

Dhawan ruled out with fracture

ICC accedes to BCCI's request to name Pant as the replacement



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
SOUTHAMPTON

Shikhar Dhawan has been ruled out of the ICC World Cup following a final confirmation that the fracture in his left thumb will need more time to heal. Subsequently, the BCCI sought permission from the ICC to name Rishabh Pant as the replacement and the request was approved.

The Indian team manager Sunil Subramaniam, who addressed the media at the Hampshire Bowl here on Wednesday, said: "Shikhar has a fracture on the base of his first metacarpal (near the thumb) on his left hand. Following several specialist opinions, he will remain in a cast till mid-July which rules him out of the ICC World Cup. We have written to the ICC and requested for Rishabh Pant as the replacement."

Dhawan was struck on his hand by a delivery from Pat Cummins during the course of his 117 against Australia at the Oval on June 9. The southpaw, however, continued batting till he was dismissed in the 37th over. The team-management, on learning about the opener's



Tough luck: Shikhar Dhawan will feel hard done to not take any further part in the mega show, especially considering the terrific touch he was in. •AP

injury, stated that a decision would be taken after 10 to 12 days as it needed a fair timeframe to judge Dhawan's state of recovery.

Contingency measure

As a contingency measure, Pant was asked to join the team as stand-by and get acclimatised to the conditions in England. Interestingly, in all its communication specific to Dhawan's injury back then, the BCCI did not mention the word 'fracture'. Now with Dhawan being deemed unavailable, India will continue to stick with Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul as its opening pair. The duo

added 136 runs during last Sunday's clash against Pakistan at Old Trafford.

Meanwhile, Dhawan limbered up with the rest of the squad here in a morning training session. He bantered with his teammates, kept an eye on Jasprit Bumrah's solo effort in the adjoining nets and warmly greeted a senior scribe and strode away with a laconic smile. Pant, the opener's replacement, did his practice stints too.

Dhawan posted a video-message and a note on Twitter which stated: "I feel emotional to announce that I will no longer be a part of

Dhawan in ICC ODI events

Matches:	20
Runs:	1,238
HS:	137
Avg.:	65.15
100s:	6
50s:	4

CWC19. Unfortunately, the thumb won't recover on time. But the show must go on. I am grateful for all the love and support from my team mates, cricket lovers and our entire nation. Jai Hind!"

The man behind Team India's fitness flourish

We have had the least number of injuries in the last three-four years: trainer Basu

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
SOUTHAMPTON

In the distant past, Indian cricketers would jog, dunk some biscuits in tea, train in the nets and off the field, dig into greasy food while the calories soared. Cut to the present, the Men in Blue prepare scientifically as they blend ideal work-outs, monitored diets and perfect sleep-patterns.

At the Hampshire Bowl here on Wednesday, Indian team's trainer Shanker Basu explained to the media about how Virat Kohli's men gear up for their sporting battles. "Rome was never built in a day and this team's brand of training started in 2015," Basu said.

Immense value

There is a zing to Indian fast bowlers these days and Basu attributed that to prime fitness: "In the last one year, (Jasprit) Bumrah, (Mohammed) Shami, Ishant (Sharma), Bhuvu (Bhuvneshwar Kumar) and Umesh (Yadav) have bowled much quicker. We did a few lifestyle modifications and we got this GPS last year. It gave us data that is of immense value, based on that we understood our training methodology and prepared our schedules. All this helped our fast bowlers bowl at more than 140 and 145 clicks (kmph)."

