

# Five legends for whom 2021 could be a bit too far

All, except Tiger Woods, have won gold medals in the Games gone by

## OLYMPICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PARIS

With the 2020 Olympics postponed until 2021, there are fears the delay will shatter the gold medal hopes of many ageing athletes. A look at five evergreen stars for whom a delayed Tokyo Games might be a step too far.

**ROGER FEDERER:** The 20-time Grand Slam champion, who will be 40 in August 2021, won the Olympic gold when he partnered Stan Wawrinka to the men's doubles title at the 2008 Beijing Games.

Federer was a quarterfinalist in singles in China, silver medalist in 2012 in London before injury forced him to skip the 2016 Games in Rio.

In Sydney, in 2000, Federer made the semifinals in singles but he still remembers Australia fondly as the place where he first started his romance with Mirka Vavrinec, who is now his wife.

"Overall, it was probably the most unbelievable Olympics I ever had," said Federer, who was also Switzerland's flag-bearer in Beijing and in Athens in 2004 where he



One more time: Serena and Federer would love to hear their national anthems again. • FILE PHOTO

had exited in the second round.

**SERENA WILLIAMS:** The US great will be 40 in September next year although her desire to play in Tokyo might not be as pressing as that of Federer's. Serena already has four gold medals - singles at London in 2012 and women's doubles with sister Venus in 2000, 2008 and 2012.

The sisters lost their opening round match in Rio in 2016 while Serena's gold medal defence in singles ended

at the hands of Elina Svitolina in the third round.

**TIGER WOODS:** Woods, who will turn 45 this December, would have struggled to make the US team for the Games had it had remained in its 2020 slot. He is currently only the sixth-ranked American, with just the top four guaranteed to make the squad.

Woods, the winner of 15 Majors, has been fighting a recurrence of a back injury so at least the delay to 2021 for the Olympics gives him

renewed hope of a golden swansong. Organisers would be desperate for Woods to play after he missed the return of golf at the 2016 Games in Rio due to injury.

**LIN DAN:** The colourful and controversial Chinese badminton superstar will be 37 by the time the next Games roll around. Lin already has gold from Beijing and London to add to his five World titles.

However, there is a hint of unfinished business for Lin who was defeated in the bronze medal match in Rio in 2016 by great rival Lee Chong Wei, the man he had beaten in two finals.

**ALLYSON FELIX:** The only female track and field athlete in history to win six Olympic gold medals, Felix had spent the last two years preparing for a golden farewell at the Tokyo Olympics.

Felix, who turns 35 at the end of this year, will be racing against Father Time as she attempts to improve her tally in what will be her fifth consecutive Olympics appearance. The American star can take comfort from the fact she is by no means the oldest woman to chase Olympic glory in sprint events. Merlene Ottey was 40 when she anchored Ja-



The ultimate prize: Tiger Woods, winner of 15 Majors, will be gunning for an Olympic medal. • AP

# Fresh dates needed to proceed further

New Tokyo task force meets to discuss the next course of action

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TOKYO

The Tokyo Olympics needs new dates for the Opening and Closing ceremonies in 2021. Nothing much can get done until those dates are worked out by the International Olympic Committee, the Japanese government and Tokyo organisers.

"We must decide this soon, otherwise it will be hard to decide on other things to follow," Toshiro Muto, the CEO of the organising committee, told his senior directors on Thursday. Two days after the unprecedented postponement was announced, the "Tokyo

2020 New Launch Task Force" must put the Games back together.

Muto and the president of the organising committee, Yoshiro Mori, each gave pep speeches.

Muto ran off a condensed string of issues to be resolved: ticketing, security, venues, merchandise, accommodation, the Athletes Village, transportation and lining up unpaid volunteers.

"I didn't imagine at all we'd be tested to this degree," he acknowledged.

He also voiced another reality. "Additional expenses are going to be quite massive we assume," Muto said.

