

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar launched the book in Delhi, remarking, "People often compare foreign policy with chess, but it's far more like cricket. There are many players, conditions vary, and you're at the umpire's whim at times."

"If He Hadn't Become A Cricketer, He'd Be In Hollywood..."



Prakash Bhandari is a senior journalist who chronicles the sporting history of the player. A host of Indian cricketers, from Syed Mushtaq Ali,

Sunil Gavaskar, and Kapil Dev to Sachin Tendulkar, Bishan Singh Bedi, EAS Prasanna, GR Vishwanath, Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, MS Dhoni, Yuvraj Singh, VVS Laxman, and Kiran More, have all written books. Sachin Tendulkar, celebrated as one of the greatest cricketers of all time, shares his story in his memoir, showcasing his modest upbringing and extraordinary achievements. Legendary opener Sunil Gavaskar has authored two books, offering fans insightful and witty commentary from one of the world's best openers. Kapil Dev's book, *Straight from the Heart*, captures his life story, leadership qualities, and India's victorious 1983 World Cup campaign. Under Dev's captaincy, India

clinched its first World Cup. In fact, there are three books about Kapil Dev, written at different times. Yuvraj Singh's *The Test of My Life* is a poignant account, where the cricketer narrates his battle with cancer and his inspiring comeback to cricket. It's not just about the sport, it's an engrossing story of resilience during the peak of his career. Over the past few decades, India has cheered for many legendary heroes. These cricketers icons have shared their journeys through inspiring books. However, if you ask a publisher,

they might say that cricket books have limited readership, whether they are autobiographies or biographies. After Gulu Ezekiel's book on Salim Durrani, Mohinder Amarnath's biography has been penned by his younger brother, Rajender Amarnath, himself a first-class cricketer, who played for several states. This is Rajender's second book. His first was about his father, Lala Amarnath, one of India's greatest cricketers with a colourful history. During the Jaipur Literature Festival, Mohinder Amarnath, and moderator Amrit Mathur, a cricket official and author, participated in a session. When I asked Rajender which book he thought was better, the one about his father Lala Amarnath or his brother Mohinder, he promptly replied, "On father, of course."

Mohinder Amarnath, who played for Indian schools and toured England as a schoolboy alongside his brother Surinder, represented India for 20 years. However, he chose to write this book nearly 35 years after his last international game. The title *Fearless* reflects his fearlessness

against the fast bowlers from West Indies, England, Pakistan, Australia, and New Zealand, prompting Sir Viv Richards in 1983 to call Mohinder Amarnath the 'best player of fast bowling in the world.' For an Indian batsman, who didn't always get his due from national selectors, to be praised so highly by a player of Viv Richards' caliber was remarkable. Yet, despite his talent and skill as both a batsman and bowler, Mohinder was repeatedly left out of the Indian team. He was in and out of the squad and was once ignored for more than three years. This exclusion frustrated him, leading him to famously describe the selectors as a 'bunch of jokers.' During the JLF session, when asked which selector



was biased against him, he revealed it was the chairman of the Selection Committee, Raj Singh Dungarpur. Mohinder also shared that Amarnath surname led to prejudice, and both he and his elder brother, Surinder, faced discrimination after their father. Despite consistent performances in domestic cricket like the Ranji and Duleep Trophies, Mohinder was often overlooked while less skilled players represented India. "On various tours, we found that some players were part of the Indian team only as tourists, taking photographs or shopping. Such players were mostly from the South," Mohinder disclosed during the JLF session. Like his father, Lala Amarnath, Mohinder's cricket career was colourful and often controversial. The book *Fearless* reveals how non-cricketing reasons kept him out of the team.

