



THE WILLOW SCEPTERED PRINCE OF THE PEOPLE



for being a champion of the game, an ambassador of his people and of his time, for demonstrating humility in greatness and for being an inspirational and articulate leader on and off the field, for dancing down the wicket, leading the charge in the battle against HIV and for changing the world, one life at a time through his partnership with the Foundation of Goodness.

Well, if records could speak, the world would pause, and then break into rapturous applause whenever this champion takes stage - 134 tests and 404 one day internationals, 600 catches, over 12,400 test runs with an average of 57, including 11 double centuries. Twice Wisden's Cricketer of the year, recipient of the largest number of Man of the Match awards in international cricket and the only batsman to score four consecutive 150s in test cricket, he is one of the very rare few that stand on the lofty peak reserved for comparisons with the incomparable Don Bradman, such is the halo of genuine greatness that surrounds the cricketer, leader, statesman and humani-



tarian they call Kumar Sangakkara. Behind the stumps or in front – the sheer class and dominance with which Kumar Sangakkara has

ruled world cricket for one and half decades - he is one of the greatest wicketkeeper-batsmen the game has ever produced. He has helped Sri Lankan cricket take a great leap forward as he has been an icon and role model for every budding wicketkeeper in every cricket playing nation. All through the awards that came his way and the records that kept tumbling around him, he has been a great ambassador of the game's fairness and integrity amidst every controversies. He has also been one of Sri Lanka's most successful captains – guiding the team to victory on numerous occasions both at home and overseas. With such

euphoric fan following all across the cricketing nations, and especially in the subcontinent - his contribution towards popularizing the game, and spreading joy and inspiring generations with his stroke-play, his character and his acumen has indeed been incredible. One of the world's best ever batsman, lightning-quick behind the stumps (who can forget him stumping Brian Lara, or catching Ravi Bopara's failed sweep shot, or his numerous diving one-handed catches) and pretty good with a ball in his hand too, it's hard to know what Kumar's best cricketing attribute is – but obviously it would have to be his cover-drive. His life beyond those pair of gloves and that piece of willow has also been as exemplary as it was during his cricketing days. He has been proactively involved in a lot of charity work in Sri Lanka through all these years. The foundations he is associated with – especially Foundation of



Goodness and Think Wise Initiative – aimed at raising social awareness against life threatening specter of HIV, AIDS. The Foundation of Goodness, was established in 2009 to bridge the gap between rural and urban Sri Lanka, and enable those living in rural Sri Lanka to move out of poverty and subsistence living and into self-sufficiency. The Foundation now supports

25,000 people in coastal regions of Sri Lanka across 45 villages with healthcare, business development, education, IT skills, women's empowerment and environmental management – all in line with the UN's 17 sustainable development goals. This is our priceless opportunity to salute this great man, who has dedicated his entire life for every fellow Sri Lankans in their quest for happiness and peace.