

New Zealand showed that it can be a giant-slayer in the big battles

It is time for the hardest test now, and Williamson would have factored in a SWOT analysis of the imminent summit clash



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
LONDON

The World Cup wends its way back to London with its history, bustle, the subterranean maze of metro trains, a dry heat of 24 degrees above and the Wimbledon ballet of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. After 47 matches, including four washed-out ventures, in a long-winding campaign that lasted a month and a fortnight, England and New Zealand have withstood the vagaries of form and will face off in the final at Lord's on Sunday.

In the pre-tournament buzz, England was expected to press hard for the title while New Zealand stayed in the dark-horse corner. But as they consistently do in big-ticket events, the Black Caps persevered, progressed steadily, stayed under the radar, coped with losses and when it came to the big battles, showed that it can be a giant-slayer.

Flummocking the best
South Africa felt the heat and succumbed in the 2015 edi-



Leading by example: Kane Williamson, right, has marshalled his resources well and taken the Black Caps to the cusp of glory. • AP

tion's semifinal at Auckland. In the latest version, it was India's turn to walk into an opponent, who firmly believed that contests are won on the basis of what is being done 'now'. History's sheets and weighty statistics may not have many alluring details of New Zealand's cricketing skills but it is a team that has flummocked the best.

Even Clive Lloyd's mighty West Indians found touring New Zealand a taxing proposition. And when the great quartet of all-rounders – Ian Botham, Imran Khan, Kapil Dev and Richard Hadlee – graced the game, the last named Kiwi's prominence was a touch subdued when compared to the other three. Blending with the environs

perhaps comes naturally to a community which has coped with the old joke about there being more sheep than people in New Zealand. 'Stay low, give your best and have a laugh with your friends' seems to be the underlying credo and this no-frills attitude spills over into sport. Kane Williamson's men enjoyed a perfect start in the

current World Cup, defeating Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, South Africa and the West Indies before suffering losses against Pakistan, Australia and England. The momentum of those initial wins offset the lack of tailwind while the league phase concluded. It was just about enough for New Zealand to edge past Pakistan on the ba-

sis of net-run-rate after the two drew level at 11 points each.

The great heist

In the semifinal, New Zealand revived India's old nemesis – good quality swing and seam bowling and backed it with athletic fielding where limbs were stretched to the maximum and gravity was con-

Kane's army

- New Zealand has won only one out of its last five matches against England (Dunedin, March 2018)

- Boult is the team's highest wicket-taker in World Cups with 39 wickets in 18 matches

- Taylor is 78 shy of equalling Fleming's 1075 runs, the highest by a Kiwi in World Cups

- Williamson (548) and Taylor (335) have been their best batsmen. Guptill (167), Munro (125), Latham (108), Nicholls (36) and Neesham (213) have 649 runs combined

- Williamson and Taylor have put together 537 runs so far, including three 100-plus and two 50-plus partnerships. No other pair has managed more than one 100-plus and 50-plus association

- Boult (17) and Ferguson (18) have been the spearheads while Henry (13), Santner (6), Neesham (12) and de Grandhomme (5) have chipped in

fair out on the greens. Williamson and his troops allowed the moment to sink in, seemingly slowed down the seconds and it was all about living in the present.

It is time for the hardest test now in which a host leaning on muscular batting, potent fast bowlers and hollering supporters, hopes to have its own moment of glory in the hallowed portals of Lord's. Williamson would have, by now, factored in a 'Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats' analysis of the imminent summit clash.

"On any day anyone can win," has been his preamble and in that generalisation, he has sensed an opportunity, a levelling of fortunes where terms like 'favourites' and 'underdogs' cease. He has led from the front both through runs (548) and in his gentle demeanour.

One more tilt at glory

Since we are in England, perhaps it can be mentioned that as a batsman, he has proved to be a right-handed version of David Gower and when it comes to leadership, the bearded, gently smiling, slow-talking Williamson has tapped into his inner Mike Brearley. Style and intelligence have found a common platform and equally, the New Zealand skipper has infused belief within his ranks and now, one more tilt at glory awaits.

Dharmasena and Erasmus to officiate

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LONDON

Kumar Dharmasena and Marais Erasmus have been named on-field umpires for the World Cup final featuring England and New Zealand at Lord's here on Sunday, according to an ICC release.

Rod Tucker and Aleem Dar are the third and fourth umpires while Ranjan Madugalle will be the match referee.

