

Relentless India keeps conquering conditions and opponents alike

The teams we play against or the surfaces we have to deal with don't make a difference to Kohli, says Rahul



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
BIRMINGHAM

In a World Cup billed to have 300-plus scores as its skyscrapers, much has changed over the last week. The weather has evolved from damp clouds to bright skies, and the runs have dipped just about enough to gift us the thrills of a tight-chase and its innate nervous bouts. If change is the order of the day, there has been one constant and that lies in the relentless performance of the Indian squad.

Virat Kohli's men have excelled in all circumstances. An external distraction like the controversy around M.S. Dhoni wearing a glove sporting an army insignia has been dealt with and internal crisis caused by injuries – Shikhar Dhawan's fractured left thumb and Bhuvneshwar

Kumar's strained hamstring – too was tided past. K.L. Rahul, Dhawan's replacement atop the batting tree, etched reasonable knocks even if he couldn't build monuments and Mohammed Shami, stepping into Bhuvneshwar's boots, has been on fire, dishing out a hat-trick against Afghanistan.

Well-oiled car

To use one of Dhoni's old automobile-inspired quotes while speaking about the Men in Blue, truly 'the car has been serviced and well-oiled'. Be it strong rivals or emerging squads placed in the opposition's corner, Kohli's men have found all the answers. Mighty totals have been posted and the advantage multiplied by a resourceful bowling unit and meagre yields on sluggish pitches too have been defended.

Except for Ravindra Jadeja, Dinesh Karthik and Rishabh Pant, who are yet to get an outing, the remaining players have all had their decent stints under the sun. Some things, though, shimmer bright. Kohli's batting has been incandescent and



The juggernaut: Virat Kohli's men have found the answer to every question that has been asked of them thus far. •AFP

four successive fifties vouch for the sheer ease he displays at the crease. "The teams we play against or the surfaces we have to deal with don't make a difference to him,"

Rahul said. Kohli's efficiency and the bowling attack's ability to strike or choke have been the recurring themes while the others too have been vital

cogs. Rohit Sharma, with two centuries under his belt in the World Cup's latest edition, was unlucky to be adjudged caught behind during the latest victory over the

West Indies at Manchester's Old Trafford on Thursday, but his splendid form should overcome the umpire-induced vagaries of fate. With five triumphs from

six clashes and having watched its face-off against New Zealand being washed away, India is the lone team yet to suffer the spectre of defeat. For the quirkily inclined, seeking a loss from this Indian outfit would take

But it is not as if all India needs to do is just turn up at the park. At multiple press conferences, rival stars have cited a perceived vulnerability in the Indian middle-order just beneath its obvious top-order riches.



Canada was bowled out for just 36 runs against Sri Lanka in World Cup 2003.

you all the way back to the warm-ups when the Kiwis prevailed on May 25. India has virtually entered the semifinals but to drive home that point, some more effort has to be dispensed.

Imminent game

First-up, there is the imminent game against England at Edgbaston here on Sunday. Eoin Morgan's men have slipped in their recent jousts but the familiarity of home and the need to regain their mojo should pep them up.

But, be it Dhoni, Hardik Pandya or Kedar Jadhav, they have all had their sparks and even Vijay Shankar seemed fine even if he couldn't extend his starts. Still, there is some pressure as India has a floundering tail. Its bowlers, excellent in their own right, however, have been walking-wickets and it doesn't help that the one who can bat among them – Bhuvneshwar, missed out with a niggle. Yet, Kohli and company are in a comfortable space and primed to deliver.

I would like to give myself credit: Shami

Faced the biggest challenges in the last two years, says the speedster

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
BIRMINGHAM

Over the last few years, the width of a bat that countered his pace seemed a minor obstacle when compared to the issues he battled off the field. Mohammed Shami had gained weight, failed the Yo-Yo fitness test and his crumbling marriage became a public spectacle. Yet, deep within, he found strength and clawed his way back to the Indian squad. The speedster took the tough road layered with sweat and long hours in the gym.