# Wimbledon's fate to be decided next week

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON

All England Club says it is still evaluating whether to postpone or cancel Wimbledon tennis tournament because of the coronavirus pandemic

and plans to make a decision next week. Main-draw play at Wimbledon is slated to start June 29 and preparations are supposed to begin in late April.

Playing without fans has been ruled out.

# India paddler stuck in Spain after lockdown

Takeme's return flight was on March 24

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA  
KOLKATA

India No. 14 and Railways table tennis player Takeme Sarkar is stranded in Spain because of the lockdown in Europe owing to the novel coronavirus.

Takeme had gone to Spain to train and play a few matches for Hotel Museo Patria Chica, a club which takes part in the Spanish league.

"I came here on February 25 and my club had arranged for the return tickets on March 24. My flight got cancelled because of the lockdown and now I can return only on May 11," said Takeme from Priego de Cordoba in Spain. "The club is taking great care of me. I am in constant touch with my family and coaches Amit Dam and Tapan Chandra,

who have been giving me the courage to endure this difficult situation."

## Fake news

A few days ago, India No. 22 Raj Mondal landed in trouble after returning from Spain, where he had been playing in the league. Some social media posts claimed he had tested positive for coronavirus and had been taken away by the police.

Mondal, who put himself in self-quarantine, said he had to approach the police authorities to stop the fake news from spreading.

"I want you to know I am safe under home quarantine and I don't have any symptoms of the virus. He also mentioned that some people are 'trying to create panic' by spreading false news about him.



Solid support: Takeme Sarkar says her family members and coaches have kept her spirits up. • FILE PHOTO: G. RAMAKRISHNA



Ben Stokes. • GETTY IMAGES

# Stokes preparing for IPL despite the uncertainty

'I have to think I will be playing on April 20 and expect the body to be ready for it'

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
LONDON

England all-rounder Ben Stokes says he is preparing to play in the Indian Premier League (IPL), even though he knows the tournament is unlikely to go ahead.

Stokes has signed to play for Rajasthan Royals and is one of 13 English players set to feature in the IPL.

But the Twenty20 tourna-

ment has already been delayed until April 15 in response to the pandemic.

"At the moment my next competitive cricket is going to be in the IPL," Stokes told the BBC on Wednesday. "That hasn't changed yet so I have to think I will be playing on April 20."

Last week, England and Wales Cricket Board announced that English county

season would not start until at least the end of May, while England's tour of Sri Lanka was also postponed.

With IPL chiefs yet to call off or further delay their event, Stokes has to continue to keep himself in shape to play in the unlikely event if he is asked to travel to India.

"I have to get my head round that I am playing even though in the back of my

mind I know I am probably not," he added.

"I have to build up and get myself physically in a position that if it does happen I am good to go. I cannot take three weeks off and expect the body to be ready for April 20 because it doesn't work like that. It might happen and if it does I don't want to be behind. There will be a lot of advice given to us."

## COVID-19 IMPACT



France evokes Tour de France spectator ban  
PARIS  
French sports minister Roxana Maracineanu says this year's

## Argentine cyclist Max Richeze discharged

WASHINGTON  
Argentine cyclist Max Richeze has been released from a UAE hospital, where the UAE Team Emirates rider spent 18 days after testing positive for the virus following the cancellation of the UAE Tour. He wrote on Instagram that tests had come back negative. AP

## Spanish MotoGP postponed

PARIS  
The Spanish MotoGP due to be staged on May 3 has become the latest sporting casualty of the coronavirus pandemic. The postponement of the race at the Jerez circuit follows the cancellation of the elite category season-opening MotoGP in Qatar. AFP

## Williamson lauds healthcare workers

WELLINGTON  
Lauding his country's doctors and healthcare workers battling the pandemic, New Zealand captain Kane Williamson on Thursday said these are the people who truly understand what it means to

be under pressure - a word so often thrown around in sports. "Real pressure is working to save lives. Real pressure is going into work each day while putting your own personal safety on the line for the good of others," Williamson observed in the *New Zealand Herald*. AFP



