



Factory Fire in Philippines on 1-2-2017
Photo Credit - [Kamz DeligenteCtuhr Manila](#)



Issue Number 39
October - December 2016

EDITOR AND LAYOUT
Mohit Gupta

Occupational safety and Health (OSH) Rights is a quarterly newsletter on occupational and safety issues in Asia. It is prepared by the ANROEV Secretariat. The newsletter contains information and news about the campaigns of the network in Asia – Mining, Victims Organising, Lung Diseases, Electronics

Articles and information in OSH Rights may be reproduced in non-profit publications with clear citations, credit to author/s and OSH Rights.

Opinions and suggestions to the editor are encouraged. Please send enquiries to

The Editor
Secretariat – ANROEV
c/o Environics Trust
Khasra Number 177, Neb Sarai
New Delhi – 110068
Ph – (91-11)2953-3957
Fax – (91-11)2953-1814
Email – anroev@gmail.com
URL - www.anroev.org
Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/Anroev>

All readers are welcome to share reactions and suggestions to articles of OSH Rights. In the coming issues, we will offer space for reader feedback.

For any questions about Occupational Health and Safety in Asia, send an email to anroev@gmail.com. Our panel of experts will attempt to reply to all questions.

Statement from IOHSAD on the Factory Fire in Philippines on 1-2-2017	3
Accident at Tampaco Foils Ltd, Bangladesh	4
Canada will ban asbestos by 2018	5
Updates from Partners	6
Campaigns and Support	17
Tributes	17
Articles of Interest:	
2016 Rachel LEE Jung-Lim Award	18
South East Asia Meeting on Asbestos	18
The Legacy of the European Asbestos Industry Continues in India	20
Anti-asbestos activists feel duped by alleged spy in U.K. court case	21
Asbestos fund set up to support victims	21
Silicosis case: thousands of women could lose out	21
Video - School at the Risk of Collapsing due to Mine Blasting	22
E-waste in East & Southeast Asia jumps 63 percent in 5 years	22
Global reach of Samsung's medieval practices revealed in new report	22
Press Statement - Another methanol poisoning accidents identified in the SAMSUNG supply chain	22
Government, industry crackdown in Bangladesh threatens health & safety improvements; clothing brands petitioned to respond	23
MWAP Statement on the Occasion of the International Day for Decent Work and Stop Precarious Work Campaign - "Ban all forms of contractualization!	23
African countries launch action to end sabotage of UN Convention on trade of hazardous substances	24
No Work, No Safety, No Justice – The Aftermath of Pakistan's Shipbreaking Disaster	24
Scientists link higher dementia risk to living near heavy traffic	24
Cancelling new coal plants in Southeast Asia, Korea, Japan would save 50,000 lives a year	25
New NIOSH Sound Level Meter App	26
Why do recent immigrants get injured more often than Canadian-born workers?	26
S Korean exec jailed over toxic humidifier disinfectant	26
Why worker-led monitoring is needed to challenge electronic sweatshops	26
OHS Initiative for Workers and Community Established In Dhaka with First Year Funding, NGO Bureau Approval	27
Regional News	27

Feature

Statement from IOHSAD on the Factory Fire in Philippines on 1-2-2017

About 120 workers were injured after a factory fire razed the Housing Technology Industries (HTI) plant in the Cavite Export Processing Zone (CEPZ), located south of the Philippine capital Manila. The number of casualties could be higher because officials have yet to give a full accounting of the hundreds of workers who were reportedly trapped inside the factory during the fire.

The fire began at 6:20 PM on February 1 after an explosion was heard on the first floor where the chemicals used by the factory workers are stored. After 12 hours, firefighters were still struggling to extinguish the fire

HTI produces pre-fabricated houses for export. It is located in the CEPZ, a manufacturing hub where labor unions and the holding of factory strikes has been banned.

Below is the statement from IOHSAD on the fire

The Philippine government's continuing "hands off" policy on workplace safety and other labor standards has made workplaces more dangerous and deadly for workers.

Its continuous adherence with voluntary compliance, instead of mandatory labor inspection, as a framework on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) is one of the immediate reasons for the mounting deaths and injuries in workplaces across the country.

Less than two years after the Kentex fire tragedy, which claimed the lives of more than 72 workers, a bigger workplace fire occurred in a Special Economic Zone which affected thousands of workers. The House Technology Industries (HTI) fire in Cavite Economic Zone last February 1 left more than a hundred workers injured and one worker dead as of this writing. There were accounts gathered from HTI workers that state that there are many workers who are still unaccounted for and were possibly trapped inside the burnt building.

Government policies supposedly mandating voluntary compliance with OSH and other labor standards as well as the jurisdiction of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) over ecozones including occupational safety are key policies that cause workplace tragedies such as the fire in HTI in CEPZ.

The DOLE brags about supposedly "tripartite" means in upholding voluntary compliance, where the government through the DOLE, the workers and the employers are involved. Such a policy will amount to nothing, especially in the country's ecozones where the right to unionize and collectively bargain are being violated with impunity. In the first place, the majority of workers there are contractuels, whose right to regular employment is being violated. Whatever "joint assessment" is conducted is surely between the PEZA-DOLE and the employer.

A deadly fire inside a special economic zone where tens of thousands of workers are employed force us not only to question these policies but to point to them as crucial in putting the workers' lives in constant danger.

Voluntary compliance as a framework for adherence to OSH and other labor standards and PEZA's autonomous zone violate the workers' right to health and safety in the workplace. These two policies only serve the interests of employers in the ecozones, allowing them to freely disregard and therefore violate OSH standards.

The HTI fire and the slow, incomplete and confusing reports on this workplace tragedy put these government policies in question:

- (1) Special Economic Zone Act of 1995: "PEZA, in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment, shall conduct periodic inspection of plants within the ECOZONE to check on the compliance with health, medical, occupational and safety standards of the buildings, structures and electro-mechanical equipment and machineries, as well as on the general condition and maintenance of the plant."
- Why is the PEZA tasked to uphold OSH and other labor standards, when it is under the

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and is primarily tasked to attract foreign investors to its sites?

- It is highly questionable that PEZA has the responsibility to ensure the inspection of plants within the ecozones when factories here employ large number of workers and usually engage in hazardous work.
 - What are PEZA's guidelines in conducting OSH inspection? How regular does it conduct OSH inspection in factories?
- (2) DOLE 131-B Series of 2016: Revised Labor Laws Compliance System Ecozone-wide assessment of Voluntary Compliance states: "The Regional Director shall coordinate with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority Director General and Zone Manager or Zone Administrator, as the case may be, the conduct of an Ecozone-wide Assessment of locators' voluntary compliance with labor standards and occupational safety and health standards."
- This provision in the said Department Order clearly shows how powerless DOLE is in relation to PEZA as it needs to coordinate with the latter to be able to conduct an Ecozone-wide assessment. Voluntary compliance promoted by the government gives workplaces in ecozones license to freely violate labor and safety standards and place the workers' lives in constant danger.

Almost a week after the deadly fire, we pose these challenges to the officials of PEZA, DOLE and the HTI Management. We also demand urgent responses and concrete actions from these agencies.

- We challenge PEZA Director General Charito Plaza to fully and truthfully disclose the details and results of the labor inspection she claimed that PEZA conducted in HTI. When exactly did the inspection happen? Who conducted the inspection? What were the results and basis for declaring HTI as compliant with general labor and occupational health and safety standards?
- We challenge Department of Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello to include labor centers and other cause-oriented groups who have initiated

fact-finding missions in conducting a thorough investigation of the HTI fire. Meetings among all the agencies involved should be made public and participation of workers and labor groups should be ensured.

- We challenge the HTI management to open its records and factory gates to the media and public. Allow workers to be interviewed and give their testimonials and full account of the fire. Stop threatening workers who are willing to give details and information about the fire.

Lastly, we call on the Senate to immediately act on House Bill 64 (An act strengthening compliance with occupational safety and health standards and providing penalties for violations thereof), which was approved by the House of Representatives last December 2016. The tragic HTI fire makes it urgent for the senators to pass a counterpart measure that will legislate the following demands : (1) Department of Labor's mandatory inspection of all establishments, including workplaces in ecozones, and disallow any form of employer-discretion based compliance with OSH laws; 2) the imposition of stiffer penalties and imprisonment to companies who violate OSH standards.

Justice for HTI Workers!

Accident at Tampaco Foils Ltd, Bangladesh

A total of 42 people lost their lives due to a tragic fire accident at Tampaco Foils Limited on 10 September 2016. 40 workers were injured seriously and still 10 workers are missing (Press Report on 26 October, The Daily Prothom Alo, Dhaka).

Primary findings show that, the fire was caused due to an explosion of the boiler in the factory but till now the causes of explosion have not been identified. Further the structure of the factory building was completely unsuitable for industrial production. In addition, the building was cramped, full of flammable materials and had only one exit.

Tampaco Foils Ltd is one of the premier companies involved in the field of Flexible and Tobacco Packaging in Bangladesh. Their customers include British American Tobacco Bangladesh Ltd., Nestle

Bangladesh Ltd., Universal Foods Ltd. and more (click here to view Tampaco's customer list)

It has been reported that the Deputy Commissioner SM Alam had announced an assistance of Tk 20,000 for each of the families of the deceased and Tk 10,000 for each of the injured. However, the brands who source their material from this factory have not yet come forward to either compensate the victims or accept their responsibility in maintaining their supply chains.

The ANROEV network considering the seriousness of the tragedy had sent a letter to the Bangladesh State Minister of Labour and Employment (click here to read the letter) on 19 September 2016 urging action and asking the minister

- To issue a public statement on this accident;
- To thoroughly investigate the accident and identify causes;
- To review the Occupational, Health and Safety standards and strengthen the inspection mechanism; and
- To ensure that the employer gives adequate compensation to the victims and the injured

A Tampaco Fire Accident Victims Rights Network facilitated by OSHE Foundation, Bangladesh has been formed which held its first meeting on 18 October 2016. For More Information [Click Here](#)

A Petition demanding the brands to take responsibility in their Supply Chains and Pay compensation to the workers can be signed [here](#)

Canada will ban asbestos by 2018

The Canadian government today announced that it will legislate a comprehensive ban on asbestos and asbestos-containing products by 2018.

This historic announcement ends Canada's century-old policy of mining, using, exporting and promoting asbestos. The announcement was made by four Ministers – the Minister of Science, the Minister of Health, the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Public Works – at a press conference held at the Ottawa Hospital.

The government stated that its approach will be guided by science-based decision making. "There is

irrefutable evidence that has led us to take concrete action to ban asbestos," said Science Minister Kirsty Duncan.