Initially in the World Cup, Shami had to warm the benches. But Bhuvneshwar Kumar strained his hamstring, an opportunity arose and Shami grabbed it with both hands. He delivered two four-wicket hauls against Afghanistan and the West Indies while India successfully protected its sub-300 totals.



Mohammed Shami. •AP

With a cap low-slung on his visage, a stubble stained with sun-screen on the edges and a smile that never left his lips, Shami squared up to the media at Manchester's Old Trafford late on Thursday after playing a significant role in India's triumph over the West Indies. *Excerpts:*

Scalping Chris Gayle:

Shami's stats

	Mat	Wkts	BB	Avg	SR
Overall (in ODIs)	65	121	4/16	24.85	27.50
In World Cups	9	25	4/16	14.00	18.28

Gayle and I have been together (for Kings XI Punjab) during the IPL. Once you play, you get an idea. The one thing I thought was that if I don't allow him to open his arms, then at some stage, he will go for it (the pull shot).

Confidence the second skin:

I have always been confident of my skills. I stay ready so that when I get my chance, I can execute my skills. I would like to give myself credit because I am the one who faced the biggest challenges in the last two years. Yes, god did give me the courage to fight my issues, be it fitness or family, but I confronted my chal-

lenges.

Fitness and speed: I failed the Yo-Yo test, that's true. But I improved my fitness, lost weight and my rhythm got better. I am maintaining my diet and am feeling good. I feel a force within me and the speed has increased. I know that whatever be the pitch I can express my abilities.

From bench to eleven: It doesn't matter if you are getting a chance to play or not. You just need to stay patient and be positive as you are here for the country. Only one thing matters, you must have a clever mind and your execution must be good. The rest doesn't matter.

West Indian cricket: all we have is nostalgia!

Perhaps the phoenix will rise from the ashes, but for now time is running out

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
BIRMINGHAM

Defeat's shadow has trailed the West Indies for quite a while. If India's 1983 World Cup triumph against the men from the Caribbean Islands was deemed a miracle, the one conjured by Virat Kohli's men at Manchester's Old Trafford on Thursday was presumed to be a certainty. Such has been the inexorable decline of the West Indies which is often everyone's second-favourite team after their national squad.

When middle-aged fans summon nostalgia, it is replete with the swagger of Vivian Richards, the menace of the late Malcolm Marshall, the athleticism of wicket-keeper Jeffrey Dujon, the bruises inflicted by 'Whispering Death' Michael Holding, the audacity of Gordon Greenidge and the sheer dominating captaincy of Clive Lloyd. There are many more heroes but what overwhelmingly lingers is the aura that the West Indies possessed from the 1970s to the 90s.



Sole sample: Chris Gayle, albeit in the twilight of his career, is the last of the West Indian greats still standing. •AP

ra, Curtly Ambrose, Courtney Walsh, Chris Gayle and Shivnarine Chanderpaul. Sadly, the last-named is headed towards the twilight but this above-mentioned quintet is the link to greatness from within a string of teams that flattered to deceive. Yes, the West Indies did win the 2004 ICC Champions Trophy, and the 2012 and 2016 ICC World T20I titles but, overall, its performance has been nothing but the flickers of a dying flame.

Extra stanza

It is tragic and with Jason Holder's men failing to stay alive in the current World

Cup, the dirge got an extra stanza. The inability of the parent cricket board to pay adequate wages; the lure of basketball in the United States of America; the gradual waning of cricket as a tool for scoring brownie points in race-dynamics – Richards wore his 'Black identity' as a badge of honour; and the magnetic pull of global T20 leagues, have all contributed to the free-fall, which, hopefully, won't become the final full-stop.

There were glimpses of the old regal touch over the last few weeks. Pakistan was swatted away with disdain, Gayle had his moments and

Brathwaite fined for dissent

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIRMINGHAM

Carlos Brathwaite was fined 15% of his match fee for violating Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during the World Cup match against India at Manchester's Old Trafford on Thursday. The West Indian all-rounder also suffered one demerit point.

