

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**Rotary donates helmets to pre-school students in Bung Rama 9**

*4 March, 2013 – Bangkok*

On March 4, 2013, the Rotary Club of Bangkok South , part of Rotary International (RI), will donate motorcycle helmets to 175 students at two pre-school child development centers in the Rama IX Aeration Pond Community, or Bung Rama 9. With this donation, Rotary Club of Bangkok South launches their *Helmets for Kids* partnership with the Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation to increase helmet use and reduce road traffic injuries among child motorcycle passengers in Bangkok.

Bung Rama 9 is a poor community in Bangkok that has received support from Rotary Club of Bangkok South for many years. AIP Foundation identified Rama 9 Child Development Center Pattana and Bung Rama 9 Child Development Center Bor 3 as crucial schools in the community to raise road safety awareness and promote helmet use as a simple safety precaution. Both schools are located close to busy highway roads that carry heavy traffic during rush hour, presenting a particular risk to these children.

Despite national traffic law mandating helmet use for drivers and passengers, only 46 percent of motorcyclists wear helmets on Thailand’s roads. Among children, helmet use falls to only eight percent. Many families ignore the requirement due to a lack of concern about road safety. However, research demonstrates that helmet use can reduce the risk of death by 42 percent and of severe head injury by 69 percent in case of a crash.

“Most of the children in Bung Rama 9 commute to and from school as passengers on motorcycles,” said Mr. Jon Plate, Rotary Club of Bangkok South Board Member and Service Projects Director. “However, as in much of Thailand, the helmet use rate is alarmingly low. Though they are young now, we recognize that these children are our future, and helmets are a simple, affordable, and proven way to protect their potential.”

Assistant Professor and Community Organizer Pongporn Sudbanthad said, “Healthy children become smart citizens, and smart citizens become creative communities, which lead to an accountable and sustainable country.”

“Helmets for Kids is a multipronged, proven approach to combat the epidemic levels of road traffic accident fatalities and injuries in many developing countries,” said Ratanawadee Winther, AIP Foundation Country Director. “In Thailand, where more than 14,000 lives were lost to road traffic injuries in 2011, widespread helmet use could save countless lives.”

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**About AIP Foundation**

The Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIP Foundation) is a U.S. registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that uses public-private partnerships, public awareness education, and school-based programs to reduce the rate of traffic injuries and fatalities in developing countries. AIP Foundation has offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Bangkok, Thailand. In 2001, AIP Foundation built its non-profit helmet assembly plant, manufacturing Protec brand tropical helmets in Vietnam. These helmets offer an environmentally appropriate, safe and affordable option for motorcycle and bicycle users.



In 2009, AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the FIA Foundation and the World Bank, launched the Global Helmet Vaccine Initiative (GHVI), an international coalition with the objective of “putting a helmet on every head in the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020).”

### **About The Rotary Club of Bangkok South**

The Rotary Club of Bangkok South is part of Rotary International. Rotary’s main objective is service — in the community, in the workplace, and around the globe. The 1.2 million Rotarians who make up more than 34,000 Rotary clubs in nearly every country in the world share a dedication to the ideal of “Service Above Self”

The Rotary Club of Bangkok South has over 100 members from more than 20 countries, volunteering their time and talents to further the Rotary motto, "Service Above Self" and it is a principle of Rotary that all donations go 100% towards charitable work.

The Rotary Club of Bangkok South is the largest as well as one of the oldest Rotary Clubs in Thailand and weekly luncheons are held every Friday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in central Bangkok.

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