"Across Canada and around the world, asbestos-related cancers continue to hurt Canadian families and pose a significant burden for our health care systems," stated Health Minister Jane Philpott.

Environment Minister Catherine McKenna stated "We will put in place the best regulatory measures to protect the health and safety of Canadians as we move forward towards a complete ban on asbestos."

The ban on asbestos will include:

- creating new regulations that ban the manufacture, use, import and export of asbestos under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, the legislative framework that protects people from the risks associated with hazardous substances such as asbestos;
- establishing new federal workplace health and safety rules that will drastically limit the risk of people coming into contact with asbestos on the job;
- expanding the current online list of asbestos-containing buildings owned or leased by the Government of Canada;
- working in collaboration with our provincial and territorial partners to change the national, provincial and territorial building codes to prohibit the use of asbestos in new construction and renovation projects across Canada;
- updating our international position regarding the listing of asbestos as a hazardous material based on Canada's domestic ban before next year's meeting of parties to the Rotterdam Convention, an international treaty involving more than 150 countries that support listing asbestos as a hazard; and
- Raising awareness of the health impacts of asbestos to help reduce the incidence of lung cancer and other asbestos-related diseases.

Thu, Dec 15, 2016, Kathleen Ruff, RightOnCanada.ca, [Read More](#)

To read the Official Government of Canada press release on December 15, 2016 [Read More](#)

To see the Joint IBAS-BWI-ABAN-AMRC-ANROEV-ABREA-AVSGF- ABREA press release about the new ban on asbestos in Canada, please see: [Read More](#)

Updates from Partners

CEPHED, Nepal

Press release - Protection of Public Health and Environment from Carcinogenic Asbestos Needs Effective Implementation of Government Decision

October 21, 2016, Kathmandu, Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED) stressed the needs of effective implementation of Government's decision of banning all form of asbestos except lining of brake shoe and clutch plates, effective since 20 June 2015 for the protection of Public Health, especially of workers health and environment.

Today, a research based document "National Asbestos Profile of Nepal" prepared by CEPHED under the project supported by Takagi Fund for Citizen Science, Asia Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN) and International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) has been released by the Chief Guest Mr. Narayan Raj Timalisina, Acting Secretary, Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) in an interaction program organized by CEPHED participated by some 50 personnel's from different concerned government agencies, development agencies, private agencies, consumers, professional associations like FCAN, FGSFN, PABSON, GEFONT, Trade Unions, Health professional and media personnel's . Other special remark has been made by, ILO, WHO representatives, NHRC, Department of Custom and several other professionals' organizations and OSH health professionals and experts. Program were held under the chairmanship of Mr. Mohan Katuwal, Advisor of CEPHED, President of Federation of Grill and Steel Fabricators Nepal and Vice President (Objective), Small and Cottage Industry, Nepal

To read about the National Asbestos Profile of Nepal [Click here](#)



Press release-Nepalese Worker needs special protection through exclusive Occupational Safety & Health Policy

October 21, 2016, Kathmandu, Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED) stressed the need of exclusive Occupational Safety and Health Policy and robust Institutional arrangement to protect domestic and migrant Nepalese workers. Program were held under the chairmanship of Mr. Mohan Katuwal, Advisor of CEPHED, President of Federation of Grill and Steel Fabricators Nepal and Vice President (Objective), Small and Cottage Industry , Nepal and Chief Guest Mr. Narayan Raj Timalisina, Acting Secretary, Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) in an interaction program organized by CEPHED participated by some 50 personnel's from different concerned government agencies, development agencies, private agencies, consumers, professional associations like FCAN, FGSFN, PABSON, GEFONT, Trade Unions, Health professional and media personnel's.

Workers in country especially in the industrial sectors like Brick, Cement and Stone Crushers and abroad in most popular destination counties needs special protection as they are suffering from different occupational related difficulties , physical, mental , social and including frequent death. In most of the cases, the basic occupational safety and health related provisions are absence in the country. Most of the workers did not have access to good working environment, sufficient water, sanitation and hygiene condition coupled with long working hours and difficult climatic conditions.

Neither concerned government agencies nor individual and/or Joint Trade Union are able to ensure their Occupational Safety and Health despite of their continued efforts since 20 years or so. Workers are forced to expose to deadly toxic chemicals such as lead in paints, carcinogenic asbestos in construction materials, toxic fumes in industrial settings and heat stroke, dusty working environment, absence of adequate provision of hygiene and sanitation and even not treated drinking water in most of their working destination other than cheating, domestic violence and physical abuses.

Situation of OSH particularly with the case of children workers and female workers (domestic and migrant) is even worse. Although Nepal opened over 110 destinations for Nepalese labor migration and over 2 million Nepalese are sending huge amount of money back home to save the country from bankruptcy and contribute to almost one third of annual national GDP Nepali workers are paying with their lives. As about 1000 workers annually died (Department of Foreign Employment 2014) only in foreign ground and country received about three dead bodies per day. Those who escaped from death, mostly return with lifelong disabilities & illness such as kidney failure, skin diseases etc. However, Nepal government and trade unions are yet to take sufficient and stringent steps to ensure safe working condition to protect national and migrant workers.

So there is an urgent need to protect all workers at national level by having exclusive Occupational Health and Safety policy with robust institutional arrangement other than the 20 years back started but still very weak OSH project in place where as ensuring the same for the migrant workers at the international destination other than protecting their human right, labour rights, social security etc. There is an absolute need of addressing the issues of violence among workers especially female workers at national and international level. These will be real attribute to the workers who have suffered while contributing to national economy at the cost of life and dignity.

Finding from country situation report on OSH with reference to three industrial sector Cement, Brick and Stone crusher of CEPHEP has been shared among the stakeholders through organizing a interaction workshop participated by over 40 peoples from concerned government, private and trade union as well as media sectors today. The time has come for Nepal to make safer migration.

NTUF

Ship breaking workers rally in Karachi

KHI 30th October: The workers at Gadani ship breaking yard should be regularized and provided with health and safety facilities, participants of a labor rights demonstration outside Karachi Press Club demanded on Sunday.

The demonstration was organized by National Trade Union Federation and a number of workers belonging to the ship breaking yard and others sectors participated in it. The NTUF president Rafiq Baloch led the event.

The demonstrators said that more than 20,000 workers were directly or indirectly associated with the ship breaking industry but they all were deprived of their basic rights. This is a sheer violation of labor rights, they maintained.

They told that the deaths of workers in accidents during work had become a routine at the ship breaking yard due to lack of implementation of labor rights and no health and safety arrangements. Poor sanitation conditions were posing a danger to the lives of those living there, they said.

The demonstrators said that Gadani was one of the biggest ship breaking yard in the world but unlike others the worker here neither had social security cover nor were they registered with the relevant authorities.

“Despite working for more than 60 years, the laborers were deprived of their right to make union and to act as collective bargaining agents. The workers who earned their employers billions were not even given hospital, ambulances, residences, education facilities, utilities such as water, gas and power.”



Due to lack of training of health and safety and such equipment's, this ship breaking industry had become even dangerous than the mining industry, they said, expulsion of hazardous gases and material were a serious threat to workers lives and most of them were developing diseases and the sea inhabitants were also being affected with this. They said that the government had turned a blind eye towards the ship breaking workers plight in collusion of the yard owners.

They demanded that the government should make legislation for the workers in the light of the Hong Kong Convention, the workers should be given their right to make union and act as collective bargaining agent, they should be provided with safety equipments and with the training to use them, they should be given their rights to health, education, residence, and other utilities.

Those who spoke at the event include NTUF president Rafiq Baloch, deputy general secretary Nasir Mansoor, Sindh president Gul Rehman, Baluchistan president Bashir Mehmoodani and others.

116 workers died, 47 injured and 170 still stuck in Ship in Gadani ON Nov 1

Gadani shipbreaking yard becomes grave yard for workers!

Huge fire and blast in oil tanker ship at plot # 54, 16 workers died, 60 injured and more than 150 workers still in Ship in Gadani ship breaking yard in Baluchistan.

Dozens of fire brigade vehicles and military helicopters pouring water on ship failed to stop the fire.

Angry workers marched through Gadani yards against the tragedy today. In an emergency meeting the NTUF announced three day strike and mourn. A protest rally will be held on Wednesday at 11am from union office in Gadani.

For further action plan a press conference will be addressed by Union and Federation representatives on Wed at Karachi Press Club.



Press Conference

We on behalf of the National Trade Union Federation welcome you in the press conference and hope that like in past you will help us in highlighting our issues.

The November 1 blast in Japanese oil tanker, FUDREAL M-T-Aces weighing 24,000 tons, in of the worst disasters in ship-breaking history. Eighteen dead bodies have been recovered so far while 47 injured have been shifted to the hospital for medical treatment. According to reports, still around 150 people are trapped inside the burning vessel. Unfortunately all efforts made to rescue them during night have gone in vain.

The ship was tugged in plot no. 54 at Gadani ship-breaking yard some ten days back and 250 workers

were enlisted for its dismantling just a day before the incident happened. A blast due to the presence of inflammable and toxic gases inside the fuel tank of the ship occurred at 9:40am and soon after it fire engulfed the ship. The explosion was so intense that heavy metal sheets were seen flying into the air and these pieces found landed on ground in a radius of two kilometers. One of the reasons of the blast is that the workers were forced to start the dismantling process even before the fuel tank could be cleaned of leftover highly inflammable oil and its fumes. The breaking of a ship is done with gas welding process which led to this disaster.

In the history of this Gadani, deaths have been recorded more than the ships broken here. It is not only a graveyard of ships but also of laborers. The responsibility of these deaths lies on the shoulders of the ship breakers. The authorities, including police and labor department, have colluded with the yard owners to let them get away with these murders.

Such accidents at the ship breaking yard have become a routine and in these life losses are reported very often. It is one of those areas in the country where the state writ seems not implemented. Here the mighty ship breakers rule and workers are treated in a way as if they were not even humans. The workers are deprived of their rights to social security, EOBI pension, and to make unions. They are not even provided with the safety gears to do this dangerous work. The NTUF has been holding protests and raising voice against these exploitations for past decade a recent example of this is the October 30 protest in which the workers demanded their right of occupational health and safety. No heed was paid to any of these concerns raised and this deliberate deafness or negligence led to this big disaster. The labor organizations have been pointing out these negligence can lead to big disasters since the Baldia factory fire incident and have been urging the government to make and implement laws for workers safety. However, the voice even if heard was never listened and this undoubtedly is a criminal act.



In today's presser, we demanded the government, concerned authorities, chambers of commerce and ship breakers owners association to take measures to stop these injustices with workers, fulfill their responsibility as per the law and make workplaces safer.

