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Champions Trophy 2025: Format Stalemate Continues



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Courtesy Dawn News

The fate of the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy remains uncertain, as negotiations over a proposed “hybrid” format fail to reach consensus. Under this model, Pakistan would host group matches, while India’s games, including the high-profile India-Pakistan clash, would be staged in Dubai due to political tensions and security concerns.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has reportedly agreed to the hybrid model, provided that the same arrangement applies to ICC tournaments in India until 2027, allowing Pakistan to play their matches outside India. However, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) opposes this condition and disputes the final's potential location in Lahore if India fails to qualify.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi is currently in Dubai to discuss the matter with ICC officials. The ongoing deadlock has delayed the tournament's schedule, slated for February 19 to March 19, 2025.

The India-Pakistan rivalry has been limited to ICC events, with no bilateral series since 2012-13. India last visited Pakistan for the 2008 Asia Cup, while Pakistan hosted last year's Asia Cup on a similar hybrid model.

Pakistan has recently hosted top cricketing nations, marking a resurgence after a 2009 militant attack on the Sri Lankan team disrupted international cricket. The country last hosted an ICC event during the 1996 World Cup.

India is set to co-host the 2026 T20 World Cup and 2031 ODI World Cup, alongside the Champions Trophy in 2029. Whether the hybrid model resolves this impasse remains to be