He was penalised for protesting against the declaration of a wide during the 42nd over of the Indian innings. Brathwaite admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by match referee Chris Broad. Earlier, Brathwaite had copped a demerit point in the game involving England at Southampton on June 14.

We can defend any total: Kuldeep

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIRMINGHAM

Kuldeep Yadav felt that India had an attack that 'could defend any total'. The chinaman bowler spoke to the media at Old Trafford's ICC mixed zone after Thursday's World Cup fixture against the West Indies in which India emphatically defended 268 and won by a whopping 125 runs. Kuldeep dismissed Nicholas Pooran during the contest. *Excerpts:*

Protecting 268: Around 40 overs, we thought 240 would be good but Mahibhai (M.S. Dhoni) hit two sixes in the last over and it gave us a



Kuldeep Yadav. •AFP

boost. It was a challenging total and (Mohammed) Shami picked up two early wickets, then Hardik (Pandya)

and I got one each and things became different. The ball was turning when we bowled slow and it was like a typical Indian pitch.

Perplexed batsmen: The batsmen are not picking (the line) and they aren't going for the big shots and that gives me confidence. I have been bowling well, giving less runs and keeping it tight in the middle overs.

Bowling arsenal: We have good fast bowlers and spinners. We have a complete bowling attack that can defend any total. Among other teams, Australia has a good attack.

The other look



Kohli's men will sport an Orange jersey during their World Cup match against England on June 30.

Foes and friends

For the opposition, they were foes on the field and friends off it, who laughed a lot, swayed to music and nursed their rum-punches. If any team exhibited the primordial joys of playing cricket – hitting the red cherry hard or hurling it at insane pace, it had to be the West Indies. However, a sport that bound different countries like a Jamaica and Barbados together under a common umbrella, went into a tailspin over the last few decades.

The lone relief was watching the exploits of Brian La-

Pretorius and Co. rip through Sri Lanka before Amla-du Plessis finish the job

SHAYAN ACHARYA
CHESTER-LE-STREET

Sri Lanka's hopes of making it to the semifinals turned gloomy on an otherwise sunny day as it went down to South Africa by nine wickets at the Emirates Riverside on Friday.

After falling prey to seamer Dwaine Pretorius, who came in for Lungi Ngidi, Sri Lanka failed to restrict the opposition as an unbeaten 175-run stand between Hashim Amla and Faf du Plessis secured South Africa a second win and some pride.

At a venue hosting its first World Cup match, the modest target of 204 could have been tricky after Lasith Malinga removed Quinton de Kock early.

However, Amla (80) and du Plessis (96), playing with the luxury of chasing a small

total, got into their groove and ensured an easy win.

Fears come true

Sri Lanka coach Chandika Hathurusingha's fear of a South Africa "fightback" came true as Sri Lanka lost its captain Dimuth Karunaratne for a duck.

Kusal Perera (30) and Avishka Fernando (30) offered some stability as the Lankans scored at more than run-a-ball (67) in the first 10 overs before Pretorius removed both. He found support from Chris Morris (three for 46) and Kagiso Rabada (two for 36).

Angelo Mathews, who made an unbeaten 85 against England, failed to click, scoring just 11.

Beef attack

During the match, the um-

pires and players had to duck for cover as a huge swarm of bees passed through the ground. It brought back memories of February 2017 when a bee invasion happened during the ODI at the Wanderers.

Next assignment

SRI LANKA: July 1 vs West Indies, Chester-le-Street, 3 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA: July 6 vs Australia, Old Trafford, 6 p.m.

Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
Australia (Q)	7	6	1	0	12	0.906
India	6	5	0	1	11	1.160
New Zealand	7	5	1	1	11	1.028
England	7	4	3	0	8	1.051
Bangladesh	7	3	3	1	7	-0.133
Pakistan	7	3	3	1	7	-0.976
Sri Lanka	7	2	3	2	6	-1.186
South Africa (E)	8	2	5	1	5	-0.080
West Indies (E)	7	1	5	1	3	-0.320
Afghanistan (E)	7	0	7	0	0	-1.634

*till the South Africa-Sri Lanka match on June 28; Q: Qualified E: Eliminated

SCOREBOARD SRI LANKA VS SOUTH AFRICA

SRI LANKA
Dimuth Karunaratne c du Plessis b Rabada 0 (1b), Kusal Perera b Pretorius 30 (34b, 4x4), Avishka Fernando c du Plessis b Pretorius 30 (29b, 4x4), Kusal Mendis c Morris b Pretorius 23 (57b, 2x4), Angelo Mathews b Morris 11 (29b, 1x4), Dhananjaya de Silva b Duminy 24 (41b, 2x4), Jeevan Mendis c Pretorius b Morris 18 (46b, 1x4, 1x6), Thisara Perera c Rabada b Phehlukwayo 21 (25b), Isuru Udana c & b Rabada 17 (32b, 1x4), Suranga Lakmal (not out) 5 (7b), Lasith Malinga c du Plessis b Morris 4 (2b, 1x4); Extras (b-1, lb-3, w-13); 20; Total (in 49.3 overs): 203.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-0 (Karunaratne, 0.1), 2-67 (Fernando, 9.5), 3-72 (K Perera, 11.3), 4-100 (Mathews, 21.5), 5-111 (K Mendis, 27.1), 6-135 (de Silva, 36.1), 7-163 (J Mendis, 39.5), 8-184 (T Perera, 45.3), 9-197 (Udana, 48.3).

SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING
Rabada 10-2-36-2, Morris 9.3-0-46-3, Pretorius 10-2-25-3, Phehlukwayo 8-0-38-1, Tahir 10-0-36-0, Duminy 2-0-15-1.

SOUTH AFRICA
Quinton de Kock b Malinga 15 (16b, 3x4), Hashim Amla (not out) 80 (105b, 5x4), Faf du Plessis (not out) 96 (103b, 10x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-1, w-14): 15; Total (for one wkt. in 37.2 overs): 206.

FALL OF WICKET
1-31 (de Kock, 4.5).

SRI LANKA BOWLING
Malinga 10-1-47-1, de Silva 4-0-18-0, Lakmal 6-0-47-0, Thisara Perera 5-2-1-28-0, Jeevan Mendis 7-0-36-0, Udana 5-0-29-0.

Toss: SA. **MoM:** Pretorius. *South Africa won by nine wickets with 76 balls to spare.*



On the prowl: Dwaine Pretorius proved too hot for the Sri Lankan batsmen. •REUTERS

Pakistan not taking Afghanistan lightly

The Sarfaraz-led team has bounced back after a poor start to the tournament

WORLD CUP

SHAYAN ACHARYA
CHESTER-LE-STREET
Pakistan, always unpredictable, has bounced back from an insipid start to the World Cup to inflict blows on South Africa and New Zealand to keep its semifinal hopes alive.

The Sarfaraz Ahmed-led side will look to extend its winning streak when it takes on Afghanistan at Headingley on Saturday.

Star performers

Pakistan will depend on its star performers Mohammad Amir and Babar Azam to deliver a telling blow on Afghanistan, which is yet to win a match in the tournament.

Amir has bowled consistently, picking up 16 wickets.

Babar has peaked at the right time, scoring an unbeaten ton against New Zealand and 69 against South Africa.

The move to bring in Harris Sohail in place of an off-



Playing for pride: Afghanistan players, at a practice session on Friday, will look to upset Pakistan. ■ AFP

colour Shoaib Malik has bolstered the team's batting.

Able support

And in bowling, Amir has found able support from young left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi.

The youngster rattled the Kiwi top order with his

stinging pace and sharp movement.

Afghanistan, in search of that elusive win, has struggled with its batting though its bowlers put up strong displays against India and Bangladesh.

The team, however, can draw confidence from its

win over Pakistan in a warm-up game.

Pakistan, aware of Afghanistan's talents, refuses to be complacent and Sohail said: "We have kept it very simple. We are taking it match by match."

Quality spinners

"They (Afghanistan) have quality spinners and we have seen a lot of videos and we've worked from them."

