my word and god, man, he is really fantastic.

"With such a short run-up, to generate pace with an awkward action is not very easy. I just want him to be fit for the next few years."

Kapil added, "When you don't have something and



Kapil Dev. ■ DIPAK RAGAV

you get it, you feel proud about that. That's what has happened to the Indian team.

"We always depended on batsman to win. But in the last 15 years, bowlers have started coming.

"It is always said bowlers win matches. The Indian team has reached the top be-

cause we not only have good batsman but also [good] bowlers."

With the biggest clash of the World Cup upon us on Sunday when India takes on Pakistan, Kapil said that India would start as favourite to win the tie and keep its unbeaten record against its arch-rival in the quadrennial event.

"I would like to keep my fingers crossed and hope they keep on playing like they have been doing so far. The current Indian team is far better.

"When I was playing, they [Pakistan] were better than us but today I can say India will win seven out of 10 times.

"What happens on that day god knows, but I hope if the players play to the best of

their potential, we can't lose."

Defends Dhoni

The 60-year-old also came in defence of M.S. Dhoni for his decision to wear an army insignia on his wicketkeeping gloves that created a furore.

Kapil was the first Indian cricketer to be made an honorary officer with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the territorial army, before Dhoni was made one.

"I respect Dhoni. He just showed his passion and love for his country and army people. There is nothing wrong in that. But at the same time, we have to follow the system and the rules set by the ICC. He must have not realised it was going to be such a big thing because the next day he said he will remove it."

India-Pakistan match is always the biggest: Asif Iqbal

'Current players are remarkable because they handle immense pressure'

VIJAY LOKAPALLY
HYDERABAD

For Asif Iqbal, an India-Pakistan contest may not be just another match, and he would not miss a ball because of the intensity it generates.

As he looks forward to the Sunday meeting between the two sides, Iqbal pleads: "treat it as a cricket match. One team will lose and let not the players from the losing team be unreasonably berated."

Makings of a classic

Speaking to *The Hindu* from his home in London, Iqbal, former Pakistan captain and one of the finest allrounders to have represented Kent, said, "an India-Pakistan cricket match always has the makings of a classic. It can be



Asif Iqbal. ■ FILE PHOTO

exhilarating stuff for the fans even though it does put the players under tremendous pressure."

Iqbal played four Ranji Trophy matches for Hyderabad before migrating to Pakistan in 1961. In fact, he

Cricket is more than a sport now but the players are human. They can make mistakes

played for South Zone against the visiting Pakistan in early 1961 and by the year-end, made his debut for Karachi.

"The pressure of performance is always there because the expectations from all stake-holders involved are huge. To me, it is always the biggest match of international cricket.

"Cricket is more than a sport now but the players are human. They can make mistakes. So let us not just shower them with adulation only when they win. Treat them as sportsmen."

Iqbal observed: "Some

former cricketers may be better than the present lot but they must understand that the game has evolved.

Not qualified

"A total of 250 is not a winning score now because of T20. I don't give views on T20 because I am not qualified to do so. The current players have a different mindset and they are a remarkable lot because they handle immense pressure."

Ahead of the Manchester match of the World Cup, Iqbal said, "I am sure it will be an excellent contest. I only hope it doesn't rain. The scheduling of the World Cup has been poor."

He will support "Pakistan" when it plays India. "But I support India when it plays another team."

Raptors rupture Warriors' hopes

Become the first team from outside the United States to clinch the honours



Making history: The Toronto Raptors players are on cloud nine after their maiden triumph. •AP

NBA FINALS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
OAKLAND

Toronto Raptors dethroned defending champion Golden State on Thursday, defeating Warriors 114-110 to win the NBA Finals and capture the first crown by a club from outside the United States.

Kyle Lowry and Pascal Siakam each scored 26 points while Kawhi Leonard and reserve Fred VanVleet both had 22 as Toronto won the best-of-seven series four games to two.

Leonard was named the NBA Finals Most Valuable Player for the second time in

his career after the first in 2014 with San Antonio, which traded him to Toronto last July.

Raptors became the first Canadian club to win a major North American sports title since the 1993 Toronto Blue Jays captured Major League Baseball's World Series.

Raptors spoiled Warriors' farewell appearance at Oracle Arena. Golden State's home since 1971 will be replaced by a new \$1 billion venue in San Francisco next season.

