

## Decision on Champions Trophy Sunday

Pakistani cricket officials are pinning their hopes on Indian board's 'all-out support' to stay hosts of next month's Champions Trophy. A final decision whether the biennial event will be held in Pakistan or not will be taken at a teleconference of the International Cricket Council (ICC) board of directors Sunday.

The senior official of the ICC had a meeting at its headquarters in Dubai Wednesday to discuss the concerns raised by the players from Australia, New Zealand, England and South Africa about the security situation in Pakistan.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) chief Sharad Pawar attended the meeting where it was decided to hold the teleconference. At the conference, the Asian bloc is expected to resist the Western nations' move to switch the Champions Trophy venue.

Pakistan officials are confident that the four Asian countries in the ICC Executive Board -- India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh -- will vote for Pakistan. They are hoping the West Indies too will support them.

A senior Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official told IANS Thursday that BCCI is fully backing Pakistan as host of the eight-nation tournament from Sept 12 to 18.

The official said the Champions Trophy would have been relocated weeks ago if Pakistan did not have the support of the powerful Indian board.

'We feel but for India's support, the ICC would have relocated the Champions Trophy,' said the official, not wanting to be named. 'We are aware that the ICC is under immense pressure from some of the member-nations to take the Champions Trophy out of Pakistan. With India and other Asian nations supporting us, we are hopeful that the tournament will stay in Pakistan.'

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