Moreover, we demand that the families of the dead should be compensated with Rs2.5million each and the injured should be given Rs500, 000. Also the ship breaking yard owners where this incident happened must be held accountable in the court of law, concerned police, labor department, social security and other officials should be suspended for their negligence in the case, contractual employment system must be abolished, workers should be given their right to make union and collective bargaining and they should be registered with EOBI, social security institutions and others.

Those who spoke at the event include: NTUF deputy general secretary Nasir Mansoor, President Rafiq Baloch, Ship-breaking Mazdoor Union president Bashir Mehmoodani, Baldia factory fire affectees association senior vice president Saeeda Khatoon.



Read More about the devastating fire at the Gadani Shipyard – [Click Here](#)

ABAN / BANJAN

Meeting with TAVOI/RCA victims

Paul, Sawada and Sugio visited the office of TAVOI, occupational victims group in Taiwan on October 25 and had good meeting with TAVOI members and RCA victims. They were invited to a rally by trade unions and other labour groups where Sawada joined



For more Pictures [Click Here](#)

Asbestos Workshop in Sri Lanka

Brother Sugio attended an Asbestos workshop in Sri Lanka for National Campaign to Promote Dangers of use of Asbestos Products was organized by National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) and BWI.

Bro. Subash Karunaratne, General Secretary of National Building Workers Union (NBWU) gave the

welcome address and Hon. Vadivel Suresh MP, General Secretary of Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union outlined the developments of government decision on ban on asbestos.

Dr. Indra Tudawe from ILO Office, Colombo introduced its policy on asbestos and another staff from the office joined the afternoon discussion actively.

Dr. Wajira Palipane from Department of Labour and Dr. Chambila Amarasingha from NIOSH (Director General) discussed asbestos hazard and OSH in Sri Lanka.

Bro. Anup Srivastva from BWI South Asia Office ("BWI policy and campaign on asbestos in the region) and Sugio ("banning asbestos in Asia") gave presentations.

There were participants from trade unions, civil societies, government, etc and asbestos industry also. This was a landmark and the first initiative from grass-roots to secure a ban on asbestos in Sri Lanka to save the lives of workers and public from asbestos.

Thank you Bro. Valayudam Ruthiradeepon, NTUF Vice President, other sisters and brothers in Sri Lanka. For Pictures: [Click Here](#)

BANKO Campaigns

As part of its awareness campaign and to intensify the efforts to ban asbestos and make the exporting countries aware of their responsibilities towards health and safety, BANK organized protest actions against the 4 major asbestos countries. The protest actions were organized every Wednesday for four continuous weeks outside the embassies in South Korea.





Outside Russian Embassy Dec 21, 2016 [Click Here](#)

Outside Chinese Embassy Dec 28, 2016 [Click Here](#)

Outside Kazakhstan Embassy Jan 4, 2017 [Click Here](#)

Outside Brazilian Embassy Jan 11, 2017 [Click Here](#)

[Click](#) to get more information about the campaign

IBAS

Throughout much of 2016, the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat was engaged in discussions regarding the November South East Asia Ban Asbestos Network Meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia. IBAS was delighted to partner on this event with some of our key allies in the region including the Building and Wood Workers International Asia Pacific, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, Asia Ban Asbestos Network and the Indonesia Ban Asbestos Network.



The discussions which took place on November 2 and 3, 2016 were of strategic import as they delineated key measures to be taken in the regional campaign to end the asbestos slaughter in Asia and around the world.

AMRC, Hong Kong

AMRC organised sub regional meetings in South Asia and South East Asia region as a response to the issues identified by the ANROEV network members in the areas of identification of victims, treatment, litigation, rehabilitation and compensation. Grassroots workers groups who are working with vulnerable groups, communities and victims in the sub- regions came together to look at what are the core, burning issues that need to be addressed and what are the common problems at hand that can be addressed in the short and long term systematically.

Following these Sub Regional Meetings, AMRC engaged with ANROEV network members in 10 countries (Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and India) to build strong national level OSH networks and help the members in their needs of awareness, advocacy, diagnosis, treatment, compensation and rehabilitation. The reports below reflect some of the National Capacity Building and OSH initiatives undertaken by the ANROEV network members post the regional meetings

The Center for Development and Integration (CDI)

CDI conducted a two-day training workshop on improving OSH in garment industry was organized on 24 – 25th September 2016 for Trade Union officers and workers in Hai Duong province. More than 40 participants attended the workshop mainly from the Hai Duong is among the most industrialised provinces in Vietnam with 289 FDI projects from 24 countries by the end of 2014. Although many works in garment industry are in the list of heavy, harmful or dangerous occupations (as stipulated by Labour Code), generally the promotion of OSH in these companies is still very limited in order to save costs, lack of understanding

and compliance on OSH among employers and workers and a lack of professional OSH officers. CDI has been recording poor working conditions and the need of migrant workers to improve their working conditions in garment companies in this area since 2011.

The participants were provided with an overview of garment industry and companies in the province as well as general OSH issues in this sector and the role of Trade Union. Participants were also informed about the new OSH Law and many questions on benefit of workers and responsibilities of employers were answered. In the subsequent sessions, participants discussed common OSH problems in garment sectors and the compliance of companies. Workers representatives provided some cases of violation for discussion and this attracted many responses from other participants. Participants also proposed some practical actions to improve working conditions in garment companies, including *providing communication materials on OSH requirement in friendly format (info graphic clips, leaflet, simple manuals, etc), organizing intensive training courses on OSH Law and OSH guidance for trade union officers, production line managers or team leaders inside the companies (some companies are welcome for training); communicating on OSH requirements through the broadcast system of the companies, enforcing labor inspection and requiring compensations/ payments for violations, etc.*

Red Flag Workers movement (RFWM)

RFWM kick started the movement on OHS in Srilanka through identifying the diseases and making the workers aware on OHS. A small pilot study to identify the current health situation was done followed by a medical screening program. An OHS booklet for awareness on OHS for workers was also prepared. In the Pilot study 89 workers were covered with varying period of experience. In the study 46 workers are not able to identify the OHS problems while 42 were able to identify their OHS problems. Varying responses on eating habits and Hygiene were also recorded. Many workers

reported that they were forced to go back to their homes or a friend's house nearby for toilets as there were no such facilities at the workplace. There are no proper eating places and workers are forced to eat under bushes or near road with lot of dust. A medical screening was conducted by a doctor. However, due to lack of OHS experience the doctor was not able to relate the disease and symptoms with OHS. More camps with professionally trained doctors will be planned. 750 Tamil and 250 Sinhala Booklets on "Venraduthaurimaihal" (rights won) were also printed. The booklets contain information about the diseases which could occur due to lack of eating facilities and toilets at work place, effects of noise pollution at work place and what are the diseases workers can get due to work.

Yaung Chi Oo Workers Association (YCOWA), Myanmar

YCOWA organized a two day workshop on OSH in Yangon in which workers from several factories participated. The participants shared information on the situation on OSH in their factories. The YCO' trainer facilitated the participants for the Body mapping session which discussed and informed about the diseases related to occupational health. The trainers also gave input about the Dahlgren & Whitehead 1991, Social Determinants of Health. The workers were also informed about the Social Protection Act (SPA) in Burma. A session on factory mapping exposed the workers to the possible hazards in their workplaces like noise, lighting, ventilation, fire safety etc. the participants also discussed their experiences on the issues of compensation, accidents and health-care. Participants and trainers also shared how they can use the complaint mechanism of labour ministry departments.

OSHE Foundation, Bangladesh

The first network meeting of Occupational Health Medical Practitioners were held at OSHE Foundation conference room on 21 September 2016 with the objective to review current

occupational health status of the workers in the country, status of diagnosis and treatment facilities by service providers and assess the scope to form a national Occupation Health Practitioners' in the country. 13 health professionals from different organisations attended the meeting. It was stressed in the meeting on the need for immediate arrange orientation courses for doctors on occupational diseases. The doctor's network formed will start discussions with the labour ministry for effectiveness and modernizing of the hospitals and workers clinics and carry out various joint preventive actions and awareness on occupational health issues.

A training of trainers with the support of AMRC was organised on 23-24 September, 2016 with the aim "to develop basic trainers capacity of 20 new field trainers from garments and construction sector" as part of OSHE's ongoing effort on building OSH capacity at field level. Mr. Morshed shared the OHS situation in Bangladesh and pointed out that the construction and garments sector are the priority sectors of the OHS rights in Bangladesh. He gave an overview on OSH as per Bangladesh Labour Acts 2006. There was a presentation on workplace risks and hazards identification, prioritization, reporting, action plan, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation, next step etc. Deputy Chief Inspector General, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments made a presentation on 'Occupational Health & Safety and Work Safety: role of DIFE'. He said that there are 353 sections in the BLA. Out of that 89 sections are only for health and safety issues. There also was a session on gender perspective in OHS.

Local initiative for OSH Network-Indonesia

LION Indonesia held training with unions at coal mining sites in Sumatra to strengthen the union capacity on OHS rights for coal workers. The training was held on 17-18 September and involved workers from 5 coal mines. OHS on mining sector is a new experience for LION that could broaden

LION's capacity on OHS issue and strengthen its capacity in supporting grass root movement in promoting OHS issue in Indonesia.



Darisman facilitated a discussion on strengthening the union with the coal-mining workers

Indonesia has a large coal reserve, ranked 4th in the world as a coal exporter. More than 45 MT is extracted every year. The industry employs more than 1.3 million workers who are exposed with coal dust every day. This massive exploitation raises big concerns regarding the ecological and human health aspects. It dangers the sustainability of environmental service and causes diseases not only to the workers but also to the people in general.

At the discussion on the hazards in coalmine, a coalmine worker shared his experiences at work. He said the attention of the company to OHS is poor. He said, "I have been working at the site for the several years and realize that our company does not pay attention on OHS. The working uniform is being replaced only once a year, and also the PPE."

Other worker revealed, "this time we are facing a contractual system, deficit wages and high-risk work. Unfortunately, we do not know how to fight for it. Our union is a new union and we are still lack of experience in advocacy, and the mining companies often do not consider the presence of the union"

It was stressed to learn from the experience of some unions in other sectors, such as the

manufacturing sector, the unions at the coalmine sector need to organize based on the supply chain flow. Solidarity of the unions and workers in the supply chain is the key of the workers' struggle that will strengthen the bargaining position of labor.

