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ICC Champions Trophy 2025 opening ceremony held at Lahore fort



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LAHORE: The opening ceremony of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 took place on Sunday at Lahore Fort, marking the start of the much-awaited tournament. While the participating teams were not present due to logistical reasons, the ceremony was still a significant occasion for cricket fans across Pakistan.

The eight-nation tournament is set to kick off on February 19, with Pakistan facing New Zealand in

Karachi. Despite the teams being based in Karachi, Lahore was chosen as the venue for the ceremony, a surprising move given the absence of key teams like India, who will play their matches in Dubai following their government's refusal to visit Pakistan. Additionally, the England and Australian teams have delayed their arrival, with England scheduled to land in Lahore on February 18, and Australia arriving on February 19. Meanwhile, the Bangladesh and Indian teams will travel directly to Dubai.

The opening ceremony featured a stellar performance by renowned singer Atif Aslam and a fly-past by the Pakistan Air Force, adding to the grand scale of the event. Cricket legends were also part of a panel discussion, recalling iconic moments from past tournaments.

The Champions Trophy will run from February 19 to March 9, with matches held across Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Dubai, culminating in the final at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium. The tournament marks a major milestone for Pakistan, hosting a major international cricket event after nearly three decades, as the country continues to strive to re-establish itself as a safe venue for global cricket.