

Rotarians against Child Slavery

(A Newsletter for the proposed Rotarian Action Group – See website www.racsrag.org)

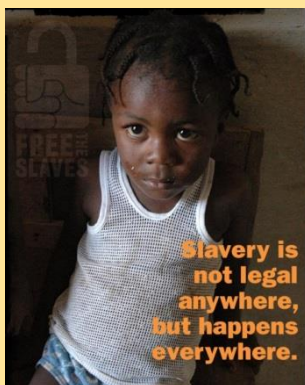
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20 March 2013

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"It may suit us to think that slavery belongs to the past and, at best, only exists in the underdeveloped countries, but in reality all our lives are touched by it and our demands sustain much of it"
(Rashila Gupta)

Editor: Mark Little – Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund, England

"In a world where most people loath slavery, awakening their awareness will unleash great power" (Kevin Bales)



RACSRAG Issues

Help wanted from Members: Talk to your DGE
(by Carol Metzker, Communications Officer)

Please tell your District Governor Elect that you are a member of the Rotarian Action Group Against Child Slavery. Recommend that when he or she receives a request from RACSRAG to communicate with Rotarians in your district that the answer is YES.

Rotarian Action Groups are not allowed to communicate in Rotary districts—except to action

group members—without the express, written approval from the District Governor (for the current year) or District Governor elect (for the coming year).

That means RACSRAG cannot recruit new members, educate Rotarians, or enlist clubs' help for projects unless the DG or DGE has said YES. Communication to districts

without permission could cause RI to revoke our Action Group status.

Help ensure our Group's successful mission! Tell your DG or DGE you'd like for RACSRAG to communicate with your district. When your DGE seems likely to say yes, please let [Harry Payne](#) know so that he can send

Do you tweet ? Social Media Channels to develop RACS's Presence
(by Stephen Sypula, Treasurer)

As you know RACSRAG aims to create awareness about child slavery and to facilitate ways of helping to alleviate its consequences. To do so, we are using many avenues to create wider interest and support.

Those of you who post on Facebook or tweet on Twitter know their viral power. Twitter is particularly effective as followers of a "tweeter" can pass on a message, an article or relevant link. Consequently, a tweet from RACSRAG to one may be broadcast to many.

True Example:

I submitted a modified article by RACSRAG President Mark Little to our District 1260 News. This was viewed online and also sent to the site's Twitter account. Followers of D1260 news articles

automatically received a link to the article, as did Rotary International (RI). RI linked to the article and so re-tweeted it to its followers.

Within days, the article was:

- read by 268 subscribers to D1260 News - see article at <http://www.rotary1260.org.uk/content/view/3274/1/>
- picked up by 146 Facebook account holders
- sent to 190,977 Twitter followers, 186,000 or so received the article link through an RI re-tweet!

The moral of the story:

Let's get tweeting so that your followers can follow RASGRAG developments, articles and

project appeals. Ask your followers to follow RACS directly, using our "handle" of [@joinracsrag](#)

Like us and ask your contacts to Like us on Facebook. Look up Rotarian Action Group Against Child Slavery, or use this link <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rotarian-Action-Group-Against-Child-Slavery/121197057958416>

Is this gobbledegook to you?

It will be if you are not into these so called social media things. It was gobbledegook for me until a few weeks back, but seeing the advantage for RACSRAG, I asked for help from my children! Ask your family or friends to help... and get them involved.



Treasurer's Message

The Price to help us End Child Slavery.

Please consider this: The cost to become a life member of RACSRAG is about the same as the average cost of buying a child slave, a heinous crime that must be stopped. You can strengthen efforts to end child slavery by subscribing to RACSRAG and becoming a full member of the Group today.

This Rotarian movement against child slavery is now open for business, working to prevent children falling into the hands of traffickers, freeing them from a lifetime of servitude and rehabilitating the survivors through projects undertaken with grassroots anti-slavery organizations.

How Will Your Membership Make the Difference?

Your membership in the Rotarian Action Group Against Child Slavery will go far to spread the message: **END CHILD SLAVERY.**

- Your **subscription/dues** will fund printed materials and other resources to help raise awareness and its solutions throughout the Rotary community and linked anti-slavery organizations.
- Your engaged **participation** as a member will lead to an effective and accountable organization, making sound decisions supported by you at our Annual Meetings.
- Your **support of nominated action group projects** will help change the lives of millions of children who are recovering survivors or still victims.