Asked about the lifestyle modifications and also the IPL's impact, Basu replied: "We educated them about the circadian rhythm. The human body has a particular



Reaping the rewards: Shanker Basu, right, seen with manager Sunil Subramaniam, feels that India's brand of training which started in 2015 is yielding dividends now. •COURTESY: BCCI-TV

sort of sleep-wake cycle but what happens during the IPL is that the boys take a beating. This World Cup preparation was critical (especially) with the IPL preceding it. We used to jokingly say that the IPL is a sort of Mount Everest, then we come to the base camp and then we are coming to Kilimanjaro here. During the IPL, the boys sleep late - 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock. To get them back to sleeping early and to do a training regimen was a challenge and we had only eight days to come here. Since the boys have done it over the last four years, they quickly understood the value of sleep-wake cycle, good nutrition programme, supplements, training, strength work, conditioning and warm-ups. It has made a difference. The IPL's impact, Basu replied: "We educated them about the circadian rhythm. The human body has a particular

camp could have been counter-productive."

Self awareness

Basu reiterated that the players were nudged to watch their diet and become self-aware. "We introduced a Dexa-scan which is used for checking bone density and fat percentage. The moment you have a number in your hand and it says 20, 30, 10 or 12, there is a sort of healthy competition within the team. What are the ways you can bring down the fat percentage? One is healthy eating habits. Everybody started eating better, they lost fat and moved better. We have had the least number of injuries in the last three to four years. The players have cut on junk (food). This team is as good as an athletic team. We also did a DNA test that gives you an indication of what sort of a person you exactly are - whether you are

power-oriented or endurance-oriented, whether you are gluten-intolerant or lactose-intolerant. We gave them the report card and they made informed decisions and that was really gratifying," Basu said.

Blessing in disguise

He also lauded Shami's metamorphosis: "He failing the fitness test was a blessing in disguise. After that, he was a changed man. We have done his fat testing over three years and it is the same. He has changed his entire training regimen and training is part of his lifestyle. This is 2.0 version of Shami."

Moving from the tropical heat of India to England's alleged summer where temperatures dip and the rain is a constant companion, Basu has a tough task on his hands in the coming days but he trusts his wards to stay warm and fit.

India back in training after a break

Afternoon drizzle forces suspension of team practice

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SOUTHAMPTON

After a two-day break following the big game against Pakistan at Manchester's Old Trafford, Virat Kohli's men were back in training at the Hampshire Bowl here on Wednesday. First up, most of them including the skipper and M.S. Dhoni indulged in a spot of sepak takraw, a sport akin to volleyball but one in which only the legs and head were permitted to be used while relaying the ball across the net.

There was chit-chat and comedy too as Hardik Pandya and Yuzvendra Chahal got struck awkwardly while the rest laughed. Later, the Men in Blue trooped to the adjacent practice ground and had a round of nets till an afternoon drizzle forced them to seek the indoor facility. Rohit Sharma, Kohli,



Follow the coach: Vijay Shankar and B. Arun during practice in Southampton on Wednesday. •AP

K.L. Rahul, Pandya and Dhoni had a hit, while Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah wheeled their arms over. Coach Ravi Shastri then had a long chat with Kohli and Pandya.

Dinesh Karthik, meanwhile, did his wicketkeeping drills at the main ground

and Kuldeep Yadav had to do his shuttle runs as part of his fitness regimen. Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who is recovering from a hamstring strain, jogged a bit and even ran up the stairs but he is unlikely to be fit in time for Saturday's clash against Afghanistan.

Ice-cool Williamson pilots New Zealand to the top

Kiwis' exciting four-wicket win puts South Africa on the brink of elimination

SHAYAN ACHARYA
BIRMINGHAM

New Zealand rode on Kane Williamson's unbeaten century to clinch a thrilling four-wicket victory against South Africa at Edgbaston on Wednesday.

In a game reduced to 49 overs-a-side, New Zealand restricted the Proteas to 241 for six. The Kiwis lost opener Colin Munro early before Martin Guptill and Williamson forged a 60-run stand. Guptill was hit-wicket off a delivery from Andile Phehlukwayo.

Chris Morris then removed Ross Taylor and Tom Latham in quick succession. With the side in trouble at 80 for four, Williamson was involved in two crucial partnerships - 37 with Jimmy Neesham (23) and 91 with Colin de Grandhomme (60, 47b, 5x4, 2x6).