## Stranded Iain O'Brien resorts to crowd-funding

CHRISTCHURCH  
Desperate to reunite with his family in the UK, stranded former New Zealand pacer Iain O'Brien has resorted to crowd-funding to arrange for his tickets after his flights were cancelled. The 43-year-old from is seeking donations through social networking site Twitter to fund his way back home. "Ok, so trying to raise some money to pay for this flight back to the UK," O'Brien wrote on his handle. PTI

## COVID-19 AID



## Sindhu donates ₹10 lakh

HYDERABAD  
P.V. Sindhu donated ₹10 lakh as her individual contribution to the State Governments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to help in their measures to curb Coronavirus. Sindhu said ₹5 lakh each would be contributed to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. Her father-cum-mentor P.V. Ramana told *The Hindu* that the 24-year-old is in self-isolation along with him on return from the All England Championship.

## MCA to give ₹50 lakh for COVID-19 fund

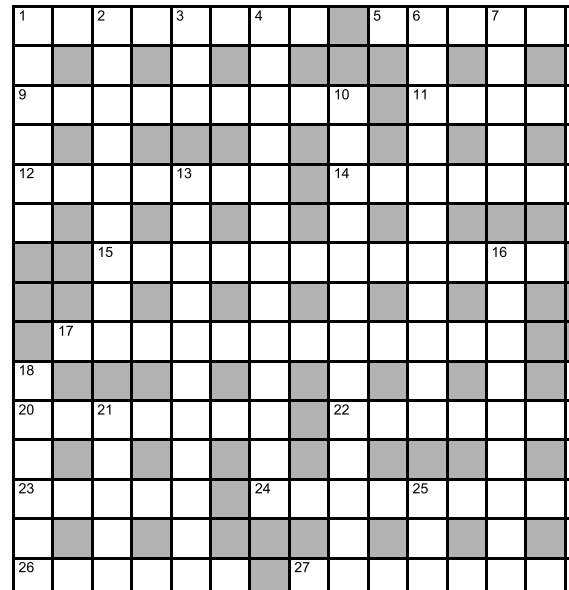
MUMBAI  
Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has decided to contribute ₹50 lakh to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision was made by the MCA apex council on Thursday during its meeting via video conferencing.

## PCI staff to contribute a day's salary

NEW DELHI  
The Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) on Thursday decided to donate a day's salary of its staff to help the country fight COVID-19. PCI chief patron Avinash Rai Khanna has donated a month's pension to the cause. PTI

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12894

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



(set by Neyartha)

- 12 You may be required to work it for a free trip to a part of a mine (7)
- 14 Unnatural locks protecting the wall from the south (3-4)
- 15 Capable of being fixed, the rabid element gets treated (12)
- 17 Distended veins of the college teams' in-charge boarding to pick up the ball (12)
- 20 German leader at the wrong place showing sensitivity in a part of a mine (7)
- 22 Twisting motion sent back group of criminals in front to a part of a mine (7)
- 23 Adult getting rid of ego to relocate a part of a mine (5)
- 24 Come around and cut short the British textile dealer's business on the Internet (1-8)
- 26 Department's ball (6)
- 27 Loans from government funds to influence Tesla's participation (8)
- 3 Lifted cover to reveal a slippery character (3)
- 4 Eyed group rate arrangement for a photograph taken with an outdated method (13)
- 6 Nick's hotel hoarding antidote mixture (11)
- 7 Hard to replace worker in a wine shop in the country (5)
- 8 Oceanic bird delivering a crude-oil derivative to the auditor (6)
- 10 Arrival with a clutched box in the class to explain a linguistic element (9,4)
- 13 Cinema crew member's rubbish turning up under the refurbished cartridge's not good (3,8)
- 16 Famous ones quoted for remembrance? (4,5)
- 18 Discharges erudite George executing strangely tricky steps first (6)
- 19 Cored out fragrant Asian fruit for the French schools (6)
- 21 Strain to draw blood reportedly (5)
- 25 Blemish in the Switzerland-banned parade (3)