Sign up [here](#). **Your commitment may be the one that turns the tide.**

Subscription levies:

Lifetime membership £80
Annual membership £20 (£5 for 2012/13)
Rotaractors membership £10 but £3 for 2012/13

How to pay

Pay by bank transfer or through RACSRAG's PayPal account. Full details can be found [here](#). If you wish to pay by card, hit the 'Pay Now' button on the [Sign up](#) page and add £3.40 to cover charges.

Ask your Club or District to nominate you as their representative and reimburse your subscription. Invite others to join and help make child slavery history.

More than 750 members receive the RACS Newsletter. Will each one of you become a full member of the Action Group? Subscribe to RACSRAG and act against Child Slavery now.

We can end Child Slavery. Let's do it together.

For queries or more information please contact [Stephen Sypula](#)

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor Mark,

I write to offer my Club's warmest congratulations in finally achieving Rotarian Action Group status.

We have followed your progress through one of our members involved with RACS from the outset. A small Club of just 20 members we jointly considered taking out an individual annual subscription to support RACS & acknowledge RACS success so far. On advice, the Club has decided this year to donate the amount per capita to RACS to be used towards a project determined by RACS Board. Members may well subscribe individually.

It's a small gesture but one we know will be put to good effect, and one other Clubs may wish to consider.

With thanks for holding firm and being a beacon of hope for children the world needs to acknowledge.

Rob Bamforth, President RC Stevenage Grange, D1260. UK

Editorial



"You may never know what results come from your action, but if you do nothing, there will be no result."

(Gandhi)

Far too many women and girls around the world, face violence. Globally, at least one in three women is beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Violence against women and young girls is unacceptable, anywhere, anytime. It violates human rights, devastates lives, fractures families and communities and undermines good development.

Recent reports of horrific acts against young girls have shocked the world. Two recent cases spring to mind a) the Pakistani school girl, Malala Yousafzai, who was attacked and shot speaking out about the importance of girls' education and b) the case of the young female student in India who was gang raped and murdered.

Acts of violence against women and children are a violation of human rights and a significant number of these acts arise because of the increase in the global trafficking of young girls who are repeatedly traded on what is called the female used body market where they are passed from man to man like a shared cigarette....used and then... all too often stubbed out.

This burgeoning growth in human trafficking is prompting some Governments to take even more active steps to curb what President Barack Obama called "a debasement of our common humanity". Two examples of recent Government legal action against the traffickers are included in this Newsletter.

One is in Australia and the other is in the USA.

Also included is a brief resume of a report by The Centre for Social Justice which has just surfaced and which calls for a radical new approach to the way that the UK Government perceives and handles trafficking issues in Great Britain. Needless to say the report is highly critical of the current approach to tackling trafficking in the UK.

One of the contributors for this issue is Matt Friedman who until recently was working as the Regional Project Manager for the UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking.

At the RI Convention in Bangkok, we persuaded him to give a presentation on "Slavery in the 21st Century". Matt is now working as a Technical Advisor to the Mekong Club which was formed in July 2012 as the world's first business-led not-for-profit organization fighting the business of slavery across the Mekong area in Asia. His article is entitled "Opening new Frontiers to address human trafficking"

Also included in this issue is an article by Peter Bashford who is the founder of **Asha Nepal**. Peter has spent many years working in the garment industry and was involved in child labour issues in China, India and the rest of SE Asia and the Far East. Through his interest in stopping child labour within the textile industry he became aware of the wider issues of child

slavery when he encountered children working in the brick kilns, carpet factories, child domestic labour, debt bondage and inevitably the trafficking and forced prostitution of children and young women.

From 2005 he concentrated his work in Nepal, making partnerships and forging interactions with NGO's and INGO's. He linked up with an emerging self-help group **Shakti Samuha** which shared his ideals of getting survivors back into society through economic and social empowerment. Together they set up a Rehabilitation Centre in 2006. From there he went on to set up a children's home for children effected by and at risk of trafficking and a number of related health, education and employment projects.

Peter is the author of "A Sense of Direction: the Trafficking of Women and Children from Nepal" (2006) and co-author of "Looking Towards Tomorrow: A study on the Reintegration of Trafficking Survivors" (2012). Both are available as free downloads at the charity's website [Asha Nepal](#)

If you are interested in a speaker on trafficking and your club is in the Olney area please contact Peter at [Peter Bashford](#). Olney is between Northampton and Bedford.



Australian Prime Minister get tough with the Traffickers

On the 8th March 2013, Julia Gillard, the Australian Prime Minister, announced her Government's strategy to combat human trafficking and slavery. Whilst speaking at the International Women's Day Breakfast in Sydney, she announced that the Governor General had just signed into law the **Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions & People Trafficking Act**.