Getting it wrong

David Miller dropped de Grandhomme off Imran Tahir in the 37th over and a few balls later, Williamson edged to the 'keeper - later confirmed by replays. Though a confident Tahir appealed, his teammates didn't back him.

Williamson made the Proteas pay for that lapse, guiding the team home. He finished with a flourish, smashing Phehlukwayo for a six to reach his century. His unbeaten 106 off 138 deliveries contained nine boundaries and a six.



Kane is able: Williamson combined style with substance during his match-winning knock. •REUTERS

Earlier in the day, Trent Boult vindicated his captain's decision to field first, casting Quinton de Kock. Skipper Faf

de Plessis (23), too, departed soon, failing to keep out a perfect yorker from Ferguson, who finished with three wickets.

Barring Hashim Amla and Rassie van der Dussen, the other South African batsmen

Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
New Zealand	5	4	0	1	9	1.591
England	5	4	1	0	8	1.862
Australia	5	4	1	0	8	0.812
India	4	3	0	1	7	1.029
Bangladesh	5	2	2	1	5	-0.270
Sri Lanka	5	1	2	2	4	-1.778
West Indies	5	1	3	1	3	0.272
South Africa	6	1	4	1	3	-0.193
Pakistan	5	1	3	1	3	-1.933
Afghanistan	5	0	5	0	0	-2.089

*Till the South Africa-New Zealand match on June 19

INNINGS SCAN

RSA	Maidens	NZ
2	1	1
18	24	24
4	3	3
72 (5th)	91 (6th)	91
4.91	RR	5.05

PROGRESSION

RSA	NZ
40/1	10 overs
73/2	20 overs
123/3	30 overs
166/4	39 overs
241/6	49 overs

TOP SHOWS

For	Batting	Bowling
South Africa	van der Dussen 67* (64b, 2x4, 3x6)	Morris 3/49 (10)
New Zealand	Williamson 106* (138, 9x4, 1x6)	Ferguson 3/59 (10)

Aussie test awaits Bangladesh

PREVIEW

IANS
NOTTINGHAM

Buoyed by its emphatic win over West Indies, Bangladesh will be brimming with confidence when it faces a stiff test against Australia in a crucial World Cup fixture at Trent Bridge, here on Thursday.

On Monday, Bangladesh came out with a commanding performance in the game against the Windies as it comfortably chased down 322-run target in Taunton. Shakib al Hasan (124 not out) and Liton Das (94 not out) played brilliant knocks as the Bangla Tigers made mockery of the Windies total and crossed the line with more than 50 balls to spare.

With wins against South Africa and Windies, Bangladesh has declared that it is



Getting ready: Glenn Maxwell gets throwdowns at a training session ahead of Australia's match against Bangladesh. •AFP

no more underdog and, now, it would aim to make a place in the semifinals.

Mashrafe Mortaza's men have been excellent so far, but it would be really interesting to see if they can live up to the challenge of competing against the five-time champion.

Australia has not been at

the top of its game so far. It has suffered batting collapses and has been put under pressure.

Despite that, it has been able to register four victories. Pacers Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins are proving to be a nightmare to face for the opposition, barring India which took them for plenty at the Kennington Oval.

Skipper Aaron Finch and David Warner are providing solid starts and laying the platform for the likes of Steve Smith, who has been a rock in the middle order. Thus, it would require a below par performance from the defending champions to lose against Bangladesh.

SCOREBOARD NEW ZEALAND VS SOUTH AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Quinton de Kock b Boult 5 (8b, 1x4), Hashim Amla b Santner 55 (83b, 4x4), Faf du Plessis b Ferguson 23 (35b, 4x4), Aiden Markram c Munro b de Grandhomme 38 (55b, 4x4), Rassie van der Dussen (not out) 67 (64b, 2x4, 3x6), David Miller c Boult b Ferguson 36 (37b, 2x4, 1x6), Andile Phehlukwayo c Williamson b Ferguson 0 (5b), Chris Morris (not out) 6 (7b, 1x4); Extras (lb-7, w-4): 11; Total (for six wkts. in 49 overs): 241.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-9 (de Kock, 1.5 overs), 2-59 (du Plessis, 13.6), 3-111 (Amla, 27.4), 4-136 (Markram, 32.3), 5-208 (Miller, 44.5), 6-218 (Phehlukwayo, 46.3).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING Henry 10-2-34-0, Boult 10-0-63-1, Ferguson 10-0-59-3, de Grandhomme 10-0-33-1, Santner 9-0-45-1.