With a spirited Pakistan threatening again, the cricket fans are hoping Sarfaraz and his men can tread on the footsteps of Imran Khan's 1992 World Cup-winning side, which, too, had bounced back from a similar poor start in the tournament

THE FACE-OFF					
Pakistan vs Afghanistan					
HEADINGLEY					
HEAD-TO-HEAD					
	Matches	Pak	Afg	Tied	NR
Overall	3	3	0	0	0
World Cup					

First Meeting
LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD), 55 2, 3 P.M.

Aussie pace test for the Kiwis

Starc and Behrendorff could pose quite a few problems

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON
Australia, peaking at the right time, will resume its Trans-Tasman rivalry at the World Cup when it takes on a New Zealand side low on confidence after its first defeat of the tournament.

Barring the loss to India, defending champion Australia has been on a roll, becoming the first team to qualify for the semifinals. Aaron Finch's side is in roaring form and would look to continue the momentum at Lord's on Saturday.

The Kiwis, on the other hand, saw their unbeaten streak snapped by Pakistan in the previous match.

For Australia, Finch and David Warner have been a dominant opening combination, putting on a record-equaling three century stands. Mitchell Starc is on top of the bowling charts with 19 wickets. Jason Behrendorff, too, came good against England, finishing with five for 44.

New Zealand will rely heavily on captain Williamson yet again.

Match starts at 6 p.m. IST.

THE FACE-OFF					
New Zealand vs Australia					
LORD'S					
HEAD-TO-HEAD					
	Matches	NZ	Aus	Tied	NR
Overall	136	39	90	0	7
World Cup	10	3	7	0	0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 3 & 55 2 (HD), 6 P.M.

Warner looks to welcome third child

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON
David Warner and his wife Candice are set to welcome their third child after Australia's World Cup match against Trans-Tasman rival New Zealand here on Saturday.

The Warners are already parents of two daughters, Ivy Mae and Indi Rae, and the plan is for Candice to have her labour induced on Sunday.

The Australian cricket team has a week-long



Warner. ■ MICHAEL STEELE/GETTY IMAGES

break leading into its final league match against South Africa in Manchester, and the Warners found this an ideal window for birth of the child.

"I just love being a father," Warner said.

Nadal gets a tough draw

Kerber could meet Serena in the fourth round

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON
Rafael Nadal breathed a sigh of relief on Friday after he was slated to meet eight-time champion Roger Federer in the semifinals.

Nadal's fears that he would be drawn in top-seeded favourite and defending champion Novak Djokovic's half of the draw – and face him in the semis – proved unfounded despite Wimbledon promoting Federer above him in the seedings.

Moody but talented Australian Nick Kyrgios – who beat Nadal in the last 16 at Wimbledon in 2014 – is a potential second-round opponent and Canadian youngster Denis Shapovalov awaits in the third round for Nadal.

His great rivals Djokovic



Prodigy: The 15-year-old American, Cori Gauff, qualified for the main draw. ■ AP

and Federer begin their campaigns against 35-year-old German Philipp Kohl-schreiber and Lloyd Harris of South Africa respectively.

Tricky

The women's draw sees Australia's new World No.1 and French Open champion

Ashleigh Barty open against China's Zheng Saisai with a potentially tricky date with Spain's 2017 champion Garbine Muguruza in the third round.

The most intriguing match-up could come in the fourth round with a rematch of last year's final between defending champion Angelique Kerber of Germany and American legend Serena Williams.

Prajnesh vs Raonic

India's top singles player Prajnesh Gunnesaran drew World No. 17 Milos Raonic of Canada in the first round.

Left-handed Prajnesh, ranked 94 in the world, will make his maiden appearance on the hallowed grass courts at the Wimbledon.

Gauff's distinction

Fifteen-year-old Cori Gauff of the United States became the youngest player, since Great Britain's Laura Robson in 2009, to qualify for the main draw.

England ends Norway's run

Puts on a masterclass to win 3-0

WOMEN'S WC

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LE HAVRE (FRANCE)
A stunning strike by Lucy Bronze helped England to a 3-0 quarterfinal win over Norway on Thursday as Phil Neville's team eased into the last four of the women's World Cup.

