

## Heartwarming to see Dhoni thank India's supporters

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As Mahendra Singh Dhoni's boys went up one by one to get felicitated by the President and Honorary Secretary of the BCCI, it was a time of great joy and pride for all those lucky to be present at the evening. Our boys had won the World Cup over a month back and it was time for the Board to say thanks to them for the achievement and the glory they brought to the country.



It was the kind of evening where past meets present and everybody rejoices in the sport that gets them together. To add to that Mahi spoke so well thanking the billions not only in India, but all over the world for their support. To have a skipper so down to earth is a blessing indeed for make no mistake, it is easy to get carried away and forget others especially at that young age.

It is only as one gets older, a bit more mature that the realization comes that prayer has great power in changing

things. It is only once the hurly burly of playing and travelling eases that the importance of the blessings of elders and good wishes of people comes through. The beauty is that the players will never ever get to meet millions of their well-wishers who make so many sacrifices, but those millions will still pray, fast or make some impossible resolutions so that their beloved team wins. Players don't always know how blessed they are to have such supporters and that's why it was heartwarming to hear Dhoni thank all of them.

It was also touching to see Salim Durani get the lifetime achievement award. Since the earlier awards had all gone according to seniority in Test cricket, it looked as if Salim had missed out. It was terrific of the BCCI to honour him with the award, for in doing so, they showed that they were not going by statistics alone, but looking at the impact a player had on the game during his time and there's not the slightest doubt that Salim Durani had a massive influence on the public during his era.

Ask for a six and you got it from Durani. He remains the nicest of cricketers and there is nobody who has an ill word to say about him. Generous to a fault, it is hoped that he will be more careful about the reward he has got from BCCI and not fall for some silly sob stories and squander it away. Salim, alongwith Wadekar, Sardesai and of course my hero, Jaisimha, were the mentors for us youngsters on our first trip to the West Indies.

Chris Gayle can be a mentor to the inexperienced West Indian youngsters, but he is not in the team at the moment despite his man of the tournament heroics in the just concluded IPL. It is India's good fortune that they won't have to bowl to a player who is the CEAT International Cricketer of the Week for his outstanding batting and accurate bowling in the IPL. PMG