

THAKRAL BROTHERS PTE LTD. DONATES 350 HELMETS FOR STUDENTS THROUGH *HELMETS FOR KIDS* PROGRAM



HANOI, Vietnam – On September 11, 2009, the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIP Foundation) and Thakral Brothers Pte Ltd. (Thakral Brothers) teamed up to bring the *Helmets for Kids* road safety awareness program to Dich Vong B Primary School in the Cau Giay District of Hanoi. In a year when Vietnam’s prominent schools have seen remarkably high attendance rates, Thakral Brothers agreed to support 350 first grade children for free helmets and supplementary road safety education initiatives—a pledge to child injury prevention that will certainly play a large role in the future of road traffic safety in Vietnam.

Although road safety conditions have improved drastically in Vietnam in recent years, the growing populations of people and two-wheeled motor vehicles promises a bleak future for the country’s uneducated youth. The road traffic safety education initiatives, which included safety-themed games and lessons on the proper way to wear helmets, were aimed at not only encouraging children to be safe but also raising awareness among parents about the realities of childhood injuries. Studies have shown that Vietnamese parents often wrongly believe putting a helmet on a young child will be detrimental to their neck and spinal health.

The AIP Foundation and Thakral Brothers *Helmets for Kids* collaboration seeks to combat such misinformation and make helmet use a widespread and ongoing safety measure. During the ceremony, teachers and traffic safety educators encouraged children to think of their helmets as their “new friends,” companions that will play an important part in their daily lives. By creating a bond between the child and their helmet and engaging the students in interactive activities like peer musical performances, *Helmets for Kids* aims to make traffic safety fun and engaging for Vietnam’s youth.

Raman Palaniappan, Country Manager (Vietnam) at Thakral Brothers Pte Ltd., said the creative and innovative methods employed by the *Helmets for Kids* program correspond directly with Thakral Brothers’ corporate mission of unique community services and information sharing.

“As a multinational corporation with vested interest in our working communities, Thakral Brothers is proud to support *Helmets for Kids*, a program which work towards promoting a safer and more prosperous future for the children of Vietnam,” Raman Palaniappan said.

Through helmet donations and traffic safety education, AIP Foundation and Thakral Brothers hope to instigate genuine awareness and concern amongst parents regarding the safety of children on Vietnam’s increasingly motorized streets.

Diva My Linh, Traffic Safety and *Helmets for Kids* Goodwill Ambassador said, “Some young people may view helmet use as unfashionable or unimportant. But I hope that they will see me and other entertainers wearing

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helmets and say, 'That's cool. I want to be like that.' I believe changing children's opinions is an important step in saving their behaviors and perhaps also their lives."

"Ensuring injury prevention on Vietnam's roads is an ongoing endeavor that requires community-based attention," said Greig Craft, President of Asia Injury Prevention Foundation. "*Helmets for Kids* empowers the nation's youth and looks towards a future of safer road users and we hope that programs like ours will raise awareness about road safety issues nationwide."

With the help of corporations like Thakral Brothers, AIP Foundation has distributed more than 400,000 child helmets to primary schools throughout Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia through its *Helmets for Kids* program. These helmet handouts, in conjunction with education and public awareness campaigns, promise to empower youths both locally and globally, becoming a catalyst for change in the fields of traffic safety and injury prevention.

About AIP Foundation:

AIP Foundation is a US nonprofit organization whose goal is to reduce injuries from road crashes, particularly involving children. The foundation is implementing a national primary school education curriculum and a road safety public awareness campaigns. Its *Helmets for Kids* (HFK) program has distributed more than 400,000 child helmets to primary schools throughout Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. AIP Foundation's not-for-profit Protec Helmet Company has developed the world's first "tropical" helmet and child motorbike helmet standard. The physically disabled are employed to assemble the helmets at the AIP Foundation factory, creating a valuable social model. All profits are put back into the community.

About Thakral Brothers Pte Ltd.

Thakral Group is a Singapore based conglomerate operating in over 30 countries. The group has been in existence for over 100 years and has been successful in delivering business value to various domains like electronic security, IT hardware distribution, Hospitality, High-end real-estate development, consumer electronics distribution and manufacturing. Beginning very humbly in 1905, the Group was adjudged the Best Private Enterprise of Singapore in 1995, with the Group Chairman, Mr. Kartar Singh Thakral being declared the Businessman of the Year.

Astral Infotech Vietnam Limited was established in 1999 as 100% foreign owned company by Thakral Group, Singapore with regional offices in Ho Chi Minh City and Ha Noi. Astral is a pioneer IT system integrator and total IT solution provider in Vietnam. Over the years, Astral has built expertise in providing a diverse range of high quality IT products and services that meets its customers' Information Technology needs. Up to now, Astral has an installed base of over 300 satisfied customers from different industries and market segments.