David Beckham was among the crowd of to see midfield stalwart Jill Scott open the scoring inside three minutes, becoming just the second English player to score at three separate women's World Cups.

Rising shot

Ellen White then grabbed her fifth goal of the tournament five minutes prior to half-time and Bronze made

sure of the victory with a rising shot high into the net as the hour mark approached.

England was so comfortable towards the end that it could even afford to squander a penalty, with Nikita Parris having her late spot-kick saved.

Norway had declared ambitions of leaving France with a medal to show for its effort, but after ousting Australia on penalties in the last round, this was a step too far for it.

It is impossible not to wonder how different things might have been in this game had the class of Ada Hegerberg been available to Martin Sjogren's team.

The result: Norway 0 lost to England 3 (Scott 3, White 40, Bronze 57).



Ecstatic: England's Lucy Bronze celebrates after scoring against Norway. ■ AFP

Leclerc puts Ferrari on top

Bottas and Verstappen crash in accident-strewn practice



Lucky escape: Valtteri Bottas was sent for precautionary medical examination after smashing head-on into the barriers at the downhill turn six. ■ BRYN LENNON/GETTY IMAGES

AUSTRIAN GP

REUTERS

SPIELBERG
Valtteri Bottas and Max Verstappen crashed in an accident-strewn Austrian Grand Prix practice on Friday while Charles Leclerc stayed out of trouble and sent Ferrari back to the top of the timesheets.

Bottas was sent to the medical centre as a precaution after smashing head-on into the barriers at the downhill turn six, with his badly damaged Mercedes brought back to the pits on a truck.

The incident on a gusty day at the Red Bull Ring brought out red flags for the second time in an error-strewn afternoon session, with last year's race winner Verstappen also caught out.

His Red Bull slammed backwards into the tyre wall at turn 10, breaking the rear

suspension. "I made a correction and it was a bit too late," said Bottas, who is second in the championship and a hefty 36 points behind team mate Lewis Hamilton after eight rounds all won by Mercedes.

Leclerc's best effort was a lap of one minute 05.086 seconds, leaving Bottas second. Verstappen, who ended up ninth in the second session, had complained earlier about losing the rear of the car in shifting winds.

Setting the pace

Five-time champion Hamilton set the pace in the morning, with Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel splitting the two Mercedes, in 1:04.838.

The Briton was only fourth after lunch with Red Bull's Pierre Gasly third.

Vettel almost became another casualty after spinning off but the four-time champion stopped short of the tyre wall and kept the

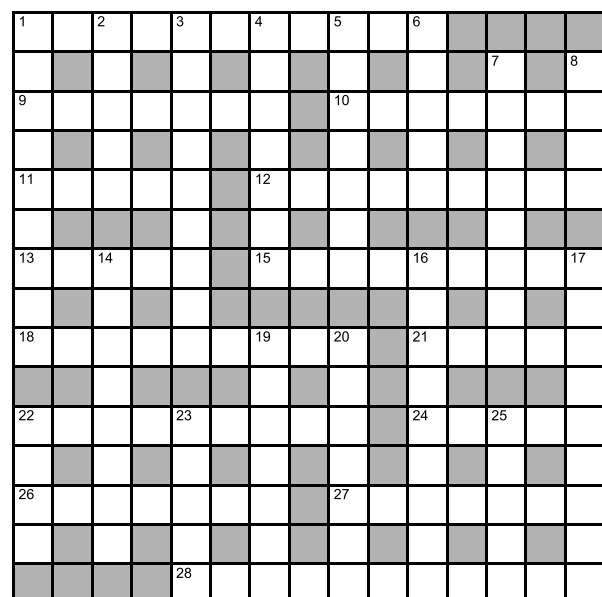
engine running. Bottas, on pole for the past two years in Austria, was third fastest in that opening session but his morning had already started with a flurry of activity in the garage.

Mercedes carried out a hurried engine change after discovering an oil leak on his car about an hour before the start of the session.

