

## Cricketing Legends Visit the Site

### Helicopter Ride to Mankulam

On Sunday March 27<sup>th</sup>, English cricketing legend Sir Ian Botham and Ashes winning Captain, Michael Vaughan along with MCC President, Christopher Martin-Jenkins, Laureus Sport for Good Foundation as well as the Foundation of Goodness team, boarded a helicopter to visit the site for the North Empowerment Project in Mankulam, northern Sri Lanka.

Sir Ian Botham has been actively involved with the Foundation of Goodness since the devastating tsunami of 2004 struck the southern coast of the island. Having made repeat visits to the region to assess the progress made by youngsters and villagers, Sir Ian is keen to become involved with and support the Foundation of Goodness' next stage of development in the North.

The trip was the first time the two cricket icons had travelled beyond the Southern areas of the country and were blown away by what they saw. Since the civil war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Government which began almost 30 years ago there has been barely any development in this part of the country. Having been allocated land for the project in November 2010 the Sri Lankan Army has carried out extensive de-mining and are close to finishing the 50 acre site. Once completed it will be possible for the project team to explore the area fully and begin the process of design and building.



The helicopter arrives

Team ready for boarding

Plans at the site

After the visit to the site both Sir Ian and Michael played a short game of cricket with some enthusiastic local school children, many who had been child soldiers during the internal conflict.

***"In 15 years time, I hope to hear of another Sanga (Sangakkara) and Murali (Muralidaran) emerging from the North. That is the vision I'd like to see for this country."***

- Michael Vaughan

In a media conference following the return of the group from the North, Sir Ian, Michael and Christopher were joined by local and international cricket stars Muthiah Muralidaran and Kumar Sangakkara as well as Foundation of Goodness Founder and Trustee, Kushil Gunasekera. During the conference Murali highlighted just how important it is for a project such as this one to be developed in this part of the country.

***"We have ambitious plans for the centre near Mankulam, and I am confident that when the plans are realised we will have built one of the finest facilities in the region."***

- Muthiah Muralidaran



Sir Ian and Michael at the site



Sir Ian at the press conference

***"I am hugely impressed by the plans for this project which will regenerate communities and encourage reconciliation."***

- Sir Ian Botham



The site clearance under way



Aerial view of the site



Talking through the design on site



Sir Ian plays a game of cricket!

***"I was completely shocked. The scenery was unbelievable."***

- Sir Ian Botham

## Giving Essential Supplies to the Needy

As the journey to create the *North Empowerment Project* takes shape the Foundation of Goodness is working on building relationships with the community on the ground. Having only recently been transferred from IDP camps to resettlement areas it is essential that the civilians most desperate and immediate needs to be met during this period.

The distribution of all these supplies is only made possible by the many generous donors that the Foundation of Goodness has the pleasure of working with.

### January 2011: 500 Essentially School Supply Packs

The very first area identified was the need to help students get back to school and provide them with the essential equipment to aid this journey. Having spoken to Principals and military leadership in the region, the Foundation of Goodness was able to identify some of the most desperate communities and provide over 500 essential schools pack to students from the Mullaitivu district. Students from six schools in Mankulam and Vidyananda College benefited from this project. At a cost of 3000/-, each pack included:

- Eight exercise books
- Pens/ pencils/ mathematical instrument box/ water colours/ colour pencils/ marker pens/ erasers
- Fabrics for school uniforms/ shoes/ school back pack.



Fabric for uniforms



Off to school



New bag



Waiting patiently

### February 2011: 125 Bicycles

Following the distribution of the essential school supplies the next pressing need that was bought to the Foundation of Goodness' attention was bicycles for transportation. The region is still far from having consistent and active means of public transportation, many walk for miles to schools, work and for numerous needs, with development still in its initial stages. Once again with the help of community leaders and military serving in the region the Foundation of Goodness was able to provide 125 cycles to villagers from Akkarayankulam, Ambalanger and Aiyankankulam areas. The supply of bicycles for the displaced families included young widowed women in the North who are trying to rebuild their lives.



New bikes



A wonderful gift



Ready to go



**"This has to be the most useful and precious gift they have received in a long time, this will truly be a huge blessing to their lives"**

- Community Leader

### March 2011: 100 Essential Housing Supplies

During the site visit with English cricketing legends Sir Ian Botham and Michael Vaughan, the Foundation of Goodness took the opportunity to continue its effort to uplift livelihoods in the Northern Provinces. Through working with local security forces the 100 poorest families within the Grama Seva Wasam Division settlements of Olumada, Ampakaman, Mankulam and Pannikkamkulam were identified and the following essential items gifted:

- Double bed mosquito net
- Two Kerosene lamps
- 1 Torch
- Flask
- Ten Litre water container



Helping the needy



Giving Supplies



Ceremonies

**"It amazed me that so many things I took for granted like clean water, mosquito nets, bicycles, meant a lot to these people who have endured decades of a horrible war."**

- Sir Ian Botham

### March 2011: Cricket Equipment

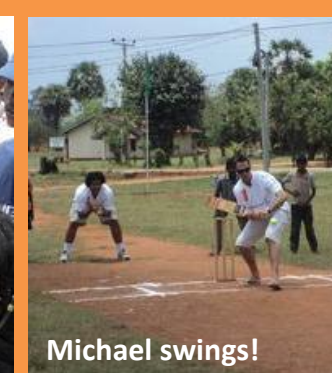
The visit to the North provided many opportunities for Sir Ian Botham, Michael Vaughan and the Foundation of Goodness staff to interact with local school children. A short cricket match was played and followed with the giving of cricket equipment including 100 bats and balls to local schools Akkarayankulam, Mankulam, Thirumurukkandy, and Olumada. Despite having lived in a civil war zone for a majority of their lives, the children's faces lit up as their cricketing idols played and joked with them on the wicket. The occasion only confirmed how sport is key to developing a child's future, breaking down barriers and helping to elevate lives out of poverty.



Cricket equipment



Sir Ian donates bats



Michael swings!