The new Act creates new offences of forced marriage and harbouring a victim. It enables accomplices to be charged as well as the main

perpetrators. It raises the penalties for existing debt bondage offences, and also increases payments to victims. Alongside these new laws, Australia's National Action Plan is being updated to combat trafficking, slavery and forced marriage.

In her speech, Prime Minister Gillard stated that *"today I'm proud to announce a new whole-of-government strategy to reinforce ethical behaviour in procurement so that no firm providing goods or services to the Commonwealth is tainted by*

slavery or people-trafficking anywhere in the supply chain.I'd hate to see a single cent of public money go to any entity involved in this vile trade. Friends, this is one of the many ways that Australia is saying 'No'. No, to people trafficking. No, to slavery. No, to treating women like objects or chattels. That is not a world we will accept. That is not a life we want for any woman or any girl. Not here. Not overseas. Not anywhere.. Not ever"



Young girls sold for sex and labour, are already the second most lucrative commodity for organized crime.

US Congress passes Anti-Human Trafficking Act

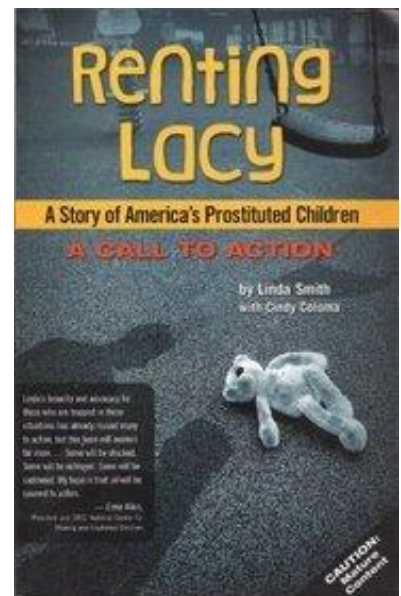
At the end of last month, after almost two years of urging action on the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA), anti-slavery activists like the Polaris Project celebrated a major victory as the US House of Representatives gave its support to this critical tool which provides vital services to survivors and curtails human trafficking both in the USA and abroad.

On 28th February 2013, the US House of Representatives passed the legislation in a 286-138 vote as part of the Violence Against Women Act (S47) just weeks after the US Senate voted overwhelmingly (93-5) to include it as an amendment to S47. In 2011, the TVPRA – a bipartisan act – was allowed to expire for the first time, placing critical anti-trafficking initiatives at risk.

By way of background, in 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act was a landmark Act that greatly increased America's ability to protect victims and assist survivors, and it was reauthorized three times with bipartisan support. The recent approval sets important funding benchmarks, encourages distribution of the Polaris Project-operated National Human Trafficking Hotline number by federal agencies, establishes grant programmes for state agencies to assist child victims of sex trafficking and strengthens the ability to prosecute those who fraudulently hire individuals in foreign labour contracts.

The Act now awaits the signature of President Barack Obama.

Editor's Note: *In 2004 only four States had made human trafficking a crime. Now all fifty states have criminalized human trafficking and significant numbers of States are passing even stronger laws to protect survivors and punish traffickers.*



New CSG report: Ministers clueless about scale of UK Slavery ?

“Human trafficking is not a performance indicator for police. Until it is, there is more incentive to investigate a shed burglar than there is a human trafficker”

(Centre of Social Justice Report)



The UK has always prided itself as being in the forefront of the fight against human trafficking and slavery. Yet according to a recent report from the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), efforts to tackle human trafficking in the UK are in a state of crisis and Ministers are clueless about the scale of slavery within the UK .

Whilst more than 1,000 trafficking victims were found last year, the CSJ maintain that the figures only represent the tip of an iceberg. According to CSJ Managing Director, Christian Guy *“the authorities are either failing to understand the nature of this abuse or turning a blind eye to its existence. Our once great nation of abolitionists is a shameful shadow of its former self”* .

The CSJ investigation (“It Happens Here”) has discovered a litany of cases where adults and children are trafficked into and within the UK and subjected to – forced labour, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and forced criminality (which includes fraud, forced begging or pick pocketing and drug cultivation). The report “It Happens Here” was prepared by a Slavery Working Group which includes members of the Crown Prosecution Service and the Metropolitan Police. To download an executive summary or the full report, visit

www.centreforsocialjustice.org

[g.uk](http://www.g.uk).

Issues which need addressing include the following:-

Human trafficking is first and foremost a crime and not an immigration issue. Yet responsibility in Government lies with the Minister for Immigration. The report recommends that the remit for human trafficking and [slavery should be transferred to the Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice](#).