The program on the second day was an introduction to OSH issue for workers in coalmine industry facilitated by Valdo from LION Indonesia. Valdo started the session by stating, "We sell our labor, not our lives." Valdo explained that potential hazards exist at the workplace and he stressed that occupational accident and diseases can be prevented. The workers then shared their experiences working at the coalmines. A visit to the nearby coal mines was also undertaken

Council of Work and Environment Related Patient's Network of Thailand (WEPT)

WEPT Organized a workshop on "Workers' Health Prevention and Safety from Asbestos Exposure" on 18th September 2016. In the workshop the participants learned more about the asbestos situation and policy campaign of WEPT. There was enthusiastic discussion amongst the participants on asbestos issue, occupational health and workplace environment & safety issue. Some participants stressed that labour unions should also focus on this issue other than just the issue of income and wage. The workshop also will lead to greater collaboration amongst labour union members and WEPT networks. The workshop came out with detailed recommendations for the government & regulating agencies, the labour unions and employers & Safety officers,



Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Development (IOHSAD)

IOHSAD organised a workshop on the Occupational Health and Safety Bill (House Bill 1044). It also aimed to design a comprehensive plan on how to launch a creative and extensive campaign for the immediate passage of the OHS Bill that will be led by the workers who attended the workshop. There were several presentations from the organisations representing workers from different sectors like manufacturing, construction, service sector (BPO), mining, Agriculture and listed the most common and urgent occupational health and safety issues experienced by workers. A presentation on the Major provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Bill (House Bill 1044) was shared by Gabriela Women's Party List Rep. Emmi De Jesus.

The workshop came out with detailed campaign plan on the bill with activities planned. There will also be work done on preparation of two more proposed bills concerning OHS –

- On occupational health or work related diseases and
- Compensation for workers who are victims of workplace accidents and diseases



Labour Education Foundation, Pakistan

LEF conducted a National Training on Occupational Safety and Health for Textile, Garment and Home Based Workers. 25 trade union leaders from textile, garment and home based sectors participated.

There were sessions training focused on situation analysis of workers' rights with special focus on

OSH issue, mapping of OSH problems in different sectors and importance of developing understating of the trade union leaders on OSH issues. Participatory learning techniques on basic OSH hazards at the workplace and management systems to make workplaces safer in the concerned sectors and importance of using OSH issues as organising tool and future planning were used.

A pictorial evidence of various types of work place related hazards were shown and understanding was imparted. Basic awareness about biological, physical, chemical and ergonomic hazards like workplace design, tools, manual handling of loads ,noise, heat, radiation, vibration, extreme temperatures, gases, dust, metals, solvents and psycho-social hazard was shared. Work place violence was discussed in detail that what it is and why it shall be avoided at all cost.

Importance of ventilation, lighting, avoidance of noise at work, how to safely handle chemicals, provision of spill response kits , emergency exit presence, personal hygiene practices and good housekeeping condition at workplace was discussed in detail. Mapping exercises of OSH problems in Textile, Garments & home based sectors was undertaken and participants highlighted their issues.

There also was a discussion on the improvements that can take place and the future planning which needs to be done.

Associated Labor Unions Press Release - Labor Group Lauds DOLE for New Policy Protecting Filipino Asbestos Workers & Communities from Risk of Cancerous Asbestos Dust Exposure

Labor group Associated Labor Unions (ALU) commends the Occupational Safety and Health Center of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for introducing a policy ensuring a comprehensive protection of asbestos

workers and communities from direct and indirect exposure to cancerous asbestos and asbestos containing materials.

The DOLE has issued Department Order (DO) 154 series of 2016 otherwise known as Safety and Health Standards on the Use and Management of Asbestos in the Workplace. The DO was issued on April 21 and it was enforced beginning October 21, last week.

“The ALU’s critical but constructive collaboration with government and industry players have helped produced this comprehensive policy that guarantees protection, treatment and rehabilitation of asbestos workers and minimize exposure of communities from the risk of direct and secondary exposure to highly toxic asbestos dust and asbestos containing materials. We are grateful that our trademark union perseverance in the dialogue platform has paid off exponentially for the sake of workers and their families,” said Gerard Seno, National Executive Vice President of the Associated Labor Unions (ALU).

Seno also gave credit to DOLE Secretary Silvestre Bello and OSHC executive director Dr. Tess Cucucuo for pushing through with the order amid strong counter lobby efforts being asserted by the local Association of Chrysotile Industry in the Philippines (ACIP) and international industry lobby group.

A by-product of thorough tripartite consultations dialogue between ALU representing the workers’ sector, and government’s Occupational Safety and Health Center-DOLE, Bureau of Working Conditions-DOLE, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Employment Compensation Commission (ECC), including the asbestos industry players and business owners, the DO 154 contains ten (10) key components that addresses problems and challenges faced by workers working in the manufacturing, construction and demolition of buildings and infrastructures with asbestos and asbestos-containing materials.

The order also puts the occupational exposure limit of asbestos workers close to zero but in no case shall exceed Threshold Limit Value of 0.1 fiber per cubic centimeter of air in an 8-hour work period.

The policy also requires all asbestos employers to develop and implement an Asbestos Safety and Health Program (ASHP) in the workplace.

The ASHP includes hazard identification and risk assessment and control; information, education and training; diagnosis and treatment through access to occupational health/medical services; medical examination shall be provided by the employer upon retirement or transfer of employee to another non-asbestos company; post-retirement medical monitoring; reportorial requirements; compensation and rehabilitation; compliance monitoring; and periodic review and update of the guidelines.

The World Health Organization (WHO) considers exposure to all types of asbestos causes lung cancer, mesothelioma, cancer of the larynx and ovary, and asbestosis (fibrosis of the lungs). There are current about 125 million people in the world are exposed to asbestos at the workplace. Several thousands of deaths can be attributed to other asbestos-related diseases as well as non-occupational exposures to asbestos.

In the Philippines, the DOLE estimates in 2013 there are 1.3 million construction, manufacturing and automobile and motor pit stop workers are exposed daily to asbestos dust.

Asbestos awareness in the country heightened after 1,542 of the more than 10,000 workers from the US Naval base in Subic were screened from 1992 to 1996. During this period alone, 587 workers were already found to have already contracted various incurable asbestos exposure-related diseases.

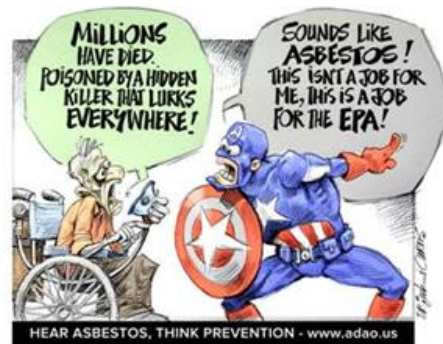
The ALU along with the global union federation Building and Woodworkers International (BWI) is pushing in the Philippines for the implementation of the WHO and the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s tripartite National Programmes for the Elimination of Asbestos-Related Diseases (NPEAD), a program designed to progressively

eliminate asbestos usage and manufacture in the country. The ALU and BWI had also been lobbying in both the Philippine Senate and the House of Representatives for a bill totally banning asbestos in the country.

29 October 2016, For inquiries, contact: ALAN TANJUSAY 09158519558, ALU, Policy Advocacy Officer

ADAO

ADAO has prepared a sequence of Political Cartoons. Cartoon 1 - Captain America Tells EPA: Be the Superhero Asbestos Victims Deserve and Ban Asbestos Now - [Click Here](#)



Cartoon Two: EPA vs Chlor-Alkali Asbestos Monster. This time around, we're calling out the chlor-alkali industry for trying to secure permission to keep using deadly asbestos, even in the face of a ban. The chlor-alkali industry stands in opposition, asking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to exempt their so-called "safe" usage from any ban — a monstrous joke considering that in 2015, used 90% of all asbestos consumed in the US. [Click Here](#)



U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer Introduces the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2016

Since the inception of the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO), U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer has been the strongest champion asbestos victims could ask for. Today, she solidified this position by introducing the **Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2016**, with co-sponsorship from U.S. Sen. Jon Tester.

If passed, this act would expedite a ban on asbestos imports and both existing and future uses. It would require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to prohibit the manufacture, processing, use, distribution in commerce, and disposal of asbestos within 18 months of the bill's enactment.

This bill builds on the encouragement we felt this past summer, when the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act (LCSA) was passed and signed into law by President Obama. LCSA gives the EPA the necessary regulatory authority to enact a ban on imports and future use of asbestos, but it also gives the Agency as long as 12 years to assess and regulate asbestos. While LCSA is a landmark step forward, The Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2016 will ensure the EPA can expeditiously ban asbestos in a fraction of the time. While we encourage Congress to support Sen. Boxer's bill, we continue to urge the EPA to prioritize asbestos in its first ten high-risk chemicals evaluated under LCSA, ensuring swift regulation of this lethal toxin. Americans can't afford to wait 7-12 more years to end the man-made asbestos disaster.

As we in the ADAO community know, this is not the first attempt at federal legislation to enact or expedite an asbestos ban. Sen. Boxer introduced another ban bill bearing my late husband's name in 2015. Though it did not pass last year, we are hopeful that this year's bill will lead to meaningful conversations and ultimately, a swift ban on asbestos. Please join me in thanking Sens. Boxer and Tester, and in urging Congress to take this opportunity to show true dedication to protecting public health and our environment. September 30, 2016, Linda, [Read More](#)

Campaigns and Support

- Take responsibility of problems in your supply chain, Pay compensation to workers: Tampaco Workers in Bangladesh [Click Here](#)
- Demand electronics companies to make safer, more sustainable products. Urge electronics brands and suppliers to implement the "Challenge to the Electronics Industry". [Click Here](#)
- Free Jailed Labor Activists in Bangladesh [Click Here](#)

Tributes

Man who championed cause of miners dies of silicosis

Ramchandra Meghwal of Gadero Ki Dhani in Jodhpur, who had gained renown as a champion of the rights of miners exposed to silicosis, succumbed to the incurable lung disease on Tuesday.

He was about 62 and had been diagnosed with the killer disease in 2013. He is survived by his wife Ugi Devi, two daughters and five sons.

Scores of fellow miners joined in the procession for his cremation. Ever since Meghwal first learned of the harm mining can do to the lungs of mine workers, he began to spread word about the need for precautions.

He also took the lead in getting other miners screened for silicosis. Gradually, it became clear that a large number of workers from the area were afflicted with this incurable condition. Hongkong-based Asia Monitor Resource Centre, which advocates internationally on labour issues, invited Meghwal to a conference in Indonesia some years ago.

Meghwal thus emerged as a spokesperson for the silicosis-afflicted across the world. Meghwal would often join fellow miners in dharnas and rallies, demanding the government offer timely relief to those suffering. Since 2013, the state government has been offering Rs 1lakh in compensation to those certified as patients of silicosis by the state Pneumoconiosis Board.

