

OpenVoiceNews Pakistan

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Pakistan Opposes ICC's Proposed Two-Tier Test Cricket System

July 30, 2025

– Categories: General News



Pakistan has voiced strong opposition to the International Cricket Council's (ICC) proposed restructuring of the World Test Championship into a two-tier format, raising concerns about the potential marginalization of lower-ranked teams and the growing influence of elite cricketing nations.

The ICC has formed an eight-member working group to examine possible changes to the current nine-team Test championship structure. The group is chaired by Sanjog Gupta and includes senior officials such as England and Wales Cricket Board CEO Richard Gould and

Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg. The committee is expected to submit recommendations by the end of 2025. Any changes would require approval from at least two-thirds of the ICC's 12 full-member boards.

According to multiple media reports, the working group is exploring a model that would divide Test-playing nations into two divisions of six teams each, starting from the 2027 to 2029 cycle. Under the model currently being discussed, Division One would consist of the top six Test-ranked teams—Australia, South Africa, England, India, New Zealand, and Sri Lanka. Division Two would include the remaining full members: Pakistan, West Indies, Bangladesh, Ireland, Afghanistan, and Zimbabwe. As of late July 2025, Pakistan is ranked seventh in the ICC Men's Test Team Rankings.

Officials from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), speaking to local media, have strongly opposed the plan. "Cricket should not become the preserve of a few dominant nations," a senior PCB official said. The official argued that limiting opportunities for lower-ranked teams to face top-tier opposition would hinder their development. "Smaller teams can only improve if they regularly play against stronger sides," the official added, citing the examples of Bangladesh and the West Indies.

Although Pakistan has faced criticism for not giving enough attention to Test cricket in recent years, PCB representatives pointed to the national team's current and upcoming Test schedule to show its commitment. In 2025, Pakistan is scheduled to play five Test matches, including two home fixtures against South Africa in October and November. For 2026, the team has nine Tests planned, including tours to Bangladesh, the West Indies, and England, as well as a home series against Sri Lanka.

The PCB maintains that these matches offer valuable opportunities to improve its Test standing and secure a stronger position in any future format. Meanwhile, the ICC working group continues its consultations, and a final decision will depend on support from a qualified majority of the full member nations.