



>> Robin Raina and the school kids at the special screening of *Slumdog Millionaire*

ROBIN'S NEST

Do-gooder millionaire

THIS 42-YEAR-OLD NRI ENTREPRENEUR-PHILANTHROPIST SEEKS TO AMELIORATE THE WOES OF SLUM DWELLERS AND BUILD HOMES FOR THEM

Shailja Katyal Verma Sector-25A

Even as *Slumdog Millionaire* makes Indian slums the flavour of the season, an NRI millionaire quietly works his way through the shanties, providing education, food, clothing, medical care and shelter to the slum kids in Noida and surrounding areas.

Robin Raina, the chairman of Atlanta-based Ebix Inc., an international developer and supplier of software and e-commerce solutions to the insurance industry, has made it his life's mission to help and educate underprivileged children who are handicapped, blind, mentally-challenged, sick or in need of medical help. Towards this end he set up the Robin Raina Foundation (RRF) in 2003.

Recalling the incident which brought about the transformation in him, Raina says, "One day I was on the top floor of my office in Sector-59, Noida, and I happened to see the vast expanse of the slums below. I was completely shaken and the realisation dawned on me that due to my business pursuits I had become immune to the plight of those around me. It was then that I decided to do something for them and RRF was

born." The globetrotting businessman was recently in Spice Cinemas to organise a special screening of *Slumdog Millionaire* for the students of the school he had started about two years ago in Sector-53 in association with another NGO, Shine Foundation.

The Raina-Shine School has adopted 650 children of Ghijor village in Noida. The school has 12 rooms and is spread across two floors.

"I personally donate a substantial sum to RRF every year and the rest of the money I raise from

my fund-raising efforts by involving celebrities like Sushmita Sen, Kapil Dev, Akshay Kumar, Shaan, Sonu Nigam, Asha Bhosle and Kailash Kher, among others. I want to make charity fashionable and cool so that young people are motivated to join in," quips the 42-year-old Kashmiri Hindu who migrated to the US during the IT boom in the 1990s. "I am known as the troubleshooter in the industry circles because of my ability to turn around loss-making companies into profit-making ventures," reveals the astute businessman who dichotomously finds "true happiness" in "giving".

Today, his foundation has adopted more than 3,500 children through various projects. RRF runs multiple schools across India, an orphanage in Mumbai, medical ambulances in Delhi, a ward in a cancer hospital built by cricketer-politician Imran Khan in Pakistan and India's largest private charity initiative in Delhi, where it is building 6000 concrete homes free-of-cost for the slum dwellers of Bawana.

And thus the NRI millionaire goes about realising his slum dreams one after the other - relentlessly, tirelessly and with dogged determination. Well, we can only say "Jai Ho" to that.

WAY TO GO

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