The kin of those dead receive Rs 3 lakh in compensation. Meghwal had been petitioning the government to release Rs 4 lakh while patients are still alive, so those ailing can use that money to stay alive a little longer.

A public hearing with the district collector and other government officials is set to be held on Thursday at Gadero Ki Dhani.

Villagers have put together a petition, seeking that the administration make available portable oxygen cylinders in areas where there are many suffering from this disease this would ease the condition of patients who grow breathless and cannot avail medical help. They have also demanded that those miners whose health has deteriorated to such an extent that they cannot work anymore must be granted monthly pension.

In the past 15 days, four deaths have occurred in Gadero Ki Dhani all of these were of silicosis patients.

Rana Sengupta of the Mine Labour Protection Campaign said the cremation grounds in the area receive bodies of patients at an interval of about two to four days. [Read More](#)

Articles of Interest

2016 Rachel LEE Jung-Lim Award

The 2016 winners of the Rachel LEE Jung-Lim Award are Occupational Health and Safety Center, Mumbai, India and Jung Ji-Yol, an asbestosis victim and leader of victim's movement in Korea.



South East Asia Meeting on Asbestos

Background

Based on the ABAN conference in Vietnam in September 2015, it was agreed to strengthening the sub regional action and campaign on ban asbestos. For Southeast Asian countries, there have been various degrees of asbestos consumption in manufacturing building material and construction.

There have been some efforts taken by the local groups in the form of national ban asbestos network; building multi-stake holders collaboration with relevant groups; tripartite mechanism; setting up asbestos national center; workplace-level and community based investigation including asbestos-air ambience sampling and simple respiratory test. In some countries like Indonesia and Philippines, banning asbestos entails strategy of organizing workers and communities impacted.

Raising the awareness on asbestos as a hazardous material encompasses other issues such as mobility of hazardous material in form of production sites relocation and trade system; State's policy on recognition of occupational diseases and hazardous material used in the industry. We are also fully aware of the counter-campaign taken up by asbestos lobbyist convincing the government in Southeast Asian countries on "proper way" in handling the asbestos.

In Southeast Asian sub region, in Indonesia, the efforts of ban asbestos have been initiated by INA-BAN engaging trade unions. INA-BAN has been active in organizing multi-stake holders workshop engaging government body representatives;

reaching out victims and potential victims and engagement of the medical expert. Various reports have been produced emphasizing the demographic aspect of potential impacts of asbestos consumption. INA-BAN targeting workers and communities have done other activities such as training and workshop on understanding the hazard of asbestos.



In the Philippines, ALU-TUC has played an active role on pushing the tripartite Industrial Peace Council (TIPC) calling on DOLE, DTI and DENR to implement total ban asbestos. ALU has advanced in public attention by taking up the campaign of asbestos exposure during the preparation; ALU-TUCP is preparing a full documentation on strategy of ban asbestos campaign in the Philippines.

For Mekong sub region, in Laos and Cambodia, APHEDA has worked closely with LFTU (Laos Federation Trade Union) and BWTUC (Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Cambodia). In Laos, interview with workers working in asbestos-related industry was conducted leading to setting up asbestos national center. Meanwhile in Cambodia, besides training on the asbestos hazard with the trade union, APHEDA has initiated dialog with MoLVT (Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training). In the symposium organized by APHEDA in August 2015, Minister of Labour stated that Cambodia would soon join free asbestos countries.

Summary, Recommendation and Reflections or Commitments

At the final session, there were two resolution proposed by Andrew Dettmer regarding the Rotterdam Convention and by Kate Lee regarding coordinated action across out the region. All

participants agreed to adopt both resolutions. Regarding the resolution on Rotterdam Convention, Sugio shared his experience at the previous COP where there were some delegations from the BAN network. At the time there were Sanjiv, one from Korea, two from Vietnam, two from India and more from Australia. Sugio called the attention of the networks to better coordinate to take effective action in dealing with the convention.

Responding to the Kate proposal, the network needs to continue the discussion regarding who will facilitate and coordinate on the resolutions. Kate invited all the organizations to take roles and contribute based on the capacity of the organization. Sharan proposed the organizing committee of the SEA-BAN meeting to continue their work in coordinating the network.

As a reflection to the meeting, Prof Vithaya Kulsomboon raised the need to deal with industry lobbyists. The CIC is everywhere trying to sustain the industry and they are now talking a lot about Thailand. He also thanked the organizing committee since the meeting has managed to strengthen the network not only regionally but also at the national level. The meeting has facilitated that process in the context of Thailand where he could meet for the first time Boonson Tawijid from trade union in Thailand and started the discussion to ban asbestos.

Recognizing the power of trade union and learning from Indonesia experience, he will continue his discussion with Boonson and continue the collaboration. Regarding the Rotterdam Convention, T-Ban will write a letter to the Government. Prof Vitaya also showed his interest on Indonesian approach to target the chrysotile factory. However, in the context of Thailand, the movement will go slowly as in Thailand, the workers are not as strong as in Indonesia. T-Ban will continue its communication with INABAN to target this factory. He also expressed his admiration to the doctors in INABAN who support the campaign.

The same reflection also shared by Ridwan Panjaitan from the Indonesia Metal Workers Federation in Indonesia (FSPMI) and Helmi Yadi from KPBI, the Indonesian Confederation of United

Workers (KPBI). Ridwan learned about INABAN for the first time at the meeting. He praised the doctors who involve in INABAN whom also his son lecturers at the program of occupational health and safety in a university. He expressed his support and promised to work together with INABAN to campaign ban asbestos. Helmi added that he learned a lot about the issue at the meeting. He pointed out that the campaign on asbestos is also related to the poverty situation and job opportunities. The campaign should include these issues in the strategy to ban asbestos.

Sanjiv Pandita updated the participants about the recent occupational accident, blasts in the ship-breaking yard in Pakistan that killed 17 people on November 1. Sanjiv invited the participants to send solidarity message to the workers. The participants agreed to send solidarity message.

Resolution

This meeting of unions, NGOs and asbestos groups, meeting under the auspices of SEABAN, determines as follows:

1. We are united in our common demand that we will not cease our campaigning until asbestos in all its forms is banned and removed from the workplace, the built environment, and the community generally.
2. We note that asbestos is subject of national and international regulation in its crocidolite and amosite forms, but not chrysotile. This is despite there being no safe level to exposure of asbestos in any form.
3. Currently the production, transport, use, storage and disposal of chrysotile is not subject to the provisions of the Rotterdam Convention, despite its toxic nature. All except 7 signatories to the Convention accept the need for it to be listed, but because the Convention currently requires unanimous endorsement before a substance is listed, this prevents its listing.
4. This meeting notes and endorses the actions of the African group of countries to change the provisions of the Convention to require a 3/4 majority for a substance to be listed.
5. We commit to seeking the agreement of our national governments to this change. We also

commit to seeking the listing of chrysotile in Annex III.

6. To pursue these aims, we will:
 - a. Maintain and improve the network created through A-BAN and SEABAN, bringing all local unions, NGOs and victims groups together to discuss and endorse a common platform;
 - b. Write to the relevant level of government (national, provincial or local) to put forward the proposals;
 - c. Seek to meet the relevant government representatives to forward the demands.

All unions, NGOs, victims groups, health agencies, and, where possible, employer groups which are prepared to agree, commit to maintaining communication through social media, etc, and to provide regular updates to each other about actions taken.

At the appropriate time, this group will reconvene electronically to coordinate our approach to the COP in Geneva in April 2017.

Coordination activity will be undertaken by regional groups, working cooperatively.

This SEABAN conference members pledge to work together for coordinated action across out region to:

1. Strengthen our national level work.
2. Enable us to work more closely at regional level.

Our regional coordination in the first instance, if resources are available, will aim to:

1. Coordinate a strategy for countering the activities of the chrysotile lobby in the region.
2. Set up a mechanism to share education resources and useful strategies across the national campaigns in SE Asia.

Adopt common messaging at a national level for coordinated communication e.g. using the brand – Asbestos. Not here. Not anywhere.

For Pictures: [Click Here](#)

The Legacy of the European Asbestos Industry Continues in India

Less than 300km from the city of Bhopal in Central India, where thousands died in a gas leak in 1984, is the small town of Kymore. Here, Asbestos Cement Ltd, a subsidiary of the British company, Turner and Newall Plc, established India's first asbestos product factory in 1934, paving the way for India to become, nearly a century later, the second largest consumer of chrysotile asbestos in the world.

Asbestos waste from the factory, including raw asbestos fibre, was dumped by Asbestos Cement Limited till 1989. Letters sent to Government in 1985 described local residents as suffering from asbestosis, and a survey by the Pollution Control Board Bhopal, in July of that year stated: "It is further been observed that the factory is dumping the solid wastes at Islam Nagar, Kymore, which may also be unhealthful (sic). However, local residents say that, despite numerous warnings by the local pollution control board, dumping was continued till 1997 by Eternit Everest Ltd, a subsidiary of the Belgium asbestos multinational, Etex. This was decades after the industry knew it to be unsafe to human health.

A report produced by Environmental Consulting and Occupational Health (ECOH), Ontario, indicates that there are nearly 600,000 square metres of waste, which would cost up to \$88m to make safe. Such remediation would probably require a transnational legal strategy and there are moves to use crowd funding (<https://www.crowdjustice.org>) in order to do so. However, at present thousands of people remain exposed, and will continue to suffer the health consequences in the future.

By Krishnendu Mukherjee, October 20, 2016, [Read More](#)

Press Release by ABAN, IBAS, OEHNI, AMRC, ABEVA, UK Forum of Asbestos Victims' Groups on the Killing Fields in India – [Read More](#)

Asbestos Investigation and Remedial Options Analysis Kymore Village, Madhya Pradesh, India – [Read More](#)

Anti-asbestos activists feel duped by alleged spy in U.K. court case

In mid-September, 2016, Laura Lozanski received an e-mail from a British documentary filmmaker named Rob Moore, asking if she would be willing to do an in-person interview with him on the health risks of asbestos.

The former nurse and occupational health and safety officer for the Canadian Association of University Teachers had no reason to be suspicious. He came to her Ottawa office on Sept. 23, where he interviewed her for about an hour. He seemed friendly, sympathetic and concerned about the issue. He said he had been doing documentary films on the impact of asbestos in places like Thailand and through South Asia.

"He was making these films about these poor children who were exposed to asbestos and was looking for support for that." [Read More](#)

Asbestos fund set up to support victims

A CHF100 million (\$97 million) fund is to be created in Switzerland to offer support for victims of asbestos-related illnesses who are not eligible for accident insurance. The construction industry and insurers will voluntarily contribute to the fund that will run until 2025.