Mohinder Amarnath's international career spanned 20 years, the second-longest after Sachin Tendulkar, yet he played just 69 Tests and 85 ODIs, hardly reflective of such a formidable player. The book offers insights into the Amarnaths, often called cricket's first family. Raised in Jalandhar, Surinder and Mohinder attended a government school, where Hindi and Gurmukhi were the mediums of instruction. Both brothers showed little interest in academics. "Mohinder skipped classes and was often seen in the cinema. He loved films and film music so much that I thought if he hadn't become a cricketer, he'd be in Hollywood," Rajender Amarnath shared. At a time when playing in England was considered essential for a cricketer's education, Mohinder went there with the Indian schoolboy team in 1967, making his Ranji Trophy debut at 17. He recalls his Test debut against Australia in Chennai in December 1969 but didn't play his next Test until the tour of New Zealand and West Indies in early 1976. His gritty 85 against the West Indies in Port of Spain was key to

India's historic win. Notably, nine of his eleven Test hundreds were scored away from home. Brought back to the Indian team for a tour of Pakistan after three years, his peak period stretched from December 1982 to June 1983. While his teammates struggled against Imran Khan and company, Mohinder scored 584 runs, including three centuries, His performance against the West Indies' formidable pace quartet, Andy Roberts, Michael Holding, Joel Garner, and Malcolm Marshall, was even more impressive, with 598 runs, including two centuries and four fifties. He was the Man of the Match in both the semi-final and final of the 1983 World Cup. "We had no hope at the start of the World Cup. Most of us just hoped to stay until the finals and watch it. But destiny had other plans, and we became champions," Mohinder reminisced. Mohinder's frustration with being left out of ODIs and the 1987 World Cup led to his infamous comment about selectors. However, he doesn't dwell much on this in his book and keeps any bitterness in check, despite being unfairly treated. In candid reflections, Mohinder ranks Imran Khan above Sunil Gavaskar as a captain, praising Khan's inclusive leadership. "Gavaskar was a phenomenal batsman, one of the bests. But he expected others to match his standards and didn't always connect with younger players. Imran, on the other hand, created an inclusive and happy team environment," he writes. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar launched the book in Delhi, remarking, "People often compare foreign policy with chess, but it's far more like cricket. There are many players, conditions vary, and you're at the umpire's whim at times."

Mohinder could have made his memoir controversial but chose diplomacy instead. rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

Indies in Port of Spain was key to

Allah Ke Bande... in Hindi



Shruti Kothari

Padma Shri Kailash Kher ventures into the Literary World, yes, you can sing your words. As the golden sun bathed the Pink City in hues of warmth, the Jaipur Literature Festival, on its second day, welcomed a voice that has transcended borders and languages. Padma Shri Kailash Kher, the maestro of soul-stirring melodies, marked his entry into the literary world with the launch of his book *Teri Deewani: Shabd Ke Paaz*.

Speaking at the event, Kher humbly shared his life journey, one marked by struggles, yet carried forward with an unwavering smile. His session, held at the "Baithak" in Hotel Clark's Amer, was brimming with high energy from the moment he stepped onto the stage. Though diminutive in stature, his aura and presence overshadowed everything else. At the beginning of the session, he made an insightful remark, expressing his delight at being among fellow literary enthusiasts. "Usually, when I perform or give interviews, I meet people from different walks of life. But here, at JLF, I am happy to see like-minded literary aficionados gathered together," he said. True to his humble nature, he took the time to greet everyone on stage and in the audience before commencing his talk.

The session was curated by Sanjoy K. Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork Arts, with whom Kher shares a long-standing bond, dating back to 2008. One of the standout aspects of the event was that it was conducted entirely in Hindi, captivating the audience with Kher's eloquence in the language.

Heartfelt Gift
Kher spoke passionately about how he considers everyone as his family rather than just fans. He expressed gratitude for the overwhelming love that he receives from people everywhere he goes, emphasizing that this kind of affection is something that only a family can provide. He revealed that his upcoming book is a heartfelt tribute to his fans, dedicated to those who eagerly seek to uncover the stories behind his music.

Navigating the Path of Growth and Discovery

Reflecting on his childhood and his decision to leave home in pursuit of his dreams, Kher spoke candidly about the challenges faced by artists in India. He expressed disappointment over the lack of appreciation for creative arts compared to Western nations. "Unless you are an engineer, doctor, MBA, or lawyer, no one really values your work," he remarked, emphasizing the need for a cultural shift where art is recognized and respected in all its forms.