Klay Thompson scored 30 points to lead the Warriors but left the game with a left knee injury late in the third

quarter after landing awkwardly on his left leg.

Latest setback
It was the latest setback for an injury-hit Golden State team that was already without two-time Kevin Durant, who returned in game five on Monday after being sidelined for a month only to suffer a ruptured right Achilles tendon.

Andre Iguodala added 22 points for the Warriors, Stephen Curry had 21 and Draymond Green contributed 11 points, 18 rebounds and 13 assists.

Golden State had a final shot to win trailing 111-110 but

Curry missed a 3-pointer and Green called a timeout when the team had none, setting up three final free throws by Leonard to seal the victory.

Warriors failed in their bid for a third consecutive title and to become the first team in 50 years to win four titles in five seasons.

Toronto's triumph made this the first NBA Finals where road teams won five consecutive games.

The result: Toronto Raptors 114 (Pascal Siakam 26, Kyle Lowry 26, Kawhi Leonard 22) bt Golden State Warriors 110 (Klay Thompson 30, Andre Iguodala 22, Stephen Curry 21). *Raptors win series 4-2.*

Three keys that opened the door for Toronto

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

Containing Curry: The Warriors sharpshooter was effectively contained by the Raptors throughout the series, who tried to trap, double-team and harass him at every step of the way.

Defenders Fred Van Vleet, Kyle Lowry, Danny Green and sometimes Pascal Siakam and Leonard always kept at his hip, giving him less time and space to shoot.

The Raptors also tried unconventional defensive tactics such as the "box-and-one" — a ploy generally used in high school basketball in the U.S. — where an active defender played man-to-man against Curry even as other players formed a zone within the arc.

The box-and-one dared other Warriors players to shoot and was most effective when Curry's Splash Brother Klay Thompson was not on court.

Injuries: Kevin Durant's calf tear and the devastating Achilles heel injury that took him out reduced the Warriors' super team into a more

Hoop high

1 Maiden title for the Raptors, a franchise that joined the NBA in 1995. Like his Warriors counterpart Steve Kerr and former Cavaliers coach Tyron Lue, Toronto Nick Nurse won the championship in his very first season as coach.

1 Center Marc Gasol joins his brother Pau in becoming the only set of brothers to win NBA titles.

3 Kawhi Leonard is only the third player to win Finals MVP with two different teams (San Antonio, Toronto) after Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (Milwaukee, Los Angeles) and LeBron James (Miami, Cleveland). Kawhi is the only player to win the MVP honours representing two different Conferences.

3 Leonard is the third highest scorer in the post-season ever — his

732 points in 24 games is next only to Michael Jordan's 759 (in 1992) and LeBron James' 748 in 2018

6 Number of Raptors players who averaged double digit scores in the NBA Finals. The last time this happened was in 1987 when the Showtime Lakers matched that tally

11 After Toronto's triumph, only 11 active teams in the NBA are yet to win the title — Phoenix, Indiana, Minnesota, Brooklyn, Utah, Orlando, Denver, Memphis, Los Angeles Clippers, Charlotte and New Orleans

17 Raptors might have lost two games en route to the championship, but they dominated the Warriors, leading in 17 of the 24 quarters in the six games

manageable machine for the Raptors to handle.

Klay Thompson, who missed a game with a hamstring injury, was brilliant in Game 6 with 30 points in 32 minutes before an untimely

ACL tear took him off the game and that proved to be the final straw for the short-handed Warriors.

Curry became more of a non-factor without Thompson to relieve him of scoring

responsibilities.

Kawhi's malleability: Leonard has been the Raptors' leading scorer this post-season, and his record this year ranks among the best ever.

The Warriors tried to limit his effectiveness in offence by double-teaming and trapping him early at the top of the arc and limiting his fouls into the paint.

The Raptors managed to circumvent this by using Leonard as a secondary option on offence and routing the plays through two point guards on the floor — Kyle Lowry and Fred Van Vleet, who both rose to the occasion in vital moments in Game 6 and other games.

The plural nature of the offence and Kawhi's ability to spot up or score off second chance points allowed the Raptors to keep the strong Warriors defence at bay.

At the other end, Leonard played stellar defence, grabbing contested rebounds and stifling passing lanes along with Pascal Siakam and Marc Gasol.

