# Cricket West Indies CEO Advocates for Indian Leadership in Promoting Test Cricket



**Cricket West Indies CEO Calls for India's Leadership in Promoting Test Cricket**

Bridgetown: Test cricket's sustainability, particularly in smaller regions like the West Indies, is under threat, according to Cricket West Indies (CWI) CEO Johnny Grave. Grave emphasized that India, with its significant influence and resources, has a critical leadership role in ensuring the five-day format not only survives but thrives. While lauding the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) commitment to Test cricket amidst a busy calendar, Grave pointed out the need for stronger International Cricket Council (ICC) support to protect the format beyond the dominant countries - India, England, and Australia.

Grave highlighted financial challenges for smaller boards and proposed that the ICC should centralize travel costs within the World Test Championship to alleviate the financial burden on visiting teams. He noted that India's tours to the West Indies have provided crucial financial aid, underscoring the severe financial disparity among cricket boards.

Moreover, the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup, co-hosted by the West Indies and the USA, is expected to provide a significant economic boost to the region. The tournament marks the first ICC men's event in the Caribbean since 2010, with renovations at six venues costing approximately USD 50 million.

Grave mentioned the continued financial stability achieved through frequent tours by India and England post-COVID-19 and the anticipated economic benefits from hosting the T20 World Cup. He also commented on the involvement of Indian cricketers in overseas leagues, indicating limited participation from Indian male players due to their packed schedules.

Reiterating the significant role of India's BCCI in global cricket politics, Grave pointed out their influence in ICC decisions, including the return of cricket to the Olympics. He suggested this move could immensely benefit associate member nations by enhancing their government and Olympic association funding.

As the T20 World Cup unfolds, CWI's financial stability coupled with a potential home team victory could significantly impact the revitalization of cricket in the Caribbean.

**Football Governance and Politics in the UK**

With the England men's team commencing their Euro 2024 campaign, the intersection of football and politics is under scrutiny. The Football Governance Bill, a landmark proposal enjoying cross-party support, aims to safeguard the integrity of the sport. Introduced after Bury FC's collapse in 2019, the bill recommends an independent regulator to ensure financial resilience and fan involvement in club heritage decisions.

While the bill ran out of time in the current parliamentary session, both major political parties are committed to implementing this framework. However, experts suggest the Premier League's opposition may influence how a future Labour government handles the bill's regulations.

Key elements include resolving financial disparities between the Premier League and the English Football League (EFL), with a potential increase in Premier League funding to the EFL being a significant focus. Additionally, the regulator would oversee stringent tests for prospective club owners to prevent financial mismanagement.

State ownership of clubs, such as Manchester City by the UAE and Newcastle United by Saudi Arabia, raises ethical concerns. However, experts believe that neither the current bill nor a potential Labour government would address this issue directly, prioritizing other policy objectives.

The women's game, although achieving significant milestones, is notably absent from the bill. Efforts to secure better funding for women's football continue amidst its growing popularity. Labour's manifesto explicitly opposes any closed league structures, such as the European Super League, ensuring the protection of traditional domestic competitions.

Lastly, travel costs for fans, particularly for away games, remain an issue. Labour's proposal to renationalize the railways could potentially address this, though details on fare reductions remain unspecified.

**South Asian Diaspora Boosts Cricket Popularity Globally**

The South Asian diaspora, particularly from India, plays a crucial role in popularizing cricket globally. In regions like the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and North America, the diaspora's involvement has significantly promoted the game.

The UAE has been a pivotal cricket center for decades, hosting various formats, including the IPL. Saudi Arabia has also been actively promoting cricket with the support of South Asian expatriates. Events like the T20 2024 Cricket World Cup, held in the US and West Indies, witnessed overwhelming support from South Asian spectators.

Notable players of South Asian origin represent non-South Asian countries, highlighting the diaspora's impact. For instance, the US and Canadian cricket teams feature numerous players with Indian heritage.

The South Asian diaspora's contribution underscores the effects of migration and globalization on sports, demonstrating the continued relevance of 'Soft Power.' The integration and success of South Asian players in global cricket offer a glimpse of harmonious coexistence beyond national borders.

In conclusion, the ongoing T20 World Cup not only entertains cricket fans but also showcases the growing influence of the South Asian diaspora in globalizing the sport.