NEW ZEALAND

Martin Guptill hit wkt. b Phehlukwayo 35 (59b, 5x4),

Colin Munro c & b Rabada 9 (5b, 2x4), Kane Williamson (not out) 103 (138b, 8x4, 1x6), Ross Taylor c de Kock b Morris 1 (2b), Tom Latham c de Kock b Morris 1 (4b), James Neesham c Amla b Morris 23 (34b, 3x4), Colin de Grandhomme c du Plessis b Ngidi 60 (47b, 5x4, 2x6), Mitchell Santner (not out) 2 (3b); Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-6): 8; Total (for six wkts. in 48.3 overs): 242.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-12 (Munro, 2.1), 2-72 (Guptill, 14.6), 3-74 (Taylor, 16.1), 4-80 (Latham, 18.1), 5-137 (Neesham, 32.2), 6-228 (de Grandhomme 47.1).

SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING

Rabada 10-0-42-1, Ngidi 10-1-47-1, Morris 10-0-49-3, Phehlukwayo 8.3-0-70-1, Tahir 10-0-33-0.

Toss: New Zealand.

Man-of-the-match:

Kane Williamson.

New Zealand won by four wickets with three balls to spare.

STAT SPHERE

Williamson has taken the fewest innings to 1000 ODI runs in England

17 Williamson
18 Rohit
19 Dhawan
21 Richards
22 David & Trescottick
23 Bairstow

Williamson has recorded his first World Cup century and also his first back-to-back 50-plus score

Tahir is the lone spinner to concede a six in this WC (min: 10 overs)

Number of times Boult has dismissed de Kock in ODIs, the most by a bowler

Amla has become the fourth South African to reach 8,000 ODI runs, after

Kallis, de Villiers and Gibbs.
He is also the second fastest player (176 inns) to the milestone, after Kohli (175)

THE BREAK-UP

1k: 24; 2k: 40; 3k: 57; 4k: 81; 5k: 101; 6k: 123; 7k: 150; 8k: 176

76.14

van der Dussen's ODI average, the best among batsmen who have played a minimum of 10 games

Lowest strike rate in this WC (min: 100 balls)

56.72 Rahmat Shah
59.02 Amla
60.66 Hashmatullah
61.16 Noor Ali Zadrn
65.43 Imam



de Grandhomme
60 (47b)

Next assignment

NEW ZEALAND: June 22 vs West Indies, Old Trafford, 6 p.m

SOUTH AFRICA: June 23 vs Pakistan, Lord's, 3 p.m.



All for the team: The fact that Hashmatullah was allowed to ignore medical advice is bound to raise questions about how the ICC is dealing with head injuries at this World Cup. • AFP

Mother's pride sees Hashmatullah carry on

Was back on his feet after being felled by a Wood bouncer

WC EXTRAS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MANCHESTER

Afghanistan's Hashmatullah Shahidi said his desire not to worry his mother was the main reason he got back up after being felled by a Mark Wood bouncer in a World Cup match against England on Tuesday.

Hashmatullah was on 24 when he took his eye off a 90mph delivery from the fast bowler that thudded into the side of his helmet and saw him hit the ground immediately after the sickening impact.

It seemed the 24-year-old was about to retire but, donning a new helmet, Hashmatullah carried on to top-score for Afghanistan with 76 in an otherwise lopsided 150-run loss. "I got up early because of my mum," he told reporters.

Big brother watching
"I lost my father last year, so I didn't want her to hurt. My whole family was watching, even my big brother was here in the ground watching. I didn't want them to be worried for me," added Hashmatullah.

Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani was also in at-

tendance at Old Trafford. But the fact he was allowed to ignore medical advice is bound to raise questions about how the ICC is dealing with head injuries at this World Cup.

"The ICC doctors came to me, and our physios, and my helmet was broken in the middle," Hashmatullah said.

"They just told me 'let's go'. I told them I can't leave my teammate at that moment. My team needed me. I carried on.

"After the match I went to the ICC doctors and talked to them. They took care of me and said it will be fine, Inshallah (God willing)."

Afghan players in restaurant row

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MANCHESTER

Police were called after members of the Afghanistan squad were involved in an altercation at a Manchester restaurant. The incident took place the night before its match against England.

According to the BBC, the unnamed squad members took exception to being

filmed by a member of the public, and confronted him. Skipper Gulbadin Naib played down the incident after the match, saying he had no fresh information.

On Wednesday, the team's campaign plunged further into crisis, with coach Phil Simmons promising to lift the lid on tensions with chief selector Dawlat

Ahmadzai. "I am in the middle of a World Cup and trying to get our team to perform to the level we expect," tweeted Simmons.

"But at the end of the World Cup I will tell the Afghanistan people about the part that Mr Dawlat Ahmadzai had to play in our preparation and his part in the dismissal of #AsgharAfghan."

All out for 6!

IANS
KIGALI (RWANDA)

Cricket fans on Tuesday were busy talking about Afghanistan player Rashid Khan, who broke an ugly record against England by becoming the most expensive bowler in the World Cup history. Rashid conceded 104 in his nine overs as England posted 397 for six and then restricted Afghanistan to 247 for eight. However, this unwanted record was relegated the same day by Women's T20 side of Mali.

In the Kwibuka women's tournament, Rwanda bowled out Mali for a mere six runs, the lowest total in a women's T20s.

The Mali innings lasted nine overs, but only one of its six runs came off the bat, courtesy opener Mariam Samake. After that, it was a sequence of ducks, with five extras, reported ESPNcricinfo. It took Rwanda four balls to finish its chase as it created the record for the biggest margin of victory in terms of balls remaining - 116.

Platini freed after being quizzed

REUTERS
PARIS

Michel Platini, the former head of UEFA, was freed in the early hours of Wednesday after having been questioned over the awarding of the 2022 FIFA World Cup to Qatar.

"I replied to all the questions calmly, whilst still not knowing why I was there," said the French football great as he left the police station where he had been detained.

Record-breaking Marta secures Brazil's last-16 berth

Overtakes Klose as the all-time leading scorer in history of World Cups

WOMEN'S WC

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
VALENCIENNES (FRANCE)

Marta said she was representing women in football after becoming the leading scorer in the history of the men's and women's World Cups on Tuesday by firing home the penalty that downed Italy and secured Brazil's place in the last 16 of this year's tournament in France.

The 33-year-old, widely considered the best player in the history of the women's game, slammed home from the spot in the 74th minute against Group C winner Italy to secure qualification and take her World Cup tally to 17 after Debinha was bundled over by Elena Linari.

Representing women
That puts her one ahead of former Bayern Munich and Lazio striker Miroslav Klose in the all-time rankings, and the veteran attacker said the goal was more than just a personal triumph.

"The feeling is a joyful



Goal! Marta fires home a penalty to help Brazil down Italy • ROBERT CIANFLONE/GETTY IMAGES

one, definitely, not only for breaking the record but for being able to represent women in doing so," she said.

"And for being able to help my team which is what matters most, qualifying for the next stage of the tournament."

Marta's record-breaking spot-kick wasn't enough to secure second place in the group however, as Sam Kerr's incredible four-goal haul in Australia's 4-1 hammering of Jamaica saw the Matildas leapfrog Brazil on goals scored as three sides finished on six points.

It means Brazil could face either France or Germany in the next round, a tough test for a team that has at times spluttered in the group stage.