Sachin sues Australian bat maker

REUTERS
SYDNEY

Sachin Tendulkar has filed a civil lawsuit against an Australian bat manufacturer, accusing it of using his name and image to promote products and then failing to pay him \$2 million in royalties.

In Federal Court papers filed this month, Tendulkar said the Sydney-based Spartan Sports International agreed in 2016 to pay him at least \$1 million a year to use his image, logo and promotional services to sell "Sachin by Spartan" sporting goods and clothing, but did not pay him.

Semenya can compete

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

Switzerland's top court rejected an IAAF request to re-impose rules obliging double Olympic champion Caster Semenya to lower her testosterone before competing in certain events, her legal team said on Thursday.

The court, which could not be immediately reached for confirmation, had issued the order on Wednesday, adding that "this means that Caster remains permitted to compete without restriction in the female category."

Nagal stuns the top seed

SPORTS BUREAU
LYON

Sumit Nagal shocked top seed Albert Ramos-Vinolas of Spain 7-5, 7-6(2) in the quarterfinals of the €92,040 Challenger on Friday.

In the \$25,000 ITF event in Hong Kong, Sidharth Rawat rallied from the brink of defeat to beat fourth seed Nam Hoang Ly of Vietnam 4-6, 7-6(0), 6-1 in the quarterfinals.

Other results: €137,560 Challenger, Nottingham, England: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Ken Skupski (GBR) & John-Patrick Smith (Aus) bt Rameez Junaid (Aus) & Leander Paes 6-4, 7-6(4).

\$25,000 ITF men, Shenzhen, China: Doubles (semifinals): Rhett Purcell (NZL) & Aoran Wang (Chn) bt Luca Castelluovo (Sui) & Karunuday Singh 6-3, 6-0.

\$15,000 ITF men, Singapore: Quarterfinals: Manish Sureshkumar bt Alec Adamson (US) 4-6, 6-3, 6-1.

Doubles (semifinals): Congsup Congcar (Tha) & Kazuki Nishiwaki (Jpn) bt Siddhant Bantnia & Manish Sureshkumar 4-6, 6-1, [10-8].

\$100,000 ITF women, Manchester, England: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Quinn Gleason & Ingrid Neel (US) bt Tereza Smitkova (Cze) & Prarthana Thombare 6-4, 6-3.

India turns on the style

Wallops Japan, meets South Africa in final



Fantastic finish: Ramandeep Singh comes up with a spectacular effort for one of his two goals in India's thumping win over Japan in the semifinals on Friday. •BISWARANJAN ROUTH

HSF

UTHRA GANESAN
BHUBANESWAR

The Indian team that everyone wanted to see finally stepped up, partially, in the semifinals of the Hockey Series Finals here against Japan on Friday, storming to a 7-2 victory and setting up a final clash against South Africa.

Despite the scoreline, it was not a 100 percent performance from the host. When in flow, the Indians can be a delight to watch, and they showed glimpses of it in the second half.

The margin could have been bigger if the forwards, specially Mandeep Singh, had managed to avoid a bit of show-boating and got their positioning correct early on.

Credit, though, must also go to Japan goalkeeper Takashi Yoshikawa, who brought off some impressive

saves. Despite the difference in rankings, it wasn't expected to be an easy outing for India and it wasn't made any easier when Kenji Kitazato slammed in the opening goal in the second minute itself.

It took the Indians by surprise and saw them hit back with desperation, getting an equaliser five minutes later through Harmanpreet Singh's penalty corner.

For the first 20 minutes, it was an even battle before Ramandeep Singh tapped in the 23rd minute and Hardik Singh, unmarked at the top of the circle, got in a rebound two minutes later.

The second half was completely different. The lethargy was replaced by aggression and it looked like the players had been given a free hand.

The team spread out, the flanks became important in creating openings, the holding time reduced and sud-

denly, the Indians were all over the Japanese half.

The team kept trying to earn penalty corners — it got 10 in all — while also putting pressure on the Japanese defence through short passes inside their circle.

It worked, as in the 37th minute Ramandeep Singh slotted home a rebound from India's eighth PC.

In the other semifinal, South Africa completed its spectacular recovery in the tournament by entering the final with a 2-1 win against USA.

The results: 5-6 place: Russia 3 (Marat Khairullin, Pavel Golubev, Sergey Lepeshkin) bt Poland 2 (Mikolaj Gumny, Michal Kasprzyk).