Around 120 people every year develop malignant tumours in Switzerland as a result of having breathed in carcinogenic asbestos fibres. A quarter of these victims cannot claim through accident insurance because their condition is not work related or they were self-employed.

In some cases, people became ill from living near to a building that contained asbestos.

A round table of politicians, trade unions, industry groups and asbestos victim support organisations came up with the solution to financially support victims who fell ill after 2006. Some CHF30 million has already been pledged to the fund. [Read More](#)

Silicosis case: thousands of women could lose out

In the pending lawsuit against South Africa's entire gold mining industry, thousands of women stand to lose out on the compensation due to the dependants of deceased miners because the care work they have done to sustain the mining labour force is invisible.

In May 2016, the South Gauteng High Court issued a landmark judgment providing that miners and the dependents of deceased miners (widows and children) could proceed in a class action lawsuit against the gold mining industry.

The legal action concerns the industry's failure to prevent miners from developing silicosis, a degenerative and deadly lung disease that the mines could have prevented. Recently, the Supreme Court of Appeal has granted six of South Africa's biggest gold mining houses leave to appeal all aspects of the class action ruling, including the ruling on transmissibility which states that dependents of deceased miners can claim compensation. [Read More](#)

Video - School at the Risk of Collapsing due to Mine Blasting

A regular class in Kujuma Government School is interrupted with a deafening blast. The walls shook and the ceiling threatened to fall down. But in five minutes later, it was a usual business for the 40-50 children studying in the government primary school. This is not a warzone, this is an everyday reality the 5000 residents, including children of Kujuma, Dhanbad face since the past 20 years due to the open-cast mines in the area. The Kujuma coal mines are in close proximity to the Jharia coal mines, which have been on fire for 100 years. The residents accuse the Bharat Coking Coal Limited, Dhanbad (BCCL), a subsidiary of Coal India Limited has been complacent about their plight since the past few years.

The mine is just 250 meters away from the school, creating a dangerous situation for the children and teachers. "One boy was sitting with water in his hand. In a while, it started steaming," says Sonali, a

student. Imagine the high temperatures and noxious fumes the children are exposed to. Another danger these kids face is the fear of a collapsing school. The constant dynamite explosions have weakened our buildings. Cracks have appeared on our walls and floors. It can all crumble at any time," says Ramesh Chandra Pal, a teacher at the government school. [Read More](#)

E-waste in East & Southeast Asia jumps 63 percent in 5 years

New Delhi, Jan 15 (UNI) The volume of discarded electronics in East and Southeast Asia jumped almost two-thirds between 2010 and 2015, and e-waste generation is growing fast in both total volume and per capita measures, new UN research shows. The report urges Governments to clampdown on improper recycling, disposal to conserve resources, avoid serious health and environment threats.

Driven by rising incomes and high demand for new gadgets and appliances, the average increase in e-waste across all 12 countries and areas analyzed -- Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam -- was 63 percent in the five years ending in 2015 and totaled 12 point 3 million tonnes -- weighting almost two and half times that of the Great Pyramid of Giza. China alone more than doubled its generation of e-waste between 2010 and 2015 to 6 point 7 million tonnes, up 107 percent. [Read More](#)

Global reach of Samsung's medieval practices revealed in new report

Samsung workers have shed light on the working conditions throughout the multinational's supply chains. The International Trade Union Confederation and IndustriALL global union have released a new report, Samsung - Modern Tech Medieval Conditions.

"From denying justice to the families of former employees who died from cancers caused by unsafe workplaces, to dodging tax and engaging in price-fixing cartels, one thing is constant: Samsung's corporate culture is ruthlessly geared

towards maximising profit to the detriment of the everyday lives of its workers,” said Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary.

The ITUC is petitioning Samsung to end worker abuse and abolish its no-union policy. A new video Samsung’s Secret tells the story of one union family caught up in Samsung’s no union policy which affects the entire Asian electronics industry.

“For contractors in Samsung’s supply chain whose workers join a union, there is a contract guillotine. The company uses its power and leverage to intervene with its suppliers. [Read More](#)

Press Statement - Another methanol poisoning accidents identified in the SAMSUNG supply chain

SEOUL, South Korea, October 17, 2016 - According to Solidarity for Workers` Health (here in after SWH), two more occupational accidents related to methanol poisoning were recently reported in the SAMSUNG Electronics’ supply chain.

A 29-year-old male worker surnamed Kim who was dispatched to DuckyongENG, a subcontractor for SAMSUNG, showed signs of blindness on February 24, 2015. Also, on January 16, 2016, another 35-year-old male worker surnamed Cheon working for BKTech, which is also a subcontractor for SAMSUNG, showed the symptoms of blindness on the way back home from work. He was taken to a nearby hospital on the following day, however he lost his sight in his right eye, and most vision in his left eye. Both of the victims have only recently realized that their accidents are deeply concerned with the methanol poisoning, thus decided to report their cases to SWH.

Methanol can cause headaches, nausea, vomiting, sight loss and even death. Ethanol is recommended over methanol because it is less toxic, but ethanol costs three times more.

Both of the workers were responsible for the process related to CNC equipment. The CNC (Computerized Numerical Control) machine is a tool capable of processing and scaling metal materials to a previously input value. The CNC equipment used by the victims is a cutting tool that

cuts according to previously input levels. [Read More](#)

Government, industry crackdown in Bangladesh threatens health & safety improvements; clothing brands petitioned to respond

Mass firings by garment factories and a wave of government arrests of union leaders and worker rights advocates threatens the gains made in improving workplace health and safety for the 4 million, mainly women, garment workers in Bangladesh. A shadow of fear and intimidation has fallen over the nation’s 3,500 export garment factories, undermining the ongoing process to establish factory health and safety committees that have genuine, active participation by workers.

International clothing brands have tremendous influence in Bangladesh because of the \$26 billion in apparel exports they ordered from the country in 2016. The clothing brands are now being petitioned to use that influence with their supplier factories to rehire the fired workers, and with the government to release two dozen union leaders being held in prison without bail.

Starting on December 11, 2016, a wave of strikes began in Ashulia, an industrial suburb of Dhaka. The strike wave eventually involved 59 factories and thousands of garment workers. The workers were demanding an increase of the country’s minimum wage of 5,300 Taka (or \$67) a month, to 15,000 (\$191) Taka a month. By Garrett Brown on January 26, 2017 [Read More](#)

MWAP Statement on the Occasion of the International Day for Decent Work and Stop Precarious Work Campaign - “Ban all forms of contractualization!”

“Contractualization in all forms must be banned. Contractualization must end.”

This is the statement of the Metal Workers Alliance of the Philippines, a national alliance of unions and workers’ associations in the industries of

electronics, automotive, metallurgical mining, shipbuilding, metal, steel and related industries, on today's observance of the Global Day for Decent Work and STOP Precarious Work Campaign.

The decades-long implementation of neoliberal policies gave rise to contractualization and other labor flexibilization schemes. Contractual labor is called with so many names: casual, reliever, project-based, agency-hired, commission-based, seasonal, 555, endo, etc.

In complicity, governments and capitalists tried to sugar-coat contractualization and other labor flexibilization schemes saying that it is needed by businesses and the economy to survive. But for the workers, contractualization meant nothing but lower wages, no benefits, no security of tenure and absence of basic rights.

In the metal industry, contractualization has widely proliferated. It is estimated that 7 out of 10 workers are contractuales and agency workers. Most of them are found in special economic zones, which is also famous for its unwritten "no union-no strike" policy. Many are women and young workers. Student labor is also prevalent, especially under the Dual Training System.

The Labor Code clearly states that the workers should become regular after six months of continuous work. However, various laws passed such as Herrera Law in 1989 and DOLE Department Order 18-A series of 2011 served as deceptive implementing rules of Articles 106-109 of the Labor Code, which blurs and diminishes actual employee-employer relations.

7 October 2016 [Read More](#)

[African countries launch action to end sabotage of UN Convention on trade of hazardous substances](#)

For the past decade a tiny number of countries allied to the asbestos industry have sabotaged the United Nations Rotterdam Convention. Led first by Canada and now by Russia, they have prevented the Convention from implementing its mandate to protect populations in the global South from being harmed by hazardous substances.

The Convention, which is science-based, was created to end the double standard under which known hazardous substances, such as asbestos, that are banned and regulated in Western countries, are being massively exported to countries in the global South without warnings or protective measures, along with industry marketing claiming the product is safe.

The purpose of the Convention is to control trade in hazardous substances. It requires that countries must obtain Prior Informed Consent before exporting any substance that is on the Convention's list of hazardous substances. It thus provides a basic human right and a practical tool for developing countries, enabling them to refuse, or set conditions, over import of hazardous substances into their country.

Wed, Nov 23, 2016, Kathleen Ruff, RightOnCanada.ca, [Read More](#)

[No Work, No Safety, No Justice – The Aftermath of Pakistan's Shipbreaking Disaster](#)

Just over one month after the deadliest accident in shipbreaking history devastated the Gadani shipbreaking yard in Pakistan, the sprawling facility has reopened with no tangible improvement to health and safety provisions and nothing in the way of compensation for affected workers and their families.

On 1 November, a floating oil production tanker, ACES (IMO #8021830), caught fire killing at least 28 workers, leaving scores missing and more than 50 people injured.

According to Shipbreaking Platform, a coalition of environmental, human rights and labour rights organisations working towards safe and clean ship recycling, "the blast was so strong that parts of the ship were blown up to two kilometers away and the fire took more than three days to extinguish".

The tanker had recently changed from an Indonesian flag to a Djiboutian flag before its arrival in Gadani; this is common practice in an industry where unscrupulous ship owners go to great lengths to avoid liability for the prevalence of

unsafe and environmentally-unfriendly shipbreaking practices. [Read More](#)

Scientists link higher dementia risk to living near heavy traffic

LONDON - People who live near busy roads with heavy traffic face a higher risk of developing dementia than those living further away, according to researchers in Canada.

A study published in The Lancet medical journal found that people who lived within 50m of high-traffic roads had a 7.0 per cent higher chance of developing dementia compared to those who lived more than 300m away from busy roadways.

"Air pollutants can get into the blood stream and lead to inflammation, which is linked with cardiovascular disease and possibly other conditions such as diabetes.

This study suggests air pollutants that can get into the brain via the blood stream can lead to neurological problems," said Dr Ray Copps, an environmental and occupational health expert at Public Health Ontario (PHO) who conducted the study with colleagues from Canada's Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences. [Read More](#)

Cancelling new coal plants in Southeast Asia, Korea, Japan would save 50,000 lives a year

Hong Kong, 13 January 2017 - Approximately 50,000 lives a year could be saved by 2030 if no new coal-fired power plants are built in Southeast Asia, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan, according to a groundbreaking peer reviewed study from researchers at Harvard University and Greenpeace International.

