





Although the Indian fans got some wind in their sails with MS Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja's partnership following a top-order collapse against New Zealand, they were left completely deflated once Wednesday's World Cup semifinal had ended. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Kohli wants measured response from fans

AFP, Manchester

India captain Virat Kohli has urged frustrated fans in his cricket-crazy nation not to get emotional after their shock World Cup semi-final defeat to New Zealand on Wednesday.

Kohli's side went down to by 18 runs at Old Trafford after the last four tie was played over two days due rain in Manchester.

The unexpected loss left a largely Indian-dominated crowd at Old Trafford disappointed, while a billion fans back home tried to come to terms with the heartbreaking end of the team's bid for a third World Cup crown.

Indian cricket fans are known for angry outbursts after crushing defeats, but Kohli said losing is part and parcel of sport and should not trigger an extreme reaction from either supporters or players.

"I have always been of the favour of a measured reaction and yes disappointment is there in a loss but don't take it to extreme," Kohli told reporters.

"Because many players will not be

able to process it. Everything has to be balanced, like we want it to be on the field.

"It is easy to criticise from the outside when somebody loses and you are put on top when are winning. But when it happens on a big scale then it is a national responsibility that how you react to the sport you watch."

India had topped the group table to book the semifinal clash with fourthplaced underdogs New Zealand but Kane Williamson's side posted 239-8 on a tricky pitch and then defended the total with excellent fast bowling.

Kohli insisted the defeat, which came after India won seven of nine group games, will eventually be dissected to work out what went wrong.

"I don't think that I would like to break things down immediately," said Kohli.

"But in time we will have to sit down and analyse things that we could have done right in this game. We are not shying away from accepting that we did not stand up to the challenge and we were not good enough under pressure. Accept the failure as it shows on the scoreboard."

India mourns shocker

AFP, New Delhi

Cricket-mad Indians tried Thursday to come to terms with their shock World Cup exit, with the Times of India telling readers "The Sun will still rise tomorrow" and Ravindra Jadeja emerging as a new national hero.

The unexpected defeat to New Zealand in Wednesday's semi-final came after a top-order batting collapse had left them teetering at 24-4.

Jadeja and veteran Mahendra Singh Dhoni, renowned as one of the game's great finishers, rekindled the hopes of the cricket-crazy nation with a fighting seventh-wicket century partnership but it wasn't enough as India, chasing 240 to win, lost by 18 runs.

"For a while it looked like he (Dhoni) would turn back the clock and script another great escape, but that was not to be," wrote the Indian Express under the headline "The un-finisher".

Batting legend Sachin Tendulkar said the target was "not big" but India had been too reliant on the top three in the batting order.

"It's not fair all the time to expect Dhoni to come and finish the game. He has done it time and again," Tendulkar said, while also praising Kane Williamson's "incredible" captaincy for the Black Caps.

Former spin bowler Harbhajan Singh tweeted that the result was "heart breaking".

should have batted higher in the order.

BEST QUOTE

মিশ্টি স্থাদে ভরবেই মল!

It was mayhem out

there with the new ball,

it was a dream start

for us and great fun to

be a part of. We knew

our best balls are good

enough for anyone, so

it was nice to get the

ball moving around and

really put the pressure

on them. We're just

excited about playing

in a World Cup final at

Lord's -- it doesn't get

And former greats Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman said that Dhoni's experience meant he

Picture courtesy: New Zealand



"It was a tactical blunder... The stage was set for Dhoni," Laxman said.

Former captain Ganguly said that the "composure" of Dhoni would have had a calming effect had he come in sooner.

"India needed experience at that stage. If Dhoni was there when (Rishabh) Pant was batting, he would not have allowed Pant to play that shot against the breeze," Ganguly said after the youngster holed out on the boundary to put India in further strife at 71-5.

On the streets of Delhi, fans were disappointed but philosophical.

"Well I thought we should have won. But well I suppose cricket is cricket," said Gorinder Wallia. "We have to accept it." "I think they could have done a lot better, because all over the series they have been playing outstanding," said Aastha Sharma.

Kohli's last three scores in World Cup semifinals have now been nine, one, one -- the US emergency number -- a coincidence not lost on some Twitter users.

"For sure that calls for an emergency," tweeted one, Rohit Thakur.

Many focused on the heroics of top-scorer Jadeja, whose sword-twirling bat celebration after reaching 50 was as a rare moment of cheer.

"When he walked out to bat, situation was dire. Dirge played in the stands... Chest out, brisk walk, and steely glint in his eyes. In six balls we knew he meant business," the Indian Express said.

Former India opener Virender Sehwag said the all-rounder's rapid 77 was "an outstanding innings" and got India back into the game.