"I think that when you play a big competition like a World Cup, you can't choose who you play,"

insisted Marta. "We have this thing now, we need to do what we need to do to keep this thing going in the competition and then whoever we have to play we will be prepared."

Hat-trick for Kerr
Kerr became the first Australian woman to score a World Cup hat-trick when she tapped home in the 69th minute following two first half headers, and her fourth was the goal that secured second spot.

Italy meanwhile will take on one of the four best third-placed finishers after topping the group ahead of Australia on goal difference, while Brazil has to wait to know its opponent.

"It's hard to think of such a thing as a 'good defeat', but you could say that we're happy for qualifying and finishing first in the group," said Italy coach Milena Bertolini.

The results:
Group C: Jamaica 1 (Solaun 49) lost to Australia 4 (Kerr 11, 42, 69, 83); Italy 0 lost to Brazil 1 (Marta 74-pen).

VAR denies Brazil in Venezuela stalemate

Peru rallies to beat Bolivia



Nailing it: Peru's Farfan nods the ball home. • REUTERS

COPA AMERICA

REUTERS
SALVADOR

Copa America host Brazil had three goals ruled out and missed a series of chances as it was held 0-0 by Venezuela on Tuesday.

Roberto Firmino had a goal chalked off late in the first half after the referee awarded a foul against the host, before substitute Gabriel Jesus found the net on the hour mark only for a Video Assistant Referee (VAR) review to deem Firmino off-side in the build-up.

Philippe Coutinho looked to have finally found the winner when he netted from close range but VAR intervened again.

Brazil leads the group on four points ahead of Peru, which beat Bolivia 3-1 earlier in the day and also has four points.

Bolivia scored its first goal in five games but it was not enough to give its first Copa America point as Peru came from behind to win 3-1 in Rio de Janeiro.

Bolivia had not scored since drawing 2-2 with Nicaragua in March but it took the lead after 28 minutes when Marcelo Moreno scored a VAR-assisted penalty.

Paolo Guerrero equalised for Peru on the stroke of half time when he rounded the keeper and slotted the ball into the empty net and the big Internacional striker turned provider 10 minutes into the second half when he crossed for Jefferson Farfan to nod home and put Peru ahead.

The results:
Group A: Bolivia 1 (Moreno 28) lost to Peru 3 (Guerrero 45, Farfan 55, Flores 90+6).

Brazil 0 drew with Venezuela 0.

Federer opens grass season with a bang

Sharapova makes a winning return from injury

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HALLE

Roger Federer began his run-up to Wimbledon with a win as he beat Australian John Millman in straight sets to reach the second round of the ATP tournament here on Tuesday.

Federer won his first grass-court game of the season 7-6(1), 6-3 on a muggy evening in Halle to set up a second-round meeting with French veteran Jo-Wilfried Tsonga. "It is always important to win your first game on grass, because otherwise the grass season can be very short," said Federer.

Tsonga, 34, said it would be "something special" to face Federer after he beat compatriot Benoit Paire 6-4, 7-5 on Tuesday.

Maria Sharapova made a winning return from injury on Tuesday by beating Viktoria Kuzmova 7-6(8), 6-0 to reach the second round of the Mallorca Open.

The five-time Grand Slam champion has not played since the end of January after taking time out to recover from a shoulder injury, but edged a tight opening set against Kuzmova before strolling through the second.

Victory on the grass will come as a timely boost to morale for Sharapova, with the start of Wimbledon now less than two weeks away.

Angelique Kerber now

awaits Sharapova in round two after the top-seeded German defeated Belgium's Ysaline Bonaventure 7-5, 4-6, 6-2.

Important results:
At Halle: Second round: Pierre-Hugues Herbert bt Sergiy Stakhovsky 2-6, 7-6(2), 6-4; Karen Khachanov bt Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3, 3-6, 6-4; David Goffin bt Radu Albot 4-6, 6-4, 6-3.