CoA to have WC review meeting



Vinod Rai. • FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

The Committee of Administrators (CoA) will review India's World Cup performance in a meeting with skipper Virat Kohli and chief coach Ravi Shastri and the focus is likely to be on selections made for the big event.

The CoA members, led by chairman Vinod Rai, Diana Edulji and Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Ravi Thodge, will also have discussions with chairman of selectors M.S.K. Prasad on a road-map for India for next year's T20 World Cup in Australia. "We will certainly have a review meeting once the coach and the captain are back from their breaks. I will not put a date and time but we will speak to them. Also we will speak to selection committee head on road ahead," Rai said. The CoA chief refused to divulge any further details.

Departs on July 14

The Indian cricket team, which lost in the semifinals of the ongoing World Cup, will head home on Sunday.

"All players have dispersed. They will assemble in London on Saturday. On 14th, everyone is returning from London. They will arrive in Mumbai."

Jofra has got a pretty good bumper: Carey

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIRMINGHAM

Alex Carey revived memories of Anil Kumble briefly at Edgbaston here on Thursday. A wicketkeeper-batsman and an ace leg-spinner may be a contrasting mix but in nostalgia's swirl, the twain did meet. The link was a long bandage that the Aussie wrapped his face with much akin to what Kumble did years back after suffering a broken jaw in the West Indies.

A Jofra Archer bouncer struck Carey on the helmet and his chin got cut. The feisty player got the gash covered and soldiered on along with Steve Smith in a 103-run fourth-wicket partnership, though, in the end England won the World Cup semifinal.

Carey, who spoke late on Thursday night, downplayed his injury and was pragmatic



Brave warrior: Alex Carey soldiered on despite receiving a cut after being hit by a Jofra Archer bouncer. • AFP

about the team's loss. **Excerpts.** **The bruise:** It was one of those reaction things. The

(helmet's) buckled clip fell off. Didn't have time to be scared, it was 'just catch the lid and play on'. Obviously

Jofra has got a pretty good bumper and a few stitches is nothing to worry about. Six stitches.

Solid partnership: It was not the situation I would have liked to come in but it was good to get the opportunity. Smith was batting quite well. It was quite difficult at times and we were trying to absorb most of the pressure and get something on the board. It was nice to go up the order but we would have liked to start and finish better.

Dregs of defeat: We bowled tight for the first three overs but they are two players (Jason Roy and Jonny Bairstow) in good form and played well upfront. In a semifinal if you get anything on the board you are in the game. We wanted to take early wickets but Jason played really well. Obviously there is disappointment but if we look back at the last 12 to 18 months, how far the playing group has come is something we are proud of.

Last-four finish creditable: Cummins

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIRMINGHAM

Just as defeat's shadow wrapped Australia after the defending champion was overwhelmed by England in the World Cup semifinal at Edgbaston here on Thursday, Pat Cummins emphasised that considering where the team was a year back, a last-four finish was a creditable achievement. The speedster spoke at the ICC's mixed media zone. **Excerpts.**

The game: If you are defending 200-odd and you don't get an early wicket, they can play with a lot of freedom. We wanted to bowl with a lot of energy and get a couple of wickets. It didn't happen and it was pretty tough from there. **Lingering emotions:** I am annoyed and peeved at the



Pat Cummins. • AFP

moment but I will wake up and be proud of where we have come from. Last 12 months, if you had told us we would be in the semifinal and come second in the group stage, we would have been really happy. Knock-out stages, it happens that you get beaten by the better team on the day. **Final prediction?** Probably England.

'Made no demands'

Offer to return was made casually to 'friend' du Plessis, says de Villiers



ABSpeak: de Villiers has cleared the air about his 'comeback' for the World Cup. • ASHLEY VLOTMAN/GETTY IMAGES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JOHANNESBURG

Retired South Africa great A.B. de Villiers on Friday broke his silence on the controversy surrounding his international comeback that never happened, saying he had not demanded an 11th-hour return before the World Cup.

In a statement, de Villiers gave his side of the story after he was criticised for picking international assignments after announcing his retirement last year.

"I made absolutely no demands at all. I certainly didn't try to force my way into the World Cup squad on the eve of the tournament," he said. "During the weeks and months that fol-

lowed (his retirement), there was no formal contact between Cricket South Africa or the Proteas and me. I didn't call them and they didn't call me.