Semifinals: India 7 (Ramandeep Singh 2, Gursahibjit Singh, Vivek Prasad, Varun Kumar, Harmanpreet Singh, Hardik Singh) bt Japan 2 (Kenji Kitazato, Kota Watanabe); South Africa 2 (Austin Smith, Nicholas Spooner) bt USA 1 (Aki Kaeppler).

Japan pips Scotland

Li strikes as China beats South Africa

WOMEN'S WC

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RENNES (FRANCE)

Mana Iwabuchi set Japan on its way to a 2-1 win over Scotland here on Friday as the 2011 winner gave its women's World Cup campaign a shot in the arm.

Yuika Sugawawa also converted a penalty as the Nadeshiko closed in on qualifying for the last 16, just four days after a disappointing display in a goalless draw against outsiders Argentina.

Asako Takakura's team, ranked World No. 7, will now go into its final Group-D

game against England next week with a chance of topping the section, which would ensure a far more favourable draw in the last 16. Scotland got a goal back through substitute Lana Clelland.

Earlier, Li Ying's first-half strike gave China a 1-0 victory over South Africa.

The results: Group D: Japan 2 (Iwabuchi 23, Sugawawa 37pen) bt Scotland 1 (Clelland 88).

Group B: South Africa 0 lost to China 1 (Li Ying 40).

Saturday's matches: Netherlands vs Cameroon (6.30 p.m.); Canada vs New Zealand (00.30 a.m., Sunday).



The toast: Iwabuchi is congratulated by teammates. •AFP

Anand beats Grischuk; Carlsen triumphs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
STAVANGER (NORWAY)

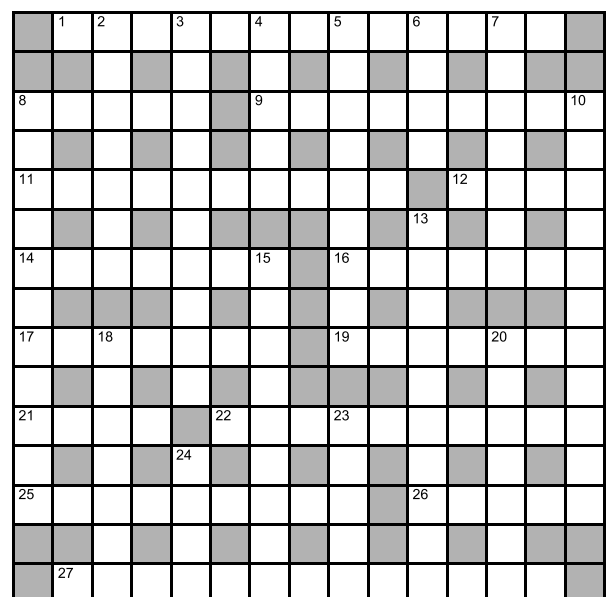
Viswanathan Anand defeated an out of sorts Alexander Grischuk while Magnus Carlsen sealed the title at the Altibox Norway chess tournament with a round to spare.

Anand's chances to be in top three had ended after he lost to American Fabiano Caruana in the previous round.

Carlsen won his sixth title of the year, defeating Yu Yangyi of China in the Classical game itself. While it was only his second Classical win here, Carlsen also won all the six matches in the Armageddon stage.

The results (eighth round): Alexander Grischuk (Rus, 3.5) lost to Viswanathan Anand (Ind, 7.5); Magnus Carlsen (Nor, 13) bt Yu Yangyi (Chn, 8.5); Fabiano Caruana (USA, 8.5) bt Levon Aronian (Arm, 9); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 7.5) bt Ding Liren (Chn, 8); Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze, 5) lost to Wesley So (USA, 8.5).

