



f/apexfootwear  
www.apexfootwearitd.com



Apex™



India's Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane (R) leave the nets after a final training session ahead of their match against the United Arab Emirates in Perth today.

PHOTO:  
AFP



## 'Not taking UAE lightly'

AFP, Perth

India will approach Saturday's World Cup match against the United Arab Emirates in Perth with the same intensity as they do against established teams, key batsman Shikhar Dhawan said.

The Pool B game between the defending champions and the minnows at the WACA ground is being seen as a huge mismatch, but the left-handed opener emphasised the importance of taking it seriously.

"We need to keep the momentum going," said Dhawan, the hero of India's emphatic wins over arch-rivals Pakistan by 76 runs and against South Africa by 130 runs in their two matches so far.

"We will approach the match the same way as we have done for other games and play it as we have been playing all along. We will play with the same fighting spirit and keep the same intensity.

"You can't afford to take any side lightly at the international level."

The UAE have lost both their matches, going down to Zimbabwe by four wickets before being edged out by two wickets by Ireland in a thriller in Brisbane on Wednesday.

Dhawan's match-winning knocks of 73 off 76 balls against Pakistan in Adelaide and a glorious 137 off 146 against the Proteas in front of more than 86,000 fans at the Melbourne Cricket Ground provided a batting feast.

Having had an ordinary tour of Australia in both the Tests and the tri-series prior to the World Cup, Dhawan attributed the turnaround to hard work and learning from past mistakes.

"The key is to stay calm and work hard," he said. "Look, it is very natural that your confidence increases when you play two good back-to-back knocks.

"I have now got used to the bounce and enjoy playing my shots."

Dhawan said the team will miss coach Duncan Fletcher, who had to fly to South Africa to attend the funeral of

his father-in-law and will not be available for Saturday's game.

"We will all miss Duncan," he said. "But we will still do the same routines at training. I am sure he must have discussed these matters with the support staff."

He added that former India captain Ravi Shastri's role as team director has been very beneficial for the players, especially him.

"Ravi's presence has been invaluable," he said. "He gave me support and confidence when I needed it and stood beside me. I think that has helped me return to form."

Dhawan, who has a home in Melbourne where he lives with his British-Indian wife and three children, said Australia was one of the best places to play cricket.

"Australia is a beautiful country, but I hardly get time to spend time with my family here," he said. "And the support you get from Indian fans at matches is so amazing."

## Bravo out of World Cup

AFP, Sydney

West Indies batsman Darren Bravo was ruled out of the rest of the World Cup on Friday after failing to recover from a hamstring injury, the squad's players' association said.

"Darren Bravo has been ruled out of the World Cup and will be replaced in the West Indies squad. Get well soon @DMBravo46#cw15," tweeted the West Indies Players Association (WIPA).

Bravo suffered a left hamstring injury in the 150-run win over Pakistan in Christchurch last weekend and missed Friday's 257-run defeat by South Africa at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The 26-year-old Trinidadian made 49 against Pakistan before he was forced to retire hurt.

He had also been left dazed when a powerful throw from Younis Khan hit him on the side of the helmet as he scrambled through for a single.

To complete his miserable day, he was later reprimanded by the International Cricket Council for swearing.

## INDIA V UAE

# Two worlds collide

AFP, Perth

Two worlds collide on Saturday when mighty India tackle the United Arab Emirates' team of shipping clerks and airline staff, with at least two of the Gulf amateurs relishing the World Cup showdown at the WACA.

All-rounder Krishna Chandran and wicket-keeper Swapnil Patil were both born in India but, frustrated by the pedestrian pace of their playing careers in the country's over-crowded talent market, they decamped to the UAE where they could pursue both jobs and cricket.

Chandran hails from Kerala and once featured for a Bangalore college club alongside Stuart Binny, who is a member of the India squad at the World Cup.

"It's going to be a big moment for people back home," 30-year-old Chandran, who moved to the Gulf in 2010, told [wisenindia.com](http://wisenindia.com).

"For people who saw me playing in my shorts, with a tennis ball, on the streets of my home village of Kollengode, it's going to be a big thing to watch me on TV, playing against India, in a World Cup match, at a ground like the WACA."

Chandran, who has become something of a curiosity at the World Cup due to his surname of Karate which adorns some of his playing gear, made a solid 34 runs in the opening loss to Zimbabwe before being dismissed for nought in the heart-breaking two-wicket defeat by Ireland.

Patil is another Indian expat and he is looking forward to meeting up with star batsman Ajinkya Rahane who smashed 79 against South Africa.

Patil and Rahane played in a variety of youth teams in Mumbai before the keeper decamped to Dubai.