"I had made my decision and the Proteas moved on, enjoying success under the expert guidance of coach Otis Gibson and the outstanding captaincy of Faf du Plessis. Faf and I have been friends since we were at school together and, two days before the World Cup squad was announced, I contacted him for a chat. I had been in decent form during the IPL and casually repeated what I had said when asked a year earlier, that I was available if required...but only if required."

Rashid is Afghanistan's new captain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KABUL

Star spinner Rashid Khan was on Friday appointed captain of the Afghanistan cricket team for all formats, while Asghar Afghan, who was unceremoniously removed as skipper before the World Cup, will be his deputy.

The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB), thus, has put an end to the split captaincy before it even came to effect. Chief selector Dawlat Khan Ahmadzai and CEO Asadullah Khan have been sacked following the team's winless campaign in the UK.

Former ACB media manager Lutfullah Stanikzai has been named the new CEO.



Rashid Khan. • FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Left the right way to go

Mitchell Starc's record-tally of 27 wickets in an edition, eclipsing Glenn McGrath's 26 in 2007, reflects how left-arm pacers have had a big influence on CWC 2019. This is in stark contrast to the 2017 Champions Trophy, that was also played in England, when there was just one (Junaid Khan) in the top-10

WORLD CUP 2019

S.No	Player	Innings	Wkts	Avg
1	Starc (AUS)	10	27	18.59
2	Mustafizur (BAN)	8	20	24.20
3	Archer (ENG)	10	19	22.05
4	Ferguson (NZ)	8	18	19.94
5	Bumrah (IND)	9	18	20.61
6	Amir (PAK)	8	17	21.05
7	Boult* (NZ)	9	17	24.23
8	Wood (ENG)	9	17	24.35
9	Shaheen (PAK)	5	16	14.62
10	Shami (IND)	4	14	13.78

* Only Boult, among left-armers, has a game left in CWC2019

CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2017

S.No	Player	Innings	Wkts	Avg
1	Hasan (PAK)	5	13	14.69
2	Hazlewood (AUS)	3	9	15.77
3	Junaid (PAK)	4	8	19.37
4	Plunkett (ENG)	4	8	24.50
5	Rashid (ENG)	3	7	20.28
6	Bhuvneshwar (IND)	5	7	28.14
7	Milne (NZ)	3	6	24.33
8	Pradeep (SL)	3	6	31.16
9	Tahir (RSA)	3	5	16.00
10	M. Morkel (RSA)	3	5	17.40
12	Starc (AUS)	3	5	26.60
13	Amir (PAK)	4	5	30.20
24	Boult (NZ)	3	3	44.00
48	Mustafizur (BAN)	4	1	183.00



Compiled by Anantaajith Ra

Bayliss not to renew contract

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

England head coach Trevor Bayliss has no intention of staying in the job, even if his side goes on to win the World Cup and the Ashes.

Bayliss, 56, is set to step down at the end of his current deal in September.

"I have always been a believer that four or five years is long enough, whether you are doing well or not," Bayliss told BBC Radio. "It is time for a new voice for the boys, to hopefully take them to another level."

Feeling great

"Four years ago after the last World Cup, which was not good for England, we set out and had planned to hopefully win the 2019 edition, and it feels great that now we have a chance to fulfil those dreams," he added.

"We had a chat in the changing room (at Edgbaston) afterwards and realised we have not won anything yet. There is going to be a lot of noise around 'you guys are the favourites' – we can't listen to any of that."

"We have just got to concentrate on the way we have gone about our cricket over the past four years."

Eleven years after epic, Federer conquers Nadal on Centre Court

The Swiss master avenges 2008 final defeat to his great rival, sets up title clash with Djokovic



N. SUDARSHAN LONDON

It didn't quite reach the levels it had eleven summers ago here on Centre Court, but Roger Federer put on a display worthy of his rich grass-court history to beat Rafael Nadal 7-6(3), 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 and enter his 12th Wimbledon final.

In Sunday's title-clash, he will encounter World No. 1 Novak Djokovic's wiry, elastic genius which weathered a tough challenge from Roberto Bautista Agut 6-2, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Living up to the hype

The first set, though, lived up to the hype, as both players fought each other to a standstill. Federer, true to his word, attacked from the word go in order to hustle Nadal.

The Spaniard found himself a breakpoint down at 3-4, but found a way by pounding Federer's backhand side.