Air pollutant emissions from coal-fired power plants in these regions currently cause an estimated 20,000 excess deaths per year, increasing to 70,000 by 2030 if coal-fired power plants presently planned or under construction go ahead. The majority of these mortalities (55,000 by 2030) will be in Southeast Asia.

"While air pollution in China and India has received a lot of scientific attention, the impacts of planned coal power expansion in the rest of the Southeast and East Asian region have been understudied," said Shannon Koplitz, lead researcher in the project from Harvard University.

"Reliance on coal in emerging Southeast Asian countries will have substantial and long-lasting impacts on air quality and public health. We estimate that tens of thousands of premature deaths could be avoided through cleaner energy choices. These significant human health costs should be considered when making choices about Southeast Asia's energy future".

Authors from Harvard University Atmospheric Sciences modeling group, Harvard School of Public Health and Greenpeace mapped out current emissions from all coal-fired power plants in the region, and used a sophisticated atmospheric model to assess how much of current air pollution levels are due to coal emissions in different locations across Asia.

If proposed coal-fired power plant projects go ahead, emissions from coal in Southeast Asia, Korea and Japan will triple by 2030 and could exceed total coal emissions in the U.S. and Europe, with the largest increases in Indonesia and Vietnam. Coal-fired power plants could be responsible for 70,000 premature deaths in the region every year, rivaling the 100,000 deaths from Indonesia's 2015 smog. Indonesia will suffer the highest number of premature deaths, followed by Vietnam, with Myanmar experiencing the fourth highest mortality in 2030.

"Planned coal expansion in Southeast Asia is a particular concern because of these countries' extremely weak emission standards for power plants. All countries in the region allow many times more pollution from new coal-fired power plants than China and India," said Lauri Myllyvirta, Senior Global Coal Campaigner at Greenpeace East Asia.

"Countries in Southeast Asia have the chance now to leapfrog dirty, outdated technology like coal and move to renewable energy. Vietnam already took the first step by cancelling 17 large coal-fired power

plants, reducing the projected health impacts from the country's massive coal expansion by more than one fourth. Governments across the region have the chance to urgently shift their energy policies and save the lives of tens of thousands of their citizens."

Southeast Asia is one of the fastest developing regions in the world; electricity demand in 2035 is projected to increase by 83% from 2011 levels, more than twice the global average. Many countries in the region are still pursuing new coal-fired power plants, while lagging behind China and India in scaling up renewable energy.

Press release - 13 January, 2017, [Read More](#)

New NIOSH Sound Level Meter App

Imagine if workers around the world could collect and share workplace (or task-based) noise exposure data using their smartphones. Scientists and occupational safety and health professionals could rely on such shared data to build job exposure databases and promote better hearing health and prevention efforts. In addition, the ability to acquire and display real-time noise exposure data could raise workers' awareness about their work environment and help them make informed decisions about potential hazards to their hearing.

The idea was so intriguing that in 2014, the NIOSH hearing loss team evaluated 192 sound measurement applications (apps) for the iOS and Android platforms to examine their suitability and accuracy in relation to professional sound measurement instruments (Kardous and Shaw, 2014). Of the 192 apps the team examined, 10 iOS apps met the outlined criteria for functionality, features, and calibration capability, and of those, 4 iOS apps met our testing criteria. [Read More](#)

Why do recent immigrants get injured more often than Canadian-born workers?

If you're a new Canadian, there's a very good chance that you're not working in the occupation that you trained for. Out of necessity, many

newcomers will instead take any job that they can find, meaning that recent immigrants — especially linguistic and visible minorities — are overrepresented in jobs and workplaces that are hazardous or harmful to their safety.

Research shows that these new immigrants are injured more often than Canadian workers. In fact, men who have been in Canada less than five years are twice as likely to be injured than Canadian-born workers. Even more concerning is that these injuries are serious enough to require medical treatment 90 per cent of the time.

Disparity of injury rates a growing social issue -

The disparity of injury rates will only become more important to Canadians since the number of immigrants working in Canada increases annually. For example between 1991 and 2005, the percentage of immigrants coming for work increased by over 80 per cent. [Read More](#)

S Korean exec jailed over toxic humidifier disinfectant

A former South Korean executive of UK-based Reckitt Benckiser has received a seven-year prison sentence over a humidifier disinfectant linked to the death of around 100 people.

Shin Hyun-woo was found guilty of accidental homicide and falsely advertising the deadly product.

Reckitt Benckiser is one of several firms linked to the deaths.

Lotte Mart, Homeplus and other retailers were also found guilty of selling the toxic product.

Mr Shin was head of Reckitt Benckiser's Oxy subsidiary from 1991 to 2005.

The seven years were the maximum prison sentence the court could give.

Reckitt Benckiser withdrew its product from the market after South Korean authorities suggested a link between chemicals to sterilise humidifiers and lung conditions in 2011. [Read More](#)

Why worker-led monitoring is needed to challenge electronic sweatshops

Since the seventies, and particularly from the nineties onwards, transnational Information and Communications Technology (ICT) companies have established a discourse of corporate social responsibility, accompanied by voluntary codes of conduct, verified by social audits contracted with specialized for-profit firms. However, these codes are limited in their ability to protect workers from labour abuses, exposure to toxic chemicals, poverty wages, and other problems endemic to current business models. A real alternative is monitoring by workers, for workers – funded by public purchasers in the Global North, who use the goods we make in the Global South.

In 2004, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) released its report ‘Clean up your computer’, exposing serious violations of fundamental human rights in ICT producing countries. The electronics industry responded with the formation of a global membership association, the Electronic industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC), made up of the leading electronics brands and factories from HP to Foxconn. The EICC has produced a voluntary code of conduct for factories and brands producing electronics product, which started weak but has been progressively strengthened. [Read More](#)

OHS Initiative for Workers and Community Established In Dhaka with First Year Funding, NGO Bureau Approval

On October 2, 2016, the OHS Initiative for Workers and Community received the legally required approval from the Bangladesh government’s NGO Bureau to begin operations, green-lighting its “train-the-trainer” program on workplace health and safety with six leading labor, women’s, public health and occupational health and safety (OHS) organizations.

The OHS Initiative Governing Board met on August 31 to approve plans to begin hiring staff, develop

Bangla language materials, and recruit trainers from the member organizations to become grassroots OHS trainers with workers in Bangladesh’s garment, construction, shipbreaking and other industries.

The NGO Bureau approval means the OHS Initiative can now receive and begin spending the funds raised for its first year budget and begin operations. More than \$53,000 was contributed by the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) in the UK, the World Solidarity Movement (WSM) in Belgium, the National Fire Association (NFA) in the US, LUSH Cosmetics “Charity Pot” in Canada, and a group of anonymous donors in San Francisco, California.



Board members of the OHS Initiative from left to right: Repon Chowdhury (OSHE) - Secretary of the Initiative Board; Tamanna Khan (Naripokkho) - Chairperson of the Initiative Board; Kalpona Akter (BCWS) – Board; Kutubuddin Ahmed (IndustriALL Bangladesh Council) – Board; Ghulam Mustafa Dulal (GK) – Board; Sushmita S Preetha (Country Representative, WRC Bangladesh Office) representing Garrett Brown (MHSSN) – Board

Regional News

Toward an asbestos-free environment, Japan has progressed but Taiwan still lags far behind

Taiwan Occupational Safety and Health Link

In June of 2005, the media disclosed that over the past 10 years, more than 50 former workers of the Kanzaki factory of the Kubota Corporation, a leading machinery manufacturer in Japan, had died from mesothelioma. It is a rare type of cancer and

is caused almost exclusively by asbestos exposure. Subsequent reports further revealed that some residents in the neighboring area also died from the disease. These events shocked the society, leading to a nationwide social movement up until today demanding for fair compensation to workers and residents succumbed to asbestos related diseases. In response the government of Japan amended compensation regulations and took measures to control asbestos hazards in the environment. In Taiwan, occupational asbestos exposure was also severe in the past. Workers in manufacturing factories, construction and renovation sites as well as shipbuilding and ship-breaking industries were exposed to high levels of asbestos. Until now, asbestos-containing materials are still ubiquitous in our living environment. However, in contrast to Japan's development, Taiwan's government has turned a blind eye to the hardships encountered by patients with asbestos-related diseases, and has done little, if any, actions to control asbestos exposures.

Epidemic of asbestos-related diseases is an undeniable fact

Asbestos is known to cause a variety of diseases, including asbestosis, mesothelioma, lung cancer and other malignant cancers. More than 50 countries have banned asbestos in all types, but asbestos is still allowed in some manufacturing factories in Taiwan. It is even more troublesome that many Asian countries including China, Thailand, Vietnam and India are still consuming asbestos on a large scale. The World Health Organization has asserted that asbestos related diseases represent a rising epidemic especially in Asia. [Read More](#)

The workshop on Total Asbestos Ban and Fair Compensation for Victims of Asbestos-Related Diseases: The Common Goals of Taiwan, Japan and around the World was held on October 24, 2016. To read about the workshop [click here](#)

To view some Pictures from the Joint Taiwan-Japan Session on Asbestos [Click Here](#)

[A documentary from Taiwan: Asbestos - the invisible threat](#)

A documentary about the problems of under-recognition of asbestos-related diseases in Taiwan has been made. [Click Here](#)

[Articles on IBAS website](#)

[Poisoning for Profit](#)

According to calculations based on United Nations trade data, the cumulative value of 5.5 million tons of asbestos imported by countries around the world during the years 2010 to 2015 was \$3.3 billion. This figure does not include the dollar amount of a similar volume of asbestos produced and used at home by the mining countries of Russia, Kazakhstan, Brazil and China which would, most likely, also be worth billions of dollars.¹ These stakeholder countries, in collusion with vested interests in asbestos-using countries, remain determined to continue business as usual despite the medical and scientific consensus that the best way to end the global epidemic of asbestos diseases is to stop the use of asbestos. By Laurie Kazan-Allen [Read More](#)

[Asbestos Victims in the Ascendance](#)

As thousands of French citizens took to the streets in Paris to highlight the country's ongoing asbestos scandal on October 7, 2016, 16,000 miles away Brazilian citizens participated in a series of seminal meetings between October 5-8, 2016 to progress the national campaign for an asbestos ban and justice for the injured. The European protest highlighted the French Government's failure to issue criminal sanctions against those guilty of operating and promoting an industry responsible for at least 50,000 deaths with future mortality estimated at 100,000 by 2050. By Laurie Kazan-Allen [Read More](#)

[Debate on Mesothelioma in the House of Lords \(United Kingdom\)](#)

As your Lordships' House has heard many times before, mesothelioma is a terrible disease, among the most cruel of all fatal illnesses. It is inflicted too often on those who contracted it through their

occupation which exposed them to the *asbestos* which causes it, and too often through public service, so members of the armed services and teachers as well as factory workers have been disproportionately affected by it. Yet those suffering from it, and their families, were appallingly treated for decades. It took years of struggle to force insurance companies to discharge their obligations to pay compensation, in the end taking legislation by the previous Labor Government - I am delighted to see my noble friend *Lord McKenzie* on the Front Bench today, as he was the Minister who did so much to make that happen—and the coalition Government to force them to do this.

