

UAE Expresses Interest to Host IPL 2020 and English Domestic Cricket

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By Our Correspondent

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The fate of the IPL 2020, which is currently suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is undecided yet. It is likely to depend on the ICC T20 World Cup 2020, which is currently scheduled for Australia in October-November.

The ICC is set to take a decision on the T20 World Cup on June 10, which could also impact the chances of an IPL this year.

There have been reports that BCCI are considering hosting the tournament abroad due to the increasing cases of coronavirus in India.

General secretary of ECB (Emirates Cricket Board) Mubashshir Usmani told Gulf News that they have approached the BCCI showing interest in hosting the tournament.

"We have a proven record of being hosts as a neutral venue for various bilateral and multi-nation cricket activities in the past. Our state-of-the-art venues and facilities make the Emirates a desired place for hosting all types of cricket," he said.

UAE had hosted opening leg of the 2014 IPL due to the parliamentary elections in India then.

Usmani said the board has also expressed interest in hosting England's county matches.



The coronavirus pandemic has cast a big shadow over the fate of IPL 2020 this year.

"We have come forward and offered our venues to both England and India. In the past, Emirates Cricket Board has successfully hosted IPL matches in UAE. We have also hosted matches involving England team on multiple occasions previously. If our offer is taken up by either of the Boards, then we will be pleased to facilitate hosting of their matches," he said.

England are set to resume cricket in the country with a three-Test series against West Indies next month, subject to UK government approval.

UAE confirm interest to fill in as hosts of postponed

IPL 2020

Indian cricket board 'divided' over selection of venue of the league: report

Dubai: The UAE is ready to step in as hosts of IPL 2020 if the Indian cricket board eventually decides to shift the tournament outside the country in view of the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The cash-rich league may earn a window for itself if the International Cricket Council (ICC), as widely expected, postpone the T20 World Cup - scheduled in October-November in Australia.

There are precedents of the IPL being held overseas twice during



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it's 12-year-old history - with the entire 2009 edition being held in South Africa while the UAE had hosted the opening leg of the 2014 tournament. It was the Parliamentary elections in India on both occasions which had prompted the change of venue.

Confirming that UAE had made the offer to BCCI, Mubashshir Usmani, General Secretary of Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) told Gulf News: "We have a proven record of being hosts as a neutral venue for various bilateral and multi-nation cricket activities in the past. Our state-of-the-art venues and facilities make the Emirates a desired place for hosting all types of cricket.

ECB had, in fact, offered their venues to the England & Wales

Cricket Board (ECB) to complete the English season here as well. "We have come forward and offered our venues to both England and India. In the past, Emirates Cricket Board has successfully hosted IPL matches in UAE. We have also hosted matches involving England team on multiple occasions previously. If our offer is taken up by either of the Boards, then we will be pleased to facilitate hosting of their matches," he added.

A clearer picture about the window for IPL, which has been 'postponed indefinitely' after the India-wide lockdown, may emerge if the ICC makes a formal announcement regarding the World T20 following their next board meeting through video conference on June 10

(Wednesday). Cricket Sri Lanka is the other country, along with the UAE, who had expressed their interest to stand in as hosts.

Meanwhile, a news agency report on Saturday claims that the decision-makers in BCCI are divided 3-2 in terms of selection of the venue of the money-spinning league.

A BCCI official told IANS said that while the general thought is that having the league in India will mean that the country has come out of the clutches of the pandemic, there are a few who feel that if the situation demands, the league can be taken to places outside India.

The Indian board is set to incur a loss to the tune of Rs 40 billion (\$530 million) if the league eventually does not take place this year. ■