**Sports and terrorism**

**[Muhammad Majid Bashir](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/muhammad-majid-bashir)**

November 24, 2021

Ideally, both in theory and practicality, sport and politics should be dealt with in two separate vacuums; with neither one being allowed to interfere with the performance and existence of the other so far as it does more to damage opportunity and morale than it does to bolster it. The recent New Zealand and England cricket team’s tours were called off due to security reasons. But the justifications given by both the crickets’ boards were based on presumptions and without holding an investigation.

In the past Pakistan filed a complaint against New Zealand over an abandoned Tennis match in Myanmar in the year 2015 before the forum of the International Tennis Federation, Appellate Tribunal and was successful in its pursuit. Davis Cup Tennis matches are regularly played in Pakistan after the decision of ITF.

In a similar situation, Pakistan brought a case pertaining to the Junior Hockey World Cup before the International Hockey Federation against India. It becomes obvious then that such is the manner that is expected in the case of grievances pertaining to international sport—one takes it up before the relevant bodies and not seize the opportunity to participate in widespread rhetoric and unilateral abandonment. There must be legal repercussions to such actions; they must not go disregarded and further enabled.

[PTI decides to not move SC over rejection of nomination papers](https://nation.com.pk/25-Nov-2021/pti-decides-to-not-move-sc-over-rejection-of-nomination-papers)

The international community should indulge in consideration of Pakistan’s deeply turbulent and turmoil ridden past, its subsequent victory over warmongering factions and the road to evidentiary progress it is now on.

In light of these, Pakistan should be given special concessions and her efforts and progress must be recognised and appreciated. Pakistan has supported the world’s fight against terrorism and has indeed been at the forefront of it, and yet the same spirit is not reciprocated by the international community.

The global community should review their isolationist policies towards countries not a part of the infamous Western bloc on an urgent basis and contribute to the return of cricket to Pakistan and other unfavoured member states of the International Cricket Council. The ICC should not limit its efforts to this but must lay down stringent unavoidable rules and regulations that would push boards to be wary of any unconscionable moves.

It is curious to consider that just days ago during the New Zealand women’s cricket team tour of England, a similar situation of threatening emails occurred and yet the series is to persist unhindered. Similarly in June of 2017 in England during the Champions Trophy match between Pakistan and India, a terror attack struck the city because of which eleven people died and another 48 suffered severe injuries. And yet the match as well as the entire tournament proceeded unhindered. During the 2005 Ashes series in London, several murders killed 50 throughout the circuit and yet the series persevered.

[Citizens suffer as petroleum dealers go on indefinite strike](https://nation.com.pk/25-Nov-2021/citizens-suffer-as-petroleum-dealers-go-on-indefinite-strike)

Sports are not simply and no longer a mere part of cultures; sport is an economy in itself. Regardless of which sport is in question, it brings with it multitudes of economic activity and opportunity; television rights, sponsorships, print media, bolstering local businesses, ticket sales, sports tourism, sale of sports products and much more.

The effects of this economy are far reaching as can be estimated by the millions of dollars it brings into the stronger Western allied economies.

The estimated size of the global sports industry was US$1.3 trillion in 2015 according to Plunkett Research Ltd. A study in 2014 by A.T. Kearney found that the market for sports events (i.e. revenues for tickets, media rights and sponsorship) was worth close to US$80 billion.

Moreover, the sports industry generates as much as US$700 billion annually or 1 percent of global GDP when sporting goods, apparel, equipment, and health and fitness spending is included. Such an opportunity to grow Pakistan’s economy should not be yanked away in such an ungracious manner.

[Police arrest blind pseudo PM’s secretary in Attock](https://nation.com.pk/25-Nov-2021/police-arrest-blind-pseudo-pm-s-secretary-in-attockt)

It is peculiar to note that since the English Cricket Board’s withdrawal from its tour of Pakistan, English players became readily available to now participate in the upcoming Indian Premier League—the milking ground for international cricketers, an opportunity that pays those far more as opposed to national matches.

Teams and cricketers have often been seen to manipulate and straight up opt out of national commitments in favour of other enticing cricket events with phenomenal pecuniary benefits accrued to individual players. One need only wonder the far reaching consequences this will have and damage that such attitudes are incurring to the game, once known as the game of gentleman.

The International Cricket Council, through the Future Tours Programme (FTP), provides that a tour should take place unless a government prohibits such a tour by making it illegal for its cricket team to participate in that tour. However, this does not suffice.

In this ever-changing international sports landscape, the ICC must accommodate for certain rules and provisions that bind cricketing nations to the tours they have contracted to participate in unless and only unless their reservations and concerns meet the stringent requirements that would be laid down in the regulations so prescribed by the ICC.

[24 hours most deaths occurred in Sindh followed by KP](https://nation.com.pk/25-Nov-2021/24-hours-most-deaths-occurred-in-sindh-followed-by-kp)

Additionally, there must be an international committee to verify and scrutinise any player concerns, rather than allowing for them to become rhetoric fodder and reasonable cause for such inelegant endings. Boards must not be so quick to forget that these tour obligations take the nature of legal obligations when they engage in a contract—and a contract, when breached, poses serious repercussions.

Pakistan must claim damages and reinstatement of the tour at its earliest possible convenience. In addition to this, the normalised attitude of boards to accept as legitimate the reservations pertaining to security raised by singular players should be seriously limited, curtailed and made subject to specific provisions and requirements so as not to encourage them to engage in manipulation of whole entire tours that several parties have been relying on.