"Yet it was a case of so near yet so far," he said. Dhoni, who captained India to their last World Cup victory in 2011 remained a hero, with "#ThankYouMSD" trending on Twitter.

"One Sun, One moon and one MSD #ThankYouMSD for your valuable contribution... 350 ODIs," read one tribute.



new World Cup record AGENCIES, Birmingham

Starc sets

Australia pacer Mitchell Starc set a new record for most wickets at a single World Cup when he had England's Jonny Bairstow lbw in the semifinals at Edgbaston yesterday.

That gave the left-arm quick his 27th wicket of the 2019 tournament, breaking the record of 26 for a single edition he had previously shared with retired Australia paceman Glenn McGrath.

But Starc's strike ended up being just a footnote in the match as England cruised home with eight wickets and 107 balls to spare in chase of 224.

Starc had equalled McGrath's tally of 26 wickets during Australia's last league game against South Africa -- with the scalps of J.P. Duminy and Dwaine Pretorius.

He also boasts the impressive stat of having taken a wicket in each of his World Cup games across two editions.

Starc is no stranger to World Cup success. Not only has he won cricket's greatest prize, but he was also the star of Australia's triumphant 2015 World Cup campaign.

He had then scalped 22 wickets. The left-arm pacer was rewarded for his incredible effort, as he was awarded the Player of the

Tournament award. The 29-year-old will now be looking to break another of McGrath's record -- the one for most

wickets in World Cup history. Over the span of just two World Cups, Starc has

scalped an incredible total of 49 wickets in just 18 matches. That has taken him into

the top five of all-time wicket takers in World Cups.

Only Wasim Akram (55 wickets from 38 games), Lasith Malinga (55 wickets from 36 games), Muttiah Muralidharan (68 wickets from 40 games), and McGrath (71 wickets from

39 matches) have more. If Starc can maintain his fitness and his astounding prowess in the showpiece event, Starc could definitely top the list by 2023.



3 pc Hot & Crispy

5 pc Hot Wings

3 pc Smoky Grilled

Jadeja toasted

AFP, New Delhi

Fans heaped praise Thursday on Ravindra Jadeja after the "bits and pieces" cricketer emerged as the unlikely hero of a losing cause, silencing critics who had questioned his place in the star-packed Indian team. The all-rounder top-scored with 77 to take India

tantalisingly close to a win in their World Cup semi-final against New Zealand on Wednesday as they chased a modest 240. "Jadeja showed his worth," tweeted one user while

another said his innings would be "remembered for a long time to come" for its sheer grit and tenacity. Jadeja, 30, thanked fans for their support, promising to

continue giving his best "till my last breath". "Sports has taught me to keep on rising after every fall

& never to give up," he tweeted.

Jadeja seemed all fired up when he walked out to bat Wednesday after being written off as a "bits and pieces" player by Sanjay Manjrekar, a commentator and former India batsman. Manjrekar was forced to eat his words soon after play ended Wednesday.

"By bits 'n' pieces of sheer brilliance, he's ripped me apart on all fronts," Manjrekar conceded. "This is the Jadeja we haven't seen before. Today he was brilliant."

Kiwis eat 'humble pie' after shock semifinal win

Friends and family of the New Zealand squad, many clad in replica shirts, celebrated with the Black Caps on the

Radio Sport declared it "eat your

significant victories". Ahead of the critical knockout match, New Zealanders had largely consigned Kane Williamson and the

There had been calls to axe longturning, pinpoint runout of MS

Dhoni made him an instant hero. Johnstone, who had labelled the Black Caps' batting "boring" before the India clash, said there was "a need to acknowledge their brighter qualities -- brilliant bowling, fabulous fielding and unquestionable character.

The New Zealand Herald hailed the victory as "the Manchester miracle" after heading their match preview earlier in the week: "Damp squib exit looms for Black Caps at Cricket World Cup".

James Nokise noted on Radio New Zealand that New Zealand were "incapable of simply winning or losing. They insist on nailbiting, nerve-destroying, adrenalinexhausting, rollercoasters that are edge-of-the-seat thrillers."

The constant stream of calls to talk radio stations was an apology for even doubting New Zealand.

A man called Steve summed up the national feeling when he told Radio Sport: "What an absolute d*** I was. I was wrong. Yay."

HAPPY MOMENT



It needed a moment of brilliance from England to bring about an end to a valiant 85-run knock from Australia's Steven Smith in the World Cup semifinals at Edgbaston yesterday. And that moment arrived when England wicketkeeper Jos Buttler removed his right glove and picked up the ball before nailing a direct hit at the non-strikers' end to dismiss Smith. Smith, who was fooled by a slower delivery from Chris Woakes and fancied a single after the ball deflected off his body, found himself short, courtesy of the brilliant piece of fielding from Buttler.



outfield at Old Trafford after their impressive win on Wednesday.