First round: Roger Federer bt John Millman 7-6(1), 6-3; Jo-Wilfried Tsonga bt Benoit Paire 6-4, 7-5; Borna Coric bt Jaime Munar 7-6(2), 6-3; David Goffin bt Guido Pella 6-1, 6-1; Richard Gasquet bt Peter Gojowczyk 6-3, 6-4; Jan-Lennard Struff bt

Laslo Djere 6-4, 6-4.
Doubles: First round: Oliver Marach & Jurgen Melzer bt Marcelo Demoliner & Divij Sharan 7-5, 7-6(5).
At Mallorca: Second round: Sofia Kenin bt Ons Jabeur 6-2, 2-0 retired; Elise Mertens bt Samantha Stosur 6-3, 6-3; Yafan Wang bt Alison Van Uytvanck 7-6(3), 6-3.

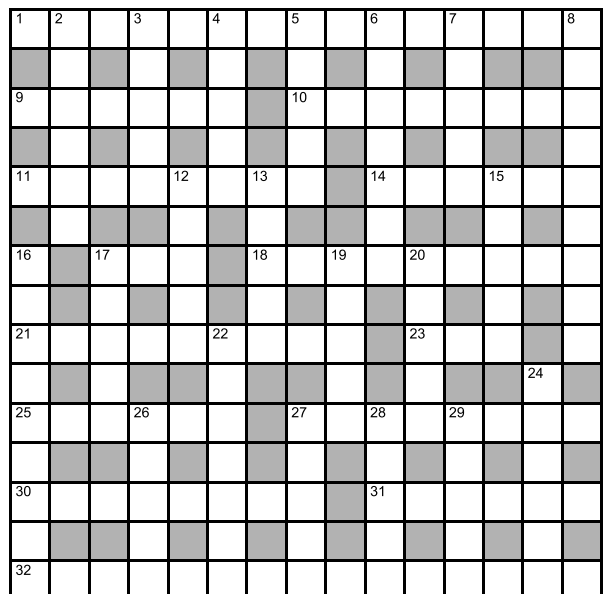
First round: Maria Sharapova bt Viktoria Kuzmova 7-6(8), 6-0; Paula Badosa bt Alison Riske 6-7(2), 7-5, 7-5; Caroline Garcia bt Victoria Azarenka 1-6, 6-4, 7-5.

Samantha Stosur bt Saisai Zheng 6-4, 7-5; Angelique Kerber bt Ysaline Bonaventure 7-5, 4-6, 6-2; Alize Cornet bt Sara Sorribes 6-0, 6-1.



Back in business: Sharapova, who has not played since the end of January, beat Kuzmova in the first round. • AFP

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12657



- ACROSS**
1 A college principal should be aware of student's keenness, take time to ring people to give admission (15)
9 Social Media firm goes to the top position in collection, leads worldwide (6)
10 Terrible female, attention seeking, so primeval at heart (8)

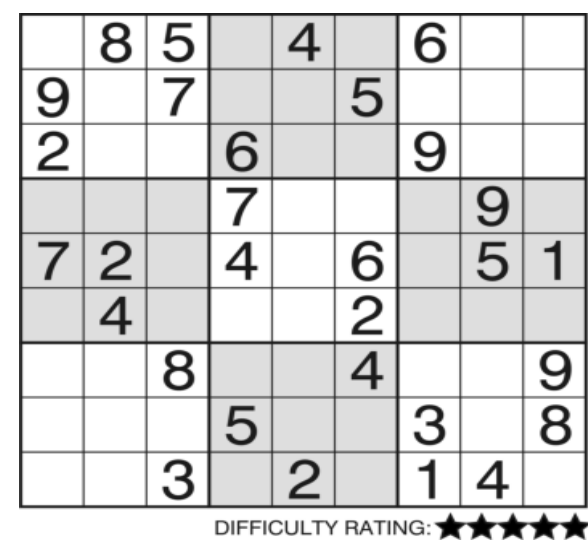
- 11 To check hotels in natural environment to reserve (8)
14 Try out intercity transport in an urge (6)
17 Innovation needed to find egg cells (3)
18 Hero drinks tea without hesitation (9)
21 In retrospect, sacking the leader and reorganising should have