He recounted tales of struggle and resilience, of moments when he was on the brink of surrender, only to be pulled back by an unshakable belief in his art. The audience was spellbound as Kher narrated how his early days of struggle in Mumbai shaped the artist we revere today. In a captivating storytelling session, Kher unfolded the chapters of his life, shedding light on the challenges he encountered in his early days. From toiling in a printing press to steering a truck, his journey was a testament to perseverance and grit. Despite the hardships, Kher narrated these experiences with a twinkle in his eye, showcasing his unwavering spirit. Delving into his deep-rooted affection for Delhi, Kher reminisced about the city's vibrant energy and the warmth of its people. He marveled at their openness to possibilities and their

Music as an ART
Kher also made a humble request to the media personnel in attendance to diligently separate Bollywood music from music in general. He emphasized the importance of media professionals educating the masses on this crucial disparity. Using his band, Kailasa, as a prime example, he shed light on the unique work ethic and discipline required in the band's music compared to the mainstream Bollywood scene. Through his anecdotes, Kher not only shared his personal journey but also imparted valuable lessons on seizing opportunities and persevering through adversity. His narrative resonated as a compelling ode to resilience and passion in the pursuit of dreams.



willingness to embrace innovation. Transitioning to Bombay marked a turning point in his career, with his foray into the

world of music. Starting from humble beginnings of composing jingles, he eventually soared to stardom in Bollywood, culminating in the formation of his iconic music group, *Kailasa*.

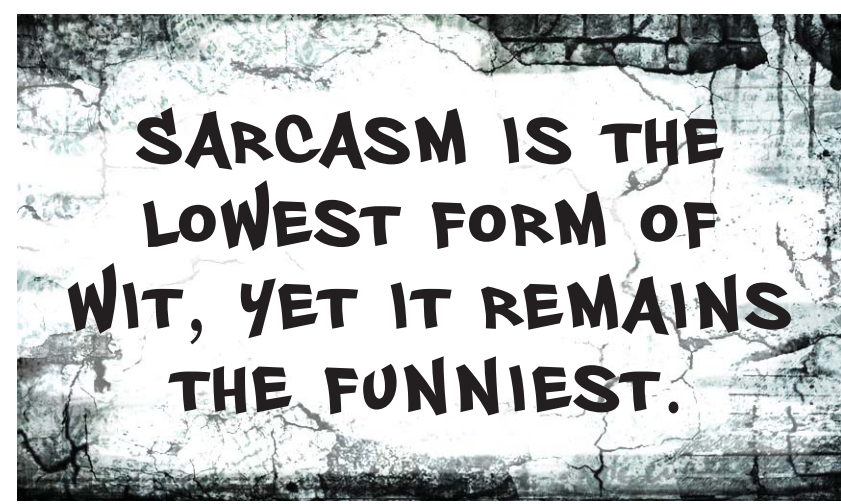
Deewani' and 'Jay Jay Kara.' His melodic voice resonated through the venue, creating a magical ambiance that left a lasting impression on all those in attendance. From the very first note he sang, the air grew electric. Every syllable resonated with the ethos of devotion and an undying love for music. "Words have music, and music has words," he remarked, emphasizing the poetic essence of songwriting. His spontaneous rendition of 'Teri Deewani' left the audience swaying, eyes closed, as if momentarily transported to a place beyond the mundane. Beyond music, Kher's session was an exploration of identity, spirituality, and the necessity of staying true to one's art. He urged young artists to find their own voices instead of chasing trends, reminding them that true success lies in authenticity. His words, like his songs, carried an honesty that resonated deeply with the gathering of literature enthusiasts, musicians, and aspiring dreamers. His session at the Jaipur Literature Festival was a testament to the fact that music, like literature, has the power to move, heal, and inspire. And for those who were present, it was nothing short of magical.