Legislation relating to human trafficking and slavery currently lies under three different acts. This separation is unhelpful and creates unnecessary confusion for those whose job it is to implement the legislation. It also perpetrates the misunderstanding of modern slavery as primarily an immigration – not a criminal problem. Thus CSJ recommends that the [Government passes the Modern Slavery Act which would include all human trafficking and slavery offences](#) in order to symbolically reflect the criminality of human trafficking for any form of exploitation and to highlight that slavery is not tolerated in British society.

Human trafficking is not a performance indicator for police. Until it is, there is more incentive to investigate a shed burglar, than there is a human trafficker.

The Government has previously stated that [each](#)

[police force should identify a responsible senior officer for human trafficking –a Single Point of Contact.\(SPOC\).](#)

However, only 50% of the 33 forces which responded were able to give any information about their SPOC.

The report also calls for the [appointment of an Anti-Slavery Commissioner, modelled on the existing Children’s Commissioner](#) to lead a concerted counter-offensive against those depriving vulnerable people of their liberties.

To promote efforts to uncover the true scale of modern slavery and to give its victims the confidence to go to the authorities, [the UK Border Agency should be stripped of its lead role in ruling on suspected cases of human trafficking](#). The CSJ cites a case where a woman escaped from a brothel where she had been enslaved and fled to a police station, only to be arrested as an illegal immigrant because she did not have a passport.

Citing widespread ignorance among police, social workers and immigration officers about the scale and nature of human trafficking, the CSJ calls for far [more rigorous training of professionals](#).



Opening new Frontiers to address Human Trafficking

(by Matt Friedman, Technical Advisor to the Mekong Club)

Human slavery is a despicable business that is thriving throughout the world. It is estimated that there are over 21 million men, women and children languishing in slavery today – more than at any other time in history. These slaves can be found in places such as factories, construction sites, within fisheries and sex venues, generating profits for their owners that exceed US\$32 billion annually. Victims are forced to work, deprived of all human rights, and subjected to unimaginable suffering. The public is largely unaware of this activity because it happens behind closed doors. It is sometimes also hidden in business supply chains.

The Mekong Club represents a not-for-profit organization based in Hong Kong made up of highly committed business professionals (senior executives from businesses such as CNN, Edelman, Pitney Bowes, Western Union, Ernst & Young and Winston & Strawn) whose goal is to uncover and stop the business of human slavery. The Mekong Club is the first organization of its kind to bring together the immense skills and resources of the business community,

channeling them into targeted efforts that will directly disrupt the human slavery trade.

The Mekong Club is fighting slavery 'business-to-business' to disable its economic and structural viability. We do this through general awareness, targeted trainings for business on how to ensure slave-free supply chains, and through the use of innovative technology to identify slavery and shut it down. Our approach is to partner with experienced anti-slavery field-experts who have the understanding, networks and resources to deliver measurable change. Our geographical focus is Asia, where it is estimated there are 11.7 million victims. A core value of our work is using voluntary support available among private sector partners.

Over the next two months, the Mekong club will continue expanding two of our core programs, which include: 1) supporting specialized international legal teams to mentor and train government law enforcement agents to effectively raid and rescue young girls from the worst sex industry sites in Thailand (\$50,000); and 2) systematically training and

providing legal support to 60 major corporations on the risks of slavery in the lower tiers of their supply chains, so that the business of slavery can be prevented or cut off at its roots (\$50,000). The outcome of this work will include: an estimated 240 women/girls saved from traffickers; an estimated 480 women/girls prevented from entering into the sex trade; at least 3 major trafficking syndicate operations will be shut down permanently; 60 major businesses reached – with refined internal controls put in place; audits will be conducted and issues among subcontractors resolved; and reduced workers in exploitative conditions.

If you would like to join this fight, your volunteer and financial support will go directly to saving many lives and making a real difference. For more details of how you can help, please contact Matthew Friedman at matt.friedman@themekongclub.org. The Mekong Club and our partners are fighting to stop slavery because we truly believe in taking care of our own and in a vision of a slave-free world within this generation. Please consider supporting our efforts in this regard. <http://www.themekongclub.org>

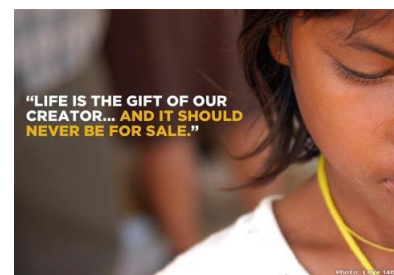


“Human trafficking is smuggling plus coercion or deception at the beginning of the process and enslavement at the end”

(Kevin Bales)

Trafficking or the Slave Trade

“It ought to concern every person because it is a debasement of our common humanity. It ought to concern every community because it tears at our social fabric. It ought to concern every business because it distorts markets. It ought to concern every nation because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organized crime” (Barak Obama)



