

ICC wants to popularise Test cricket

To preserve the sanctity and popularity of Test cricket in the face of growing success of Twenty20 format, the International Cricket Council's (ICC) board is considering some options, including a Test Championship or a league.

The options will be discussed at the board meeting in Dubai from June 29, ICC's acting chief executive Dave Richardson said.

'I am certainly in favour of looking at options to make sure that we provide a really good quality context for Test cricket to take place so that it can be preserved as the pinnacle of the game,' Richardson was quoted as saying in The Daily Telegraph here Friday.

'The ICC will be considering a number of options in the upcoming board meetings, one of which is to introduce a Test championship or league. There are so many ways this could be done, a league over one year, two years or four years, the details have yet to be worked out,' he added.

Richardson, a former South African wicket keeper-batsman, while admitting that Twenty20 is the most popular brand of the game these days, said that playing Tests still remains the ultimate dream for any cricketer.

'There is no doubt that domestic Twenty20 leagues, such as those held in India and other competitions like in South Africa, England and Pakistan have been a fantastic success, they have attracted new audience to the game.

'The ICC's policy has always been to encourage such popular formats but... if you ask any player around the world he would say that he likes to play Test cricket for his country,' he said.

Richardson also rubbished claims that the ICC is not doing enough to preserve the sanctity of Test cricket.

'The ICC always gives importance to, and is serious to make sure that a special place is maintained for, Test cricket in the calendar,' he said.

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