



Former child-slaves gather around a motorbike provided by two Rotary clubs, West Chester Downtown “Fridays” and Norwich-St. Edmunds (England), at Bal Vikas Ashram in India.

A Kick Start to End Child Slavery

--- By Carol Metzker

“Rajneesh,” who conducts raids and child-slave rescues, as well as keeps operations running smoothly at Bal Vikas Ashram child-slave rehab center, took the first spin on a motorbike provided by Rotarians this month. He traveled to the area of Bhadohi to check on the health of Asmat, a boy who was a slave in the carpet industry, and the financial situation of his family. After Asmat was rescued, he was treated at BVA and returned to his home, but is currently suffering from cardiac problems.

In the next few years, the motorbike will enable staff from BVA to make numerous field visits to ensure the continued health, well-being and freedom of children who were rescued from slavery.

The Rotary clubs of West Chester Downtown “Fridays” and Norwich St. Edmunds (UK) provided funds for the motorbike, helmet and accessories. It was the first project undertaken by the newly forming Rotarian Action Group, Rotarians Against Child Slavery.

Bal Vikas Ashram (BVA) is a child-slave rehabilitation center near Allahabad, India, that has served more than 450 children since the year 2000. During their recovery and rehabilitation at the center, boys receive medical and psychological treatment. They also receive education—general literacy, vocational training and information about human rights—that help protect them and their villages against further slavery after the children have returned home.

For more information on how to fight child slavery, contact Carol Metzker, echmetzker@aol.com.