In turn, he pressured the Federer serve at 4-4, but the latter drilled an ace at 30-30 and held on. Inevitably, the set slipped into a tie-break



Vintage: Roger Federer attacked from the word go, beating Rafael Nadal in four sets to enter his 12th Wimbledon final.

where Federer made the play by reeling off five straight points from 2-3 and finished with a forehand winner.

Complete breakdown

Early in the second set, following a few nervous holds

from both players, Nadal broke Federer to love to go 3-1 up.

The Swiss' serve broke down completely and a game as tightly wound as his is to the serve, it collapsed with Nadal taking the set 6-1.

But Federer regained his

mojo in the third, able to summon the serve which had earlier given up on him.

He broke to 3-1, following up a great backhand winner with a forehand crosscourt before winning a net exchange. Nadal nearly broke back immediately, but Fe-

derer held on, even finishing on the right side of 25-shot rally to ward off a break point.

Federer's two subsequent holds were first-rate, for a combined loss of just one point.

Nadal's tactic of attacking

Federer's backhand came undone, as Federer, with a larger racquet head, not just sliced but even drove many powerfully.

Overall, he hit 15 winners to just two unforced errors in that set.

The eight-time champion

Match stats

Table with columns for Nadal and Federer, rows for Aces, Double Faults, First Serve %, Net Points Won, Break Points, Winners, Unforced Errors, Total Points Won.

broke in the third game of the fourth and maintained it.

With Nadal serving at 3-5, Federer even had two match points, both of which the 12-time French Open champion saved with service winners. A nervous hold ensued with Nadal saving two more match points. But Federer wouldn't be denied the victory.

Compared to the electric setting that welcomed Federer and Nadal, Djokovic-Agut clash was played at room temperature.

Unlike a typical Spanish grinder, Agut wields a flatter stroke. Djokovic, perhaps mindful of this, hit with more topspin than usual. By the time Agut could get wind of it, Djokovic had broken twice to take the first

set. However, Agut came into his own in the second, breaking to go 2-1 up, courtesy a delightful inside-out winner. He did squander the chance to take a 4-1 lead but didn't let his level drop.

Deceptive change

The 31-year-old often fell back on his inside-out forehand and such was his positioning that he could deceptively change direction and go for the inside-in too to drive it down the line.

The opening five games of the third set were tight. In the sixth game though, Djokovic pressured Agut's serve. At 15-15, an engaging all-court rally ended with the Serb reading a lob right and executing a remarkable on the turn pass.

The 32-year-old then pinned Agut to the backhand corner twice and knocked off volleys to break open the set.

Serving to gain a 4-2 lead in the fourth, the World No. 1 fell behind 15-40 but three good serves and a glorious down-the-line backhand to end 45-shot rally seemed to liberate him completely.

Djokovic had sunk his teeth into the match. The victory was had not long after.

Saturday's showpiece

CENTRE COURT WOMEN'S FINAL 7-Halep vs 11-Serena (6.30 p.m. start, IST)

Halep faces her ultimate test against a formidable Serena

I am the best version of myself and I am desperate to win Wimbledon, says the Romanian

N. SUDARSHAN LONDON

Serena Williams never forgets her losses. Asked to reflect on her past duels with Simona Halep ahead of Saturday's Wimbledon final, she didn't pick any of the nine victories, but chose the solitary defeat, back in 2014 at the WTA Finals in Singapore.

Halep had thrashed Serena 6-0, 6-2 in the round-robin stage. It didn't matter that Serena returned the favour within days, bagel included, in the final. The defeat is still the point of reference, as she looks to tie Margaret Court's all-time record of 24 Majors. "The key in our matches is that loss," the 37-year-old said. "She played unbelievable. That tells me that the level she played at, she can get there again. So, I have to be better than that."

Calm but crystal-clear

Apart from providing a fascinating insight into how Serena prepares for her biggest matches, it was indicative of her calm but crystal-clear thinking. With the body in sync - this is the fittest she has looked since returning from maternity break at the

Mount 24 beckons Serena

Serena Williams is one victory away from clinching her 24th Grand Slam and pulling level with Margaret Court for most Majors. Standing between the American and history is the relentless Simona Halep

*The meeting between these two in the semifinal of the Indian Wells Masters in 2015 was won by Halep by a walkover after Serena withdrew from the contest due to a left knee injury

Head-to-head: Serena leads 9-2

THE BREAK-UP:

Round-wise: Final (2 times): Serena leads 2-0

Semifinals* (3 times): Serena leads 2-1

Quarterfinals (3 times): Serena leads 3-0

Round-of-16 (once): Serena won

Round-of-64 (once): Serena won

Round-robin (once): Halep won

Surface-wise:

Outdoor clay (1): Serena won

Outdoor grass(1): Serena won

Outdoor hard (7): Serena leads 6-1

Indoor hard (2): Level 1-1

Many of my matches against her were close. So I know that I have the chance to win. I respect a lot of what she has done and is doing. But I now feel stronger mentally facing her - SERENA

There are so many impressive things about her. Her tenacity, ability to improve every time, ability to find power. Can't underestimate her. She's like a little powerhouse - SERENA

- RANKINGS: Seed: Halep (7), Serena (11) WTA Ranking: Halep (7), Serena (10) AT GRAND SLAMS: Titles: Serena (23), Halep (1) Head-to-head: Serena leads 3-0 BREAK-UP: WIMBLEDON 2011: ROUND OF 64: Serena won 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 US OPEN 2016: QUARTERFINAL: Serena won 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2019: SEMIFINAL: Serena won 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 AT WIMBLEDON: Titles: Serena (7), Halep (0) Head-to-head: Serena leads 1-0 BREAK-UP: ROUND OF 64: 2011: Serena won 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 LAST MEETING: AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2019 SEMIFINAL: Serena won 6-1, 4-6, 6-4

someone who made a French Open final and Wimbledon semifinal back-to-back (2014) is not to be trifled with. But questions about her mental make-up abounded as she struggled to back that up with a breakthrough at a Major.

Quietly confident

The 2018 French Open, where she won her maiden title, has changed things and she is quietly confident. It has reflected on the court this past two weeks, as she has repeatedly cut to size formidable opponents.

The 27-year-old has moved as well as anybody on grass and on current form appears best placed to stonewall Serena's incredible ability to hit through the court.

"Compared to 2014, I have more experience and I am positive," Halep said.

"I don't give up anymore. Right now, I am the best version of myself and feel stronger mentally. It's a great feeling to face Serena in a Slam final. If you are able to win, it makes it sweeter. I am desperate to win Wimbledon more than stopping her [from getting the record]."

Griezmann makes it official with Barcelona

BARCA-BOUND

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BARCELONA

Barcelona announced the signing of Antoine Griezmann on Friday after the Spanish champions paid La Liga rival Atletico Madrid the €120 million release clause required to sign the World Cup winner.

"The player will sign a contract with his new club for the next five seasons, through to 30 June 2024, with a buyout clause of €800 million," Barca said in a statement.

Friday's announcement

brings to an end a dispute between the two clubs and Griezmann, who had long aimed to move to the Catalan giants.

Griezmann joined Atletico in 2014 and has scored 133 goals in 257 appearances, lifting the Europa League in 2018.

He won the Golden Boot at Euro 2016.

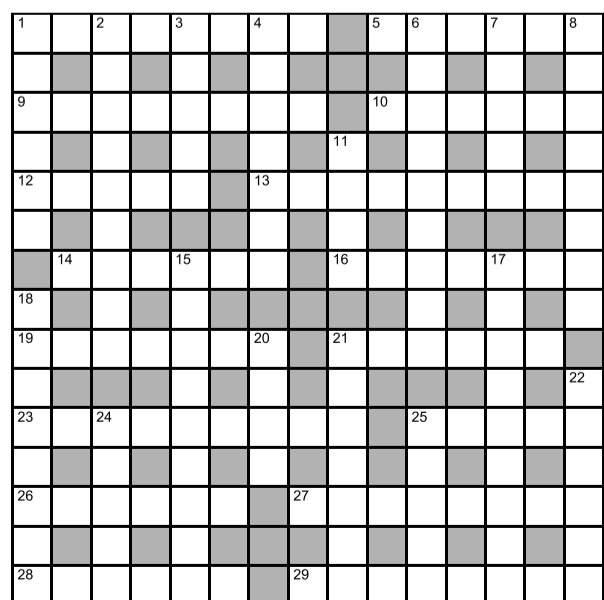
The sale of Griezmann comes after Atletico stumped up a whopping €126 million to sign rising star Joao Felix from Benfica last week, making the 19-year-old one of the five most expensive players in history.

