

India close on victory in first Test against Sri Lanka

- India bowl Sri Lanka to 84-4
- Target set at 372 runs to win
- Pant reaches 100 Test sixes

AFP | Galle

India took a big step towards victory in the first Test in Galle yesterday after their bowlers reduced Sri Lanka, chasing a daunting 372 to win, to 84-4 on day four.

Left-arm spinner Manav Suthar took two wickets to rattle Sri Lanka's top-order on a pitch offering big turn.

Earlier, India were bowled out for 193 at tea after Rishabh Pant top-scored with 66 and became the fastest player to hit 100 sixes in Test cricket.

Sri Lanka then slipped to 47-4 before skipper Dhananjaya de Silva, unbeaten on 31, and Sonal Dinusha, 25 not out, put on a stubborn stand to steer their team to stumps.

"In Galle if you look at the history, spin plays a big part in the last couple of days and batting gets tough," said Sri Lanka's pace bowling coach Ryan van Niekerk.

"As a bowling group we have tried to improve and continue to find ways to get wickets. A team



India's Rishabh Pant plays a shot

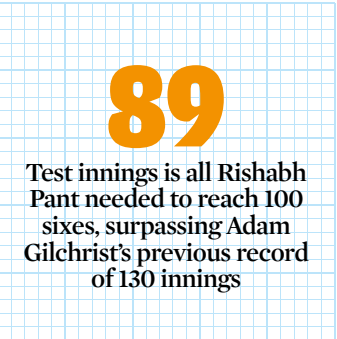
like India will continue to take the initiative."

Opener Nishan Madushka Fernando was the first to go in the chase, top-edging a hook off Mohammed Siraj straight to fine leg to be dismissed for six.

Pasindu Sooriyabandara endured a forgettable debut after coming in as a concussion substitute for veteran Dinesh Chandimal, who hurt himself while fielding when he hit his head on the ground and was ruled out of the rest of the match.

Pant shines

Sooriyabandara was trapped



lbw by Suthar for a golden duck.

"The wicket was playing well," said Suthar. "Even when we were bowling in the second innings, we were getting only a little turn. Maybe tomorrow

there will be more turn."

Prasidh Krishna then had Kamindu Mendis caught at the first slip for two.

De Silva survived being caught at slip off a no ball by Ravindra Jadeja when he was on seven.

But Lahiru Udara fell to Suthar after close-in fielder Dhruv Jurel took a low catch, which the TV umpire gave out after several replays.

The Sri Lankan camp were disappointed with the decision, as the ball looked to have hit the turf before settling into Jurel's hands.

Bahrain head to Qatar for friendly tournament

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's senior men's basketball team will depart for Doha today to compete in a three-nation friendly tournament as they step up preparations for the Fiba Asia Cup 2029 pre-qualifiers.

The nationals will join hosts Qatar and Saudi Arabia in the three-day tournament, which gets underway tomorrow and runs until Saturday.

Bahrain open their campaign against Qatar tomorrow before facing Saudi Arabia on Friday, with both games scheduled for 7pm.

The tournament will provide another opportunity for newly appointed Greek-Slovenian head coach Slobodan Subotic to assess his squad ahead of the first round of the continental pre-qualifiers in Dubai.

The Bahrainis have continued their preparations at home in recent days, with training focused on improving the players' technical and physical readiness and implementing Subotic's tactical plans.

An initial 18 players were called up for the preparations: Mustafa Hussain, Ahmed Salman, Mohammed Buallay, Ahmed Bindaayneh, Mohammed Juma'a, Ali Jaber, Mahmood Abbas Isa,

Mustafa Hussain in action during training in Bahrain

Ali Hussain, Ahmed Alderazi, Emran Ashkanani, Abdulkader Thani, Hamad Faisal, Mohammed Ghazi, Ali Mohsen, Hassan Fahad, Nader Shaker, Muzamil Ameer Hamoda and JaKarr Sampson.