- been confidential (3-6)
23 Indeed having middlemen helps in getting visitors (1-1-1)
25 Fancy talk about new beginning (6)
27 Woman's upset with priest joining leading evangelist to deliver frivolous fib (5,3)
30 Arbitrarily managed work being blocked by teller (2,6)
31 Chose to mix some red inside to create pigments (6)
32 Harry searched milkman for possible weapons (6,3,6)

- DOWN**
2 Bit of chocolate and egg's fine diet essentially with biscuit (6)
3 Sprite is taken with gin, whiskey, rum at the end at Philippines (5)
4 Eccentric wife can retort endlessly and knock out (5)
5 As per slang, doomed, affected badly; no act (5)
6 Rock is great; rock uses new instrumentation primarily... (7)
7 ...an art like cubism, revolutionary with bass standing out (5)

- (set by Afterdark)
8 Article on father has no substance, nothing meaningful primarily as a consequence (9)
12 Pitch's almost a paradise (5)
13 An adjective for sharp sale conducted - Royal? (5)
15 A passage perhaps, in print, romantic selection (5)
16 Therapist Mark, in Berlin facing terrible heat, skips work (9)
17 Plant put behind gate (5)
19 Mark's at church ground (5)
20 Fix on place (5)
22 Type of cheese in Switzerland Edward finds costly, pointless (7)
24 Direct approach's often manly (6)
26 Alert in Nepal arms hidden inside (5)
27 Without marriage one can become a lady? (5)
28 Aspirant in the middle, on first stretch, presses (5)
29 Principle of economics to begin with is broad, limitless (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12656
SEARCH RETINA
HWH CANU
SAGO APARTMENTS
MKP T E A O
APPEAL EARDROPS
O R M A T I O N K E N Y A
S U R P C I T Y S T A T E
E T U C E H H
MALAYSIA ALBEIT
F L E E R L R L S
BOYS IN BLUE ACTS
O I E Y N M C L L
DENOTE ADHERE

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku
3 1 4 7 6 8 9 5 2
2 7 6 1 5 9 4 8 3
8 9 5 4 2 3 1 6 7
9 6 2 5 4 1 7 3 8
5 8 7 9 3 2 6 1 4
4 3 1 8 7 6 5 2 9
1 4 9 3 8 5 2 7 6
6 5 3 2 9 7 8 4 1
7 2 8 6 1 4 3 9 5

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

FAITH

The hurdle called samsara

In chapter 12 of the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna describes in detail the path of bhakti yoga to attain moksha. He says to those who dedicate all their actions (sarvANI karmANI) to Him, thinking of Him as the only goal to be attained, and who have no other goal (ananya yEva), and who worship Him, He will grant release from the ocean of samsara (mrtyu samsara AgarAt). And he will not delay in granting such release, for He says, na cirAt - without delay.

An expansion of sarvANI karmANI would be that it includes all activities - worldly activities - like taking up a profession, acts needed to keep oneself alive like eating or drinking water, the acts of learning prayers - everything should be dedicated to Him. Since the Lord is present in everything, we must perform these actions with total detachment, with the attitude that we are doing everything for His joy. When we perform yagas, we offer havis to many devas. We should realise that all of them are subordinate to the Supreme One, elaborated Valayapet Ramachariar in a discourse. Why does the Lord use the word mrtyu when talking of samsara? Involvement in samsara acts as a hurdle on our path and keeps us from attaining His feet. For this reason, samsara is equated to death itself.

But how is it possible for the ordinary man to have such focused thoughts? He will let his mind go astray. In fact, Arjuna himself has this doubt, and soon after the Lord says he is to keep his mind on the Lord, Arjuna points to the practical difficulties involved in such meditation. Even for a short while, the mind does not concentrate on anything, but gets distracted in a few minutes. How then can constant concentration be achieved, asks Arjuna. In the next verses, Krishna offers him a solution to this problem too.