

Leaving no stone unturned to provide security at World Cup 2019, says ICC CEO David Richardson

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The recent shootings at Christchurch mosque in New Zealand, which Bangladesh cricket team narrowly escaped, has once again reignited the debate over the security measures at the upcoming World Cup tournament in May.

The ICC chief executive, David Richardson, initially spoke about the "unlikely" conversion of the 2021 Champions Trophy to a World T20. (Source: PTI)

The recent shootings at Christchurch mosque in New Zealand, which Bangladesh cricket team narrowly escaped, has once again reignited the debate over the security measures at the upcoming World Cup tournament in May. The ICC CEO David Richardson on Sunday stressed that security for players and the staff remain an "absolute priority" going into the major tournament.

Speaking to reporters in Karachi on the sidelines of Pakistan Super League (PSL) final between Quetta Gladiators and Peshawar Zalmi, the head of cricket's governing body said: "I don't think security is anything new, obviously something happening in New Zealand probably took a lot of people by surprise and it emphasised the need not to be complacent, especially going into the World Cup."

The former South Africa cricketer added that the authorities in the UK, where the tournament is set to take place, are leaving no stones unturned to ensure safety.

"I know the work has already been done by the security director together with all the security agencies in the UK and they are leaving no stone unturned," Richardson said.

The ICC CEO further praised Pakistan for safely hosting PSL matches, a decade after an attack on Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore led the foreign teams to refuse travel to the country for cricket matches due to security concerns.

"The perception outside of Pakistan was that it was quite a dangerous place to visit in the past and that perception slowly but surely has been changed," the ICC head said.

Last week on Friday, at least 50 people died in attacks in two mosques in Christchurch. Bangladesh's cricketers, who had gone for prayers at one of the mosques, were just a few minutes away from getting caught in the massacre. Following the incident, the third Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand was cancelled and the team returned home the next morning.

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