Transforming girls lives in Nepal

by Peter Bashford, Founder, Asha Nepal

“There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want, and that they grow up in peace” (Kofi Annan)



Founder Peter Bashford and friends



Every year thousands of female children are abducted or taken under false pretences from their homes in Nepal. Within days they disappear into the underworld of India, are sold and resold until they arrive in the brothels of Mumbai, Kolkata, Pune, Delhi and the coastal resorts. Beaten and tortured into submission they become tied by debt bondage or false imprisonment into sexual slavery. The majority of victims are aged between thirteen and eighteen. Their life expectancy in the brothels is thirty five years of age.

Asha was founded in 1998 as a volunteer organization to combat the sex trafficking of Nepalese children and young girls. Although still run by volunteers in the UK, since 2006 they have a Nepalese team working out of their Centre in Kathmandu. They are registered as a charity in the UK and as an NGO in Nepal.

Our work revolves around the needs of the individual rather than the stereotypical long term institutionalisation of returning victims approach of many organisations. This includes listening to needs and expectations, discussing what is possible and what is unrealistic, helping find ways to open the future and meet survivor's aspirations. At times even the seemingly impossible can happen. We currently have two girls studying at degree level and another studying to be a nurse.

Rescued victims face a number of discriminations; gender, caste and just being a victim of trafficking. We work to help victims regain their self-confidence, overcome their abusive past and take a self-sufficient place in society ie, living socially and economically

independently above the poverty level of Nepal.

We work closely with local partners and rescue organisations in India to give rescued victims the opportunity of a new beginning. India does not treat victims kindly and many of the rescued girls can spend months even years locked in so called children's homes and remand centres before being returned, many in ill health with little more than the clothes on their backs. With local partners we initially provide health care and a safe refuge. The next stage is to try to re-unite them with their families. This has an approx 40% chance of success. Many girls are rejected by their families and communities as soiled goods. Others with family members implicit in their trafficking remain at risk of being re-trafficked. Those unable to return home are offered a six month place at our jointly run rehabilitation centre where they will receive psychological and health care support and counselling.

Our dedicated Job Creation scheme helps to coach the girls and to find them work. Our major priority is to set up a new project giving residential care and full time education to the younger victims who wish to return to school. This has been at the top of our agenda for over two years but sadly to date we have been unable to find a long term donor to commit to this project.

Recent research shows that for many being a victim of trafficking can be a life-long disability. Rehabilitation can be an ongoing and complex process. Many survivors enter into abusive marriages and face multiple forms of discrimination both

socially and in the work place. Often their children face an uncertain future and the danger of being trafficked themselves. To this end we run a number of projects to support the children of survivors as well as girls at risk of trafficking through our children's home, educational support program and respite fostering unit.

We care for around one hundred and twenty women and children every year. Sadly this is the tip of the iceberg. The Indian Government estimate that there are over 100,000 Nepalese girls and young women working in their sex industry. Many of these will have been trafficked and held against their will in closed establishments and cage brothels. The Indian Government appears to do very little to end trafficking or close down the illegal brothels. We have also talked with successive Nepalese Ministers for Social Welfare and have heard a lot of promises but seen little action. Similarly, little is being done to stop the high levels of corruption within the police and judiciary and though we and our partners work hard to prosecute known traffickers even where successful we find the criminals back on the streets well before their sentences end.



A Personal Reflection

In his book "A Crime so Monstrous", Ben Skinner refers to a conversation he had with a quarry slave called Gonoo. There is a paragraph which I would like to share with you because it shocked me to the core.

"Gonoo recalled a hot summer day shortly after Ramesh Garg took over the quarry. A young, unmarried dalit girl had just begun working alongside her parents. In her innocence, she wandered from her work to play with a kitten that had strayed into the quarry to drink from the poo. Gonoo did not notice the girl until he heard the crack of Garg's Mauser rifle. The police never investigated the incident, and her parents never filed charges. That week, the girl's family cremated her small body. Garg paid for the death rites. He then added the cost to the family's debt"

I can't stop thinking about that incident and it has made me even more determined, with the help of other Rotarians, to do something about this monstrous crime.



PLEASE COPY THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR CLUB. ALSO ENCOURAGE COLLEAGUES TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND SIGN ON AS A MEMBER . THE WEBSITE IS www.racsrag.org.

If you click [here](#) will also be able to find out what you can do to help end child slavery.

The Webmaster is Stephen Sypula, RC of Stevenage Grange, D1260, England.

Mark Little, RC of Norwich St Edmund
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20 March 2013