The first session ended three minutes early after Renault's Nico Hulkenberg ran over the kerb at the penultimate corner and ripped off half of his car's front wing, scattering debris across the track. That was just one of several incidents involving the kerbs.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner said they had already cost his team some \$318,125 in damage and suggested the angle needed changing. Hamilton has won the last four races, and six out of eight this season.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12665



ACROSS

- Former partner, on in years, goes over broken grate? Not true! (11)
- Rogan travels to limits of Zambia for thin material (7)
- Abstraction that may be on a highway during daylight (7)
- Sanctuary granted to a sister within (5)

- Airing con's output is artificial (9)
- Silly Nina concealed at final part of puzzle (5)
- Outcome I have is telling! (9)
- Sexpot or I will reveal one who spells (9)
- Miserable person heard to react violently (5)
- Time to give orders, no time to stamp out (9)
- To have this thing at one's feet is most desirable (5)
- Some brew I must have this moment! (7)
- Retired professors see worthiness in eastern India (7)
- See Lorraine settling in West African country (6,5)

DOWN

- English chief's first order: Illegal monies? Use less! (9)
- Support gets area gains regularly (5)
- Force town in France to harbour street robbers (9)

(set by Gridman)

- Become aware serial's squelched by top executive (7)
- Divert vessel caught in swell (4,3)
- Find fault with plot held up by undergraduate (5)
- Listener out to do another stretch (2-6)
- Be in it, and you're in agreement (4)
- Rate a pawn's compliment (8)
- What reel ran after Chile's first revolution? (9)
- Drug playing havoc deep in her (9)
- Snack that is offered to a good man first (7)
- Said "Fight, honey, for graceful animal" (3,4)
- Be up to a climbing that is not good (4)
- Preachers start interpreting many arcane manuscripts secretly (5)
- Animal horn one ordered (5)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12664

U	N	D	E	R	H	E	S	E	A										
T	O	A	A	T	U	D	F												
I	M	P	E	R	I	L	O	L	D	R	O	P	E						
L	E	E	Y	P	I	M	T												
I	N	D	I	E	A	P	O	L	O	G	I	S	E						
T	I	N	N	E	R	D	I	F	F	I	D	E	N	T					
S	E	N	T	H	E	S	I	S	N	E	R	M	A						
T	H	E	O	F	E	R	M	A											
A	S	S	A	I	L	A	N	T	C	R	E	S	S						
L	U	C	A	R	H	O	T	O											
A	S	C	R	I	B	E	E	A	R	T	H	E	N						
S	H	I	N	G	R	U	O	I											
G	O	S	P	E	L	M	U	S	I	C									

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Higher Knowledge

The Upanishads cannot help being repetitive while discussing the nature of Brahman and the atma. They also reiterate that the ultimate purpose of human existence is to attain the higher knowledge by which the life of sorrow is crossed. The quest is so subtle and mystic to the inquiring mind that it has been pursued with renewed interest tirelessly generation after generation, pointed out Sri Krishnamurthy Sastrigal in a discourse.

In the Svetasvatara Upanishad, there is reference to 'the Indescribable, the Vast, the One, the Self the Seer of which sees neither death, nor disease nor sorrow.' How to grasp this essence? In symbolic vein, the atma within each one is explained as being 'subtler than the subtle, greater than the greatest, and hidden in the heart of all creatures.' The atma resides in the body, but also moves around everywhere with innumerable forms. His hands and feet, eyes, heads, mouths, ears are everywhere and He pervades everything in the universe. Though Formless, Brahman brings forth innumerable forms into creation. None can fathom why this is done. He then draws them back into Himself.

The Self in each and every being in creation co-exists with Brahman like two beautiful birds, inseparable companions, living in the same tree. While one of them experiences the world of creation, and is subject to the joys and miseries of the world, the other is representative of Brahman, the master of Maya, who remains the unseen, immobile and calm observer. He is so subtle that though He is the source of all scriptures, and one may be well versed in the scriptures, unless the truth is internalised and felt in the heart, He cannot be grasped. He is grasped only through transcendental experience.