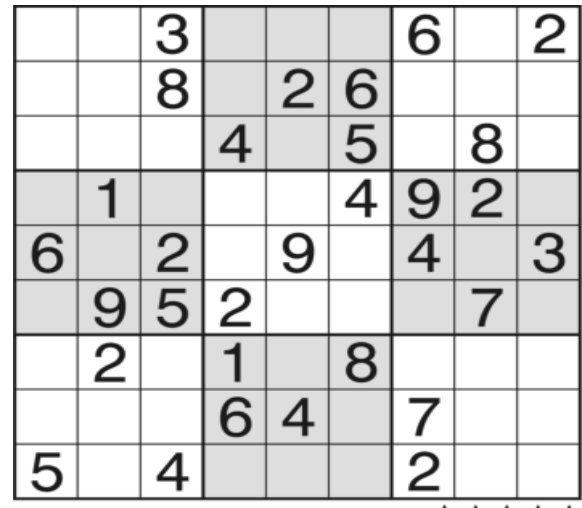
## ACROSS

- 1 Superior cricket club seen in the pits turns out well (8)
- 5 Delay in obtaining a part of the Gothic cupboard (6)
- 9 Relating to the study of matter deformation by the man entering the cool rig at sea (9)
- 11 Substance to be carried along in a part of a mine (5)

## DOWN

- 1 Letters from the maestra peddled as a rank indicator (6)
- 2 Water clock and the frolicking pterodactyls models go missing after the ring's removal (9)

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

## Solution to puzzle xxxxx

MODIFIED	GARLIC	4	9	2	1	6	8	7	5	3
A I U N O W I O	1	6	8	3	7	5	9	2	4	
T A G A L O G E L A S T I N	5	3	7	2	9	4	6	1	8	
U E M L M R E T	3	8	4	9	5	2	1	7	6	
R I S H I I N O R D E R T O	6	2	1	7	8	6	3	4	5	
E T N S N A U	9	5	2							7
C A S H R E G I S T E R	2		1		8					
S A T C T S I S			6	4		7				
P A N T E C H N I C O N	5	4								
A E A S L G B	8	4	9	6	2	7	5	3	1	
M A C E D O N I A R E T E	7	1	3	5	4	9	8	6	2	
M E D R N T T N R										
I S O L A T E I N I T I A L										
N T F L O G U I	2	5	6	8	3	1	4	9	7	
G H E T T O I N U N I S O N										

## FAITH

# Many avatars

The Lord appeared as Nara and Narayana in Badrikasrama. Pillai Lokacharya, in his Mumukshupadi, gives the reason for this avatara, said P.T. Seshadri in a discourse. Samasaris do not know about the Lord. They do not know why they have been born. They do not know what kankarya they have to do for the Lord. Samasaris are like a man who has lost something, but does not even know what he has lost. The Lord did not want them to continue to suffer in samsara. So, He came as Nara Narayana, did penance in Badrikasrama and gave us the Ashtakshara mantra.

Thirumangai Azhvar also records this in his Peria Thirumozhi. While Narayana was the Acharya, Nara was the sishya. While it is understandable that the lord should have come as an Acharya, why did He have to come as a sishya as well? Pillai Lokacharya answers this question also. He explains that we do not know how to be model disciples. To show us how a sishya should behave, He came as a sishya too. So, in his very first avatara as Nara Narayana, He shows the world how to be an ideal Acharya and an ideal sishya. In His next avatara, He came as a swan, to save the Vedas. This was followed by the Dattatreya avatara, Sanatkumara avatara and Rishabadeva avatara. These four were amsa avatars, that is partial incarnations.

Then comes the Hayagreeva avatara, says Dhrumila, one of the nava yogiswaras. In this avatara, the Lord killed Madhu and Kaitapa and retrieved the Vedas, which had been stolen. Then came the Matsya avatara. In this avatara, He asked king Satyavrata to protect all life forms during the deluge. Dhrumila also talks of the avatara He took to save Gajendra, the elephant. Dhrumila tells king Nimi that the Lord will soon be born as Krishna.