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THE WALL

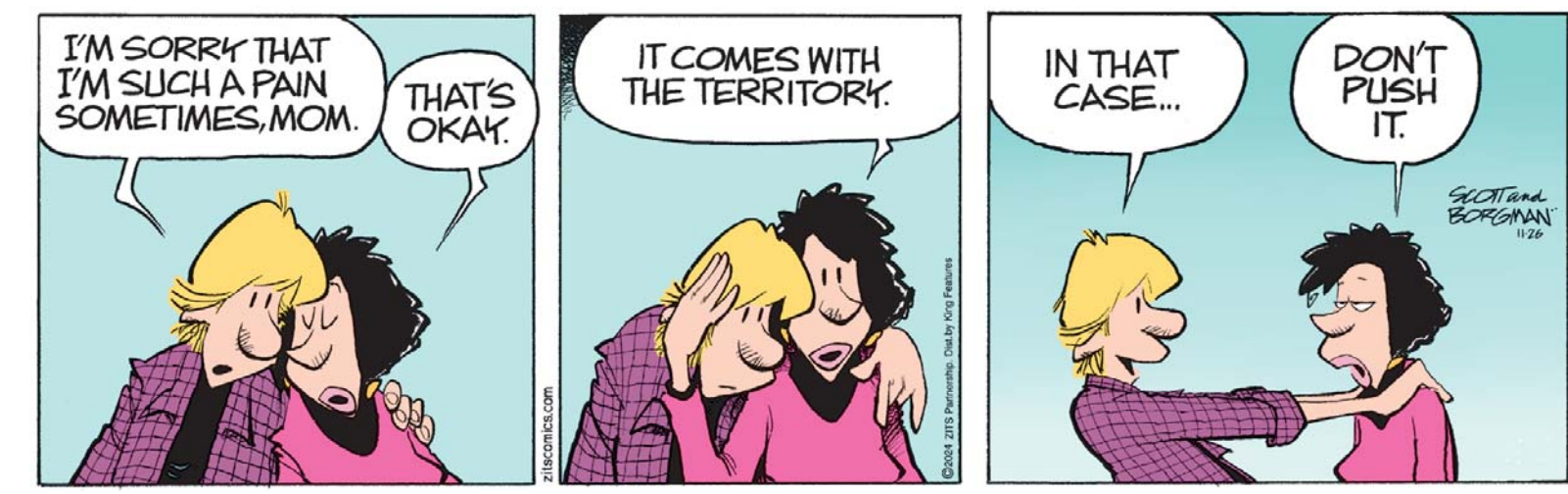


BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

Change Your Password Day

Change Your Password Day is a special reminder to enhance your online security. This day is essential because it encourages everyone to update their passwords regularly. Strong and unique passwords are the first defense against hackers. With so many online accounts, it's easy to use the same password everywhere, but that can lead to serious security risks if one site gets hacked. By changing passwords often, you reduce the chance of your personal information falling into the wrong hands.

#SPARKLERS



Lit Kumbh

The real fight at JLF? Getting your hands on the Festival pass. Skip the crowds, sink into plush lounges, sip on handcrafted cocktails, and indulge in gourmet bites, all while enjoying exclusive sessions away from the chaos. Literature is great, but VIP perks? Now, that's a bestseller.



Prajakta Koli drawing bigger crowds than authors

Books may be the heart of JLF, but fandoms run the show. When Prajakta Koli arrived, this time as an author, not just a content creator, the crowd surged, proving that internet stardom and storytelling go hand-in-hand. Long lines, eager selfies, and a buzz that rivaled any literary giant looks like YouTube to bookshelves is a bestseller move.



Not this Ila!!

When an author stormed out of a session, fuming that the other panelist wouldn't let him speak. Long-winded monologues, interruptions, and one person hogging the mic, was this a literary discussion or a family WhatsApp group? No wonder he pulled an "Albert Pinto" moment.

Javed Akhtar getting more clicks than the session

The speaker at the session had plenty to say, but so did the audience, only their language was flash photography. While discussions unfolded on stage, the real spectacle was Javed Akhtar, unintentionally becoming the most photographed person in the room. Panelists spoke of literature, but the crowd was busy composing their captions.



Sparkling Attendees



Words meet wardrobes

JLF isn't just a literary spectacle, it's a fashion runway disguised as a festival. Sarees, co-ord sets, flowy skirts, and statement jewelry steal the show, draped as effortlessly on men as on women. Because here, style is as much a conversation starter as the books.