

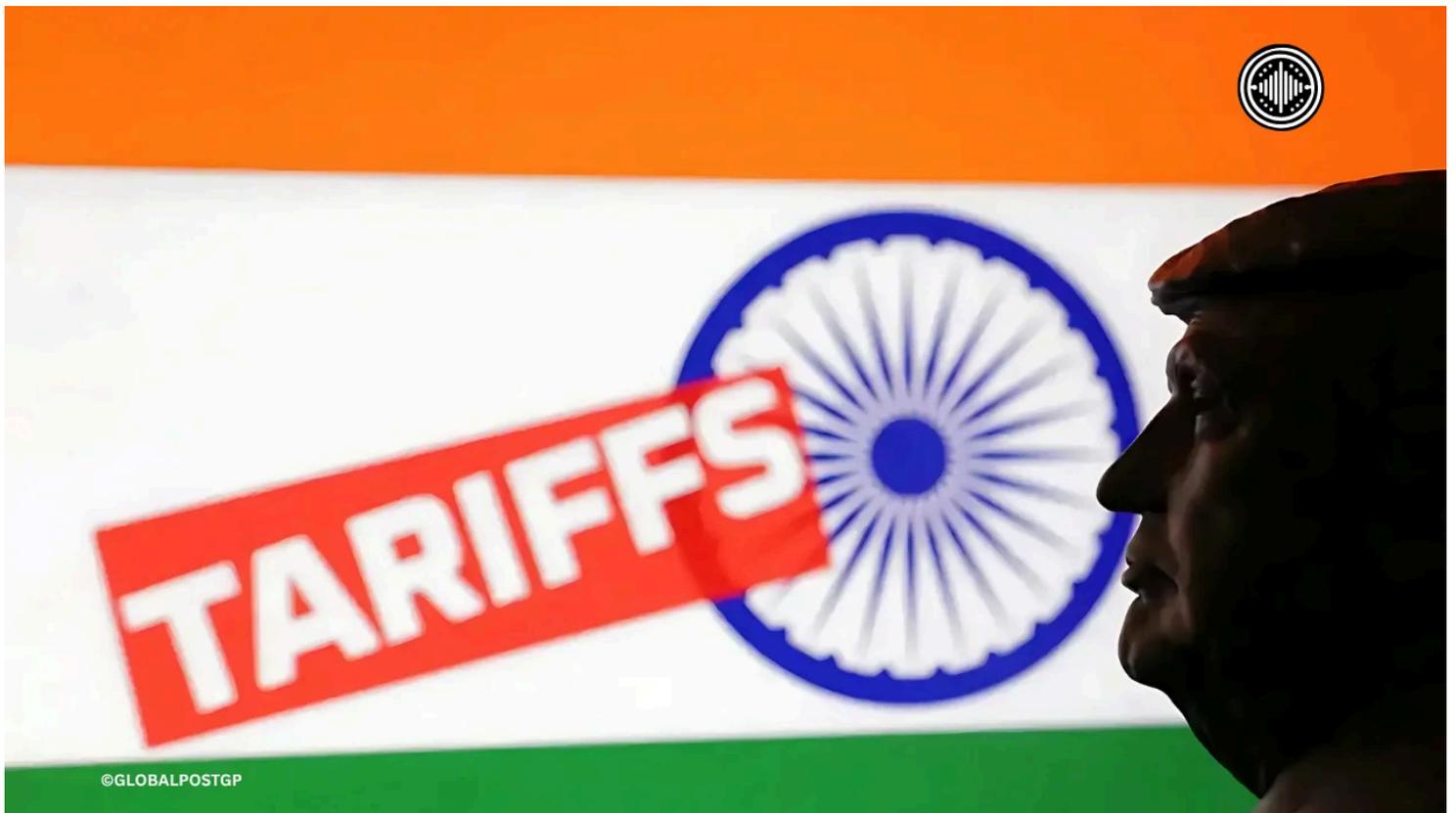
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Shashi Tharoor Urges Kohli's Test Comeback

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Congress Member of Parliament Shashi Tharoor has reignited discussion around Virat Kohli's decision to retire from Test cricket, calling the move "premature" and expressing hope that the former India captain might reconsider. His remarks follow India's recent 2-2 series draw against England, a contest marked by competitive performances and leadership from stand-in skipper Shubman Gill.

Kohli, who stepped away from Test cricket earlier this year, is widely regarded as one of the game's most accomplished batsmen and a defining figure in India's modern cricket era. His

departure from the longest format was met with mixed reactions, with some praising his decision to focus on shorter formats and personal priorities, while others lamented the loss of his experience and influence in the Test side.

Speaking after the England series concluded, Tharoor emphasized that Kohli's presence could still make a decisive impact in the five-day game. The veteran parliamentarian, known for his interest in sports and cricket commentary, suggested that the former captain's leadership qualities and batting prowess remain valuable assets that India should not forgo at this stage. Tharoor's comments have since been amplified across social media platforms, sparking a fresh wave of debate among fans, analysts, and former cricketers.

The recent England tour, led by Shubman Gill in Kohli's absence, saw a mix of highs and lows for the Indian side. The team fought back after early setbacks, managing to level the series 2–2. Gill's captaincy drew praise for its composure under pressure, while younger players stepped up to fill key roles. However, several observers pointed out that Kohli's experience in navigating difficult conditions and his ability to anchor innings might have made a difference in certain critical moments of the series.

Kohli's record in Test cricket includes over 8,000 runs, 29 centuries, and a notable tenure as captain that transformed India into one of the most dominant sides in the format. Under his leadership, the team achieved landmark victories, including a historic series win in Australia and consistent success at home. His aggressive approach, fitness standards, and uncompromising competitiveness became hallmarks of the team's identity during his captaincy.

Despite his retirement from Tests, Kohli continues to play in One-Day Internationals and Twenty20 Internationals, where he remains a pivotal figure in India's batting lineup. His workload management and focus on limited-overs cricket have been viewed as strategic, particularly with major ICC tournaments on the horizon. Yet, the call from Tharoor has reignited discussions about whether India might benefit from his return to the red-ball format, even if only for select series.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has not commented on Tharoor's remarks, and Kohli himself has not indicated any change in his decision. For now, the discussion remains a matter of public and media interest, with opinions divided between those who believe Kohli's chapter in Test cricket is closed and those who think it could still see one more innings.