The Griezmann file

Profile card for Antoine Griezmann: Atletico Madrid (2014-19) 133 goals in 257 appearances. Titles: UEFA Europa League 2018, UEFA Super Cup 2018. France (2014-) 29 goals in 70 games. Titles: FIFA World Cup 2018, Golden Boot in Euro 2016.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12677

(set by Lightning)



ACROSS

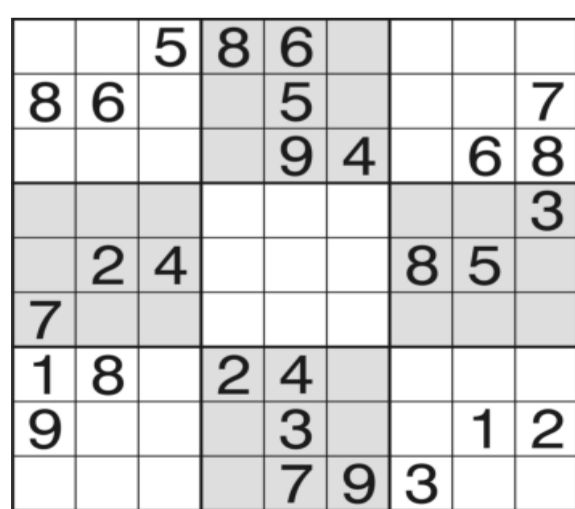
- 1 Steno following democrat earnestly at first to explain (8) 5 Layout of South Carolina border area (6) 9 Refining erratic breach (8) 10 King tucked into sauce quickly (6) 12 Poor gangster smuggled instrument (5)

DOWN

- 1 Joke about a working plant (6) 2 Security fraud sage corrected (9)

- 13 Perhaps caught laid back southern lady inside (9) 14 Neglected German stormed around (6) 16 Supply tailless northern animal for occasion with 12 hour day (7) 19 Partial word in a liberal religious book (7) 21 Shift direction without acceleration, curse and vent partly (6) 23 Provided original covers for penultimate match (9) 25 Grave mistake including a recipe of toxic agent (5) 26 One new measure for arched section of foot (6) 27 Short stock of Tesla, perhaps (8) 28 Martial art class one thousand are joining upfront (6) 29 Time limit for the departed? (8)
- 3 Rule of precipitation, say (5) 4 Secure father outside hospital in capital city (7) 6 Engineer uttered one command primarily with confidence (9) 7 Relieves leaderless kids (5) 8 A religious leader admits liberal with couple of unknowns in condition (8) 11 Tennis star has her captivated (4) 15 Funnily clung feet to bow (9) 17 Primarily Rama avatar in novel festival (9) 18 Gaming device that could bring pleasure (8) 20 Lorentz or Tesla abandoned physicist? (4) 21 Quiet from the time the French parted (7) 22 Admission to a main course (6) 24 Stingy person removing top third from title (5) 25 Exhaust energy replacing note in haste (5)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12676 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

Sudoku solution grid showing numbers 1-9 in a 9x9 grid.

FAITH

Benefits of Karma Yoga

The Gita clearly bats for Karma Yoga as the most effective practice that can make the jivatma eligible to gradually attain a pure state of mind, which is the springboard for salvation, pointed out Velukkudi Sri Krishnan in a discourse. When Arjuna shies away from his Kshatriya dharma and wishes to accept a life of renunciation, Krishna clearly exposes the folly in this escapist attitude. Renunciation is a state of mind that is very difficult to attain for the jivatma who is caught deeply in the worldly life.

Though, like Arjuna, many are keen to pursue jnana yoga or bhakti yoga rather than karma yoga, the senses, mind and intellect are drawn naturally to the world and this becomes the greatest obstacle. For, as long as the jivatma thinks that it is his birthright to enjoy the world of sense objects, there is no way out. Sadly enough, the atma within is totally enveloped by this desire for the attractions of the world.

Krishna explains that first of all one has to understand that desire or Kama is the only enemy that prevents the jivatma from apprehending the nature of atma swabhava as the essence of eternal bliss and consciousness. Undoubtedly, the senses are strong, the mind is stronger and the intellect still higher than the mind. But Kama is far stronger and subtler than all these and has already gained full control over them. By first enslaving the senses with the sense objects, it is able to easily dissuade any effort to identify the atma within as different from the body. If the jivatma has to overcome Kama, it has to turn away from the attractions of the material world and engage in karma yoga by renouncing actions and fruits. Proper understanding of the Lord's advice reveals that jnana and bhakti get subsumed in karma yoga.