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12653



- (set by Dr. X)
- 12 Best to take pawn for knight (4)
 - 14 Italian violinist's heart problem returns (7)
 - 16 Scrap in bar over a little remark (7)
 - 17 Almost killed, receiving knock in fight (7)
 - 19 All are high on ecstasy and drink (4,3)
 - 21 Wicket lost in fine game played by children (1-3)
 - 22 Move to arrest atheist essentially spreading disinformation (10)
 - 25 Clumsy girl! Don't be in such a rush? (9)
 - 26 Lives to bring charges against heirs (5)
 - 27 Be in a very precarious state with illogical instruction to executioner? (4,2,1,6)
 - 5 Cry when boyfriend gets overwhelmed by strain (4,1,4)
 - 6 Weary couple taking a bit of rest (4)
 - 7 Staff is more congenial after receiving a little raise (7)
 - 8 What actors dislike in print — bad acting reviews ultimately (11)
 - 10 Be the most outrageous man in attack! Keep battling to remove President (4,3,4)
 - 13 English girls lost over cliff getting more dishevelled (10)
 - 15 Intoxication from one tiny beer! Strange (9)
 - 18 Ebullient friend hugging son accepted in Scandinavian University (7)
 - 20 Partly reviewed data is on gait in sensory disorder (7)
 - 23 Very upset in Gulf state (5)
 - 24 Request to catch glimpse of renowned Austrian composer (4)

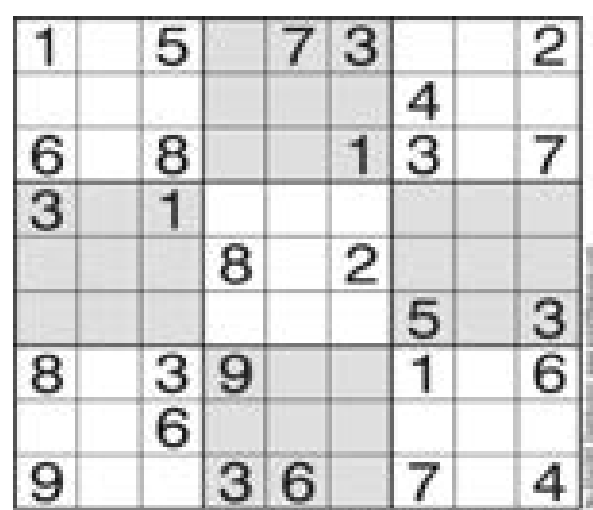
ACROSS

- 1 Skeleton over small mound! Go ballistic (4,4,5)
- 8 One in bathroom is somewhat blotto, we learn (5)
- 9 Leaves listeners enthralled by hit (6,3)
- 11 Stunning bird approaches old chaps entertained by lap dance (10)

DOWN

- 2 Cheap attire that's essential for climbing hills (3,4)
- 3 Gangster troubling folk captured by partner in pursuit (4,2,4)
- 4 Good to keep husband in place (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12652

D O M I C I L E A G H A S T
E A O E K O R A
C A I R O F I R E W O R K S
E N L T A J A T
I N T H E D O C K T H Y M I
T A D U E H
P I G U O T N O O D L E S
P A N I U O T
E A S I E S T A N T O N Y
O A S U P I S T C A
A W A S H R E H A R S A L
N V E G A Y H L
T R A G E D I E S I N O N E
I I L D I N T G
C A L A S H L A R G E S E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

The guru illumines

In days of yore, study of Vedas followed the oral tradition and this fostered a bond between Guru and sishya. The role of the Guru in enabling the disciple to imbibe the Eternal Truth with clarity is the most salient feature in this tradition, pointed out Sri R. Krishnamurthy Sastrigal in a discourse. In this regard, Adi Sankara is hailed as a guru par excellence by his direct disciples who acknowledge their indebtedness to him for conferring on them not only intellectual proficiency but also spiritual enlightenment.

Adi Sankara is the earliest acharya in terms of history and the lineage of acharyas preceding him is traced back through Govinda, Gaudapada, Suka, Vyasa, and the rishis in the Puranas to the Lord Himself who is the primordial guru. Believed to be an incarnation of Siva, Adi Sankara has been responsible for bringing about spiritual awareness in people at a time when much confusion prevailed owing to the prevalence of many cults, dogmas and beliefs. The acharya has firmly established the authority of the Vedas and his contributions by way of explaining the difficult and esoteric thought in the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutra and the Bhagavad Gita continue to be a source of reference in philosophical discussions and debates. He has propagated the Advaita Siddhanta from which other philosophical systems of thought, such as Visishtadvaita, Dvaita, Suddhadvaita, etc have branched out.

Adi Sankara's Stotra granthas are exceptional in the way they carry the essence of the Vedas to the common man in practical terms. These hymns sensitise one to the fleeting and short life of all beings and to the subtle awareness of God who alone matters when it comes to crossing the cycle of birth.