The squad is expected to be trimmed to a final roster ahead of Bahrain's competitive campaign.

Following the Doha tournament, Bahrain will turn their attention to the pre-qualifiers, which are scheduled to take place in Dubai from August 24 to September 1.

They have been drawn in Group A alongside hosts UAE, Oman, Nepal and Kuwait.

Bahrain begin their campaign against Oman on August 27 before facing the UAE the following day. After a rest day, they take on Nepal on August 30 and conclude the round against Kuwait on August 31.

The top three teams from the group will progress to the second round of pre-qualifiers, scheduled to be played later this year.

Bahrain are also preparing for next month's Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, where they have been drawn in Group C alongside defending champions the Philippines, China and Kazakhstan.



Kane confirms Bayern extension talks set to start



Harry Kane celebrates during a match (file photo)

AFP | Munich

Bayern Munich striker Harry Kane has said he is set to start negotiations to extend his contract with the Bundesliga champions beyond 2027.

Speaking at a media day in Munich, the 33-year-old England captain told reporters the discussions had been delayed until after he returned from a post-World Cup holiday, but would begin soon.

"I'm not sure exactly when, but they'll start this week or next week," Kane said of the extension talks.

"We're calm, they're calm with the situation. Obviously now's the time to start talking, because with only a year left

it's important.

"But both sides are relaxed and I'm pretty sure there'll be talks this week or next week."

Kane arrived at Bayern on a four-year deal in 2023 and has won two Bundesliga titles and a German Cup, while making the Champions League semi-finals in two out of three seasons. He has scored a remarkable 146 goals in 147 games in all competitions for Bayern.

Bayern have repeatedly said they want to extend Kane's deal at the club, having called the former Spurs striker their "best transfer ever" at the end of last season.

German media report-

Williams sisters fall at Cincinnati while Zverev advances

AFP | Cincinnati

Serena and Venus Williams lost in their first doubles match together since 2022 while men's top seed Alexander Zverev battled into the fourth round at the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters.

The Williams sisters, with 14 Grand Slam titles and three Olympic gold medals together, were side-by-side for the first time since the 2022 US Open but lost to American Payton Stearns and Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-2, 1-6, 10-8.

"It was fun and special. We kicked off a little rust," Serena Williams said. "I didn't come here to win this tournament. It's about having fun and I did want to do the best I could."

German star Zverev, the reigning French Open champion, won his ATP season-best 46th match of the campaign by defeating Terrance Atmane 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (8/6).

Zverev finished the Frenchman, a 2025 Cincinnati semi-finalist, with a sizzling backhand down the line.

"He was playing incredibly aggressively, hitting forehands



Venus Williams and Serena Williams confer while playing Marta Kostyuk and Peyton Stearns

all over the court," Zverev said. "He made it difficult for you to play aggressive yourself."

Serena, 44, and Venus, 46, each lost serve once in the first set, dropping six of the final seven games, but dominated the second set and rallied from 8-2 down in the 10-point tie-breaker third set only to

lose on a Venus double fault.

"It was weird to be in a full stadium. This is not my usual Monday night," said Serena, who noted with the US Open approaching that their reunion is a limited-time attraction.

"This is not forever. It's... not long," she said. "We don't have to play every week. It's a bit



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SERENA WILLIAMS

different."

Alexandra Eala, the 17th-seeded Filipina, lost to US ninth seed Amanda Anisimova, who recovered after losing a 65-minute opening set for a 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 victory.

The opener featured a 20-minute fifth game, with Eala, 21, coming back from a break down before Anisimova battled back.

Men's fifth seed Alex de Minaur battled through multiple rain interruptions to defeat Arthur Fery 7-5, 7-6 (7/3). The Australian was up a set and 5-1 after a 30-minute stoppage before Wimbledon semi-finalist Fery caught fire, but he took the tie-break to advance despite 29 unforced errors.