But the 29-year-old Patil, one of seven players in the UAE squad who only made their debuts last year after completing residency qualifications, has fond memories of his time spent with Rahane.

"As juniors we have spent much time together. Because of distances in Mumbai, we couldn't hang out together after games but Ajinkya is like a brother," Patil told the Indian Express.

"Once I moved from India, we lost contact. But one day at the Dubai airport, he was

returning from India's A tour to South Africa, it was like old times again."

Reigning champions India's much-vaunted batting line-up has impressed so far at the World Cup, but captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said his fielders deserved credit for restricting opposition totals.

### BENCH STRENGTH

"If we score 280, for example, we know with our fielding we can actually add another 15 runs. I think we have got some excellent fielders, and apart from that we have got fast bowlers who are above average fielders," said the skipper, whose team were livewires against South Africa.

"Overall I've got plenty to play with."

India have a mixed record at the WACA, winning four times and losing six, with one of those defeats coming against England during the tri-nations series in January.

Now they may use Saturday's match to test their bench strength.



World's Most Preferred Cement Brand from Switzerland

Waiting in the wings are batsmen Ambati Rayadu, all-rounder Binny, young left-arm spinner Akshar Patel and seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

The United Arab Emirates have made a mark at the tournament, with Pakistan-born Shaiman Anwar scoring the first hundred by a UAE batsman at a World Cup with 106 off 83 balls against Ireland.

All-rounder Amjad Javed, who made 42 and took three for 60 in Brisbane, believes that performance, as well as Ireland's win against the West Indies and competitive displays by Afghanistan and Scotland, should force a rethink by the International Cricket Council (ICC) who plan to cut the 2019 World Cup to 10 teams.

"They have to introduce more teams in the World Cup. The teams are not coming straightaway to the World Cup, they are going through a process and then they are qualifying for the tournament," Javed said.

## 5 facts

India have won both previous one-day internationals between these teams -- Asia Cup matches in 1994 and 2004 -- they batted first on both occasions

Shaiman Anwar hit the first World Cup century by a United Arab Emirates batsman in his team's narrow defeat against Ireland. It was only the second ODI century in any competition by a UAE batsman

India opener Shikhar Dhawan has hit 573 runs at an average of 95.5 in his seven innings in ICC tournaments -- he hit 363 at the 2013 Champions Trophy and has 210 in this event

India's last five ODIs at Perth have been won by the team that batted second

The UAE has two Indian-born players in their team, all-rounder Krishna Chandran and wicketkeeper Swapnil Patil

## Shami to miss UAE game

AFP, Perth

India's in-form seamer Mohammad Shami will miss Saturday's World Cup clash against the United Arab Emirates in Perth due to a knee injury, a media release from the team said.

Shami has a mild left knee problem, the release said, adding that he was given "an ultrasound guided injection" and asked to rest for the Pool B match.

## 2019 WORLD CUP

# ICC still mulling number of teams

AFP, Sydney

The number of teams taking part in the 2019 World Cup hasn't been finalised, the International Cricket Council told AFP on Friday as it responded to growing criticism that its proposed cut risked damaging the sport's development.

Cricket chiefs have come under fire for their plan to reduce the number of teams involved in England in four years' time to 10 from the 14 taking part in the ongoing tournament in Australia and New Zealand.

But ICC chief executive David Richardson, in a telephone interview with AFP, said Friday: "I've learnt never to say never to anything. I'm sure the format of the next World Cup will be debated after this one has finished."

Ireland beat one of the elite Test match nations for the third successive World Cup when they defeated the West Indies by four wickets in their

2015 opener, while Thursday saw tournament debutants Afghanistan's astonishingly rapid progress continue when they defeated Scotland by just one wicket to record their first World Cup win.

"I'm pleased with the performances of the qualifiers so far, but the bigger tests are still to come," said Richardson.

"The question is what do you want the World Cup to be? Do you want it to be a jamboree of world cricket or the pinnacle of the one-day game?"

"Heading into this tournament there was criticism that the format (where 14 teams are split into two groups of seven, with the top four in each pool qualifying for the quarterfinals) would leave us with a long group stage, at the end of which the eight teams everyone thought would get through had made it into the quarterfinals."



South Africans present at the SCG are jubilant after witnessing De Villiers' raw power while West Indies fans are left with a bad taste in their mouths.



Sometimes I Weep : No more arguing over best batsman in the world at the moment. Sangakara, Smith, Williamson and Kohli all have to sit back and watch. Sukrachari: SA scores 408 at the SCG. Dedication to Philip Hughes?