There have been inexcusable delays in providing adequate resourcing for research into effective treatments for this dreadful illness. [Read More](#)

Kenya faces cancer epidemic caused by asbestos roofs

Kenya is facing a national health crisis caused by the widespread use of asbestos sheets as a building material.

Government now spends nearly 10% of its health budget on the treatment of asbestos-related cancers, and the figure is set to rise, according to broadcaster KTN.

The country's National Environmental Management Authority (Nema) says the government should take action to replace asbestos on public roofs to avoid worsening health hazards.

"The cost of environmental damage caused by asbestos pollution, including asbestos-related cancers, is higher than what we would spend to replace the roofs," said Izaak Elmi, chief research officer at Nema. By GCR Staff, [Read More](#)

The asbestos victims of Eternit – in pictures

The billionaire owner of the Eternit factories in Italy, who allowed workers to be exposed to asbestos, may be heading back to court. Alfredo Covino has been following the plight of the victims

Monday 28 November 2016, [Read More](#)

Asbestos deaths set to hit record levels

Asbestos-related deaths are expected to hit a record high in the next few years as the legacy of decades of ignorance about the cancer-causing building material hits home.

And safety experts have warned the danger will remain high for another 10 to 15 years, with asbestos finds rising 80% in recent years as the recovering economy sees an increase in building renovations and refurbishments.

Notifications to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) — which are mandatory when asbestos finds exceed a certain limit in a building about to undergo demolition or renovation works — increased from 164 in 2010 to 290 up to the middle of December this year. [Read More](#)

Canada-wide asbestos inventory 'a positive step,' say health and safety advocates

CBC's map detailing the federal buildings across the country containing asbestos has been updated with hundreds of new entries to reflect the newly released National Asbestos Inventory from Public Services and Procurement Canada.

Our map now includes more than 800 federal properties, including major airports, passport offices, shopping malls and office buildings.

After years of lobbying, an official public inventory of Canadian government buildings containing asbestos is now available online — and workplace health and safety advocates say the document is a good start. [Read More](#)

Swedish Study Shows Asbestos Ban Has Had Little Impact on the Country's Mesothelioma Rates, According to Surviving Mesothelioma

Scientists at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden have just released new findings on the mesothelioma risk posed by various different jobs

and its relationship to the country's 1982 asbestos ban. Surviving Mesothelioma has just published a new article on the findings. Click here to read it now.

Of the 280 occupations analyzed in the newly-published study, 24 of them were found to carry an elevated risk for malignant mesothelioma.

"Among men, increased risks of mesothelioma of the pleura were observed in male-dominated occupations, with the greatest elevation of risk among plumbers," writes Nils Plato, a Chemical Engineer with the Institute of Environmental Medicine at the Karolinska Institute. [Read More](#)

Border Force makes a dozen interceptions of asbestos coming into the country

Border authorities have made more than a dozen interceptions of asbestos since a department shakeup last year, amid fears lax enforcement is allowing the killer substance to flood into the country from overseas.

Australian Border Force has made 13 seizures of the banned building material since its establishment in July last year, according to figures obtained by Fairfax Media.

The disclosure comes after asbestos was discovered in Chinese-sourced materials at a string of construction sites this year, casting doubt on the enforcement of an import ban introduced in 2003. [Read More](#)

Asbestos-related deaths may continue to rise long after 2018 ban

Despite the federal government's decision to ban products containing asbestos by 2018, some medical experts predict the number of Canadians who die because of past exposure will continue to rise.

Every day, about five Canadians are diagnosed with cancers linked to asbestos. It can take anywhere from 20 to 40 years for exposure to asbestos to develop into the disease, which is often aggressive and, in many cases, fatal.

Over the past 100 years, thousands of Canadians are believed to have been exposed to asbestos at some point in their lives. In 2012, Canada's last asbestos mine ceased operations. But the import of materials containing asbestos, such as construction materials, is still allowed until the 2018 ban kicks in.

[Read More](#)

Asbestos victims march across France for justice

The world has always been worrying about asbestos for decades, and the dangerous pollutant will remain a problem for the decades to come. In France, asbestos has already killed tens of thousands of people, and yet no one has ever been held legally accountable for the deaths. Ramin Mazaheri reports from Paris.

Ramin Mazaheri, Press TV, Paris [Read More](#)

Amos and Boyd: Learn from asbestos – and do more to protect Canadians

The story of asbestos is a cautionary, disturbing and timely tale. The recent announcement that Canada will enact a comprehensive ban by 2018 is a decision that will save lives and prevent painful diseases caused by exposure to this deadly substance.

Banning asbestos is an important step towards fulfilling the fundamental right of all Canadians to live in a healthy environment. It also demonstrates that we finally have a federal government willing to make decisions based on scientific evidence.

To be clear: the decision comes decades late. Thousands of Canadians have already died from mesothelioma, asbestosis and lung cancer. Thousands more will suffer the same fate in the coming years. Asbestos is far and away the leading occupational killer, costing Canada billions of dollars annually. [Read More](#)

Photo Story: Along Road to Awareness of the Danger of Asbestos

Karawang - Saturday, November 5, 2016 in the front yard of the secretariat of SERBUK, we organized a discussion on asbestos. Many members of the unions attended it. Most of them were the members of Serbuk Siamindo (SICP). Some other factory-based union members were also attending the discussion. Among us were also some guests from several unions and organizations in Cambodia, Malaysia, Japan, Vietnam and Australia. After a short introduction, Kirman as chairman of SERBUK Siamindo described the condition of the union. Kirman explained how SERBUK Siamindo organized their activities after the succession of the board. In addition to their regular discussions and thematic education related to the basic rights of the workers, SERBUK Siamindo also provided advocacy for their members. The membership, 1% of wage which is collected directly from their members, is the main source to fund the union. Of the various programs that have been implemented, Kirman explained that the board of the union under his leadership targeted to urge the CBA negotiation, so that they will have an opportunity to demand for better working conditions.

Next, Tubagus Saeful Sadat shared his story when he initiated the union of Serbuk Siamindo. Saeful is the former chairman of SERBUK Siamindo. In his explanation, Saeful Sadat stated that SERBUK Siamindo was initiated by 20 daily workers. Daily workers were those who work in PT. Siamindo without employment contracts and received daily payment. They were not entitled to wages based on the regional minimum wage, health facilities, annual bonus, OHS facilities, THR allowance, annual leave and working uniforms. SERBUK Siamindo was initiated on December 9, 2012.

Three days after the union formed, one of the initiator, Hadar, was terminated his employment following an accident during operating a forklift which damaging the top pile of asbestos. The dismissal case called solidarity from the other workers which then gathered in front of the plant gate to conduct protest action by blocking the entrance. This action has ceased the activities of the plant. After negotiation, the management agreed to rehire Hadar. Receiving the news that Hadar was rehired by the company, the workers

who gathered there cheered and that evening, as many as 200 workers gave their statement to join SERBUK Siamindo. Three months later, after a strike, SERBUK Siamindo succeeded to have their members of 206 daily workers appointed to be permanent workers and their rights fulfilled.

Furthermore, Subono - the Secretary General of SERBUK Indonesia- shared his experience in getting involved in the campaign of asbestos as a hazardous material. Bono added that initially he and his comrades did not realize that asbestos is a hazardous material that can cause various diseases since the company claimed that the raw materials they used during production process were safe.

After a discussion with some network that focus on campaigning the danger of asbestos, Bono and his unionist comrades finally alerted that asbestos is a hazardous material. LION Indonesia - a network that focuses on OHS issues - then organized routine agendas with the members of SERBUK Siamindo. Bono implied that he and his comrades in SERBUK Siamindo do not struggle to make the plant closed but to urge the company to replace their raw materials with safer materials.

Kate Lee, a rep of Apheda Australia, appraised the struggle of SERBUK Siamindo. Kate showed that the role of Saeful as the initiator of the union is outstanding. She noted that what they are doing today cannot be separated from the courage of their comrades to initiate the union. Union, is a tool for workers' struggle to change their working conditions to be better.



Meanwhile Brad Parker, a board member of the Australian Construction, Forestry, Mining and

Energy Union (CFMEU) viewed that the courage showed by the workers in initiating union is the main asset that must continue to be built. Brad emphasized a slogan that those who have the courage to struggle, will achieve victory. He also shared the success of the labor movement and community in Australia in stopping the use of asbestos in various industries in Australia. As known, besides being used as the raw material for the manufacture of asbestos roofing, asbestos is also commonly found in automobile brake linings industry, electronic equipment, electric tools and even in crayon for children.

Riki Hermawan - Chairperson of Serbuk Indonesia - in the separate occasion stated that Serbuk Indonesia will vanguard the advocacy action on the OHS conditions that are getting worse. Asbestos case will be the entrance in the OHS campaign. In the near future, Serbuk Indonesia plans to organize a joint workshop with some legal aid institutions and media networks to develop a long-term plan on OHS campaign in Indonesia.

By Khamid Istakhori

Kin of those dead of asbestosis denied relief for lack of evidence

JAIPUR: Kin of those dead of asbestosis in Udaipur villages find that local authorities will not release money due to them as compensation after the death of their dear ones without proof the death was indeed caused by asbestosis. Ram Lal, whose wife is now a panchayat member at the Netaji Ka Bara village in Jhadol of Udaipur district says he has been attempting to help the families of those who lost loved ones to asbestosis but is finding it a near impossible battle.

"We have made several trips to different offices, but we are told that we must produce proof that the death was caused by asbestosis. Some of the deaths occurred as far back as 2012. The families have not received even a paisa in compensation. We have been running from pillar to post but how can we possibly establish, after all these years, how the deaths happened?"

After a global campaign to ban asbestos once its deleterious impact on health was known, the state government banned asbestos mining and stopped issuing leases for it in 1986. However, it was not until 2005 that the last mines actually shut. By 2013, the state government began to offer Rs1 lakh as compensation to patients of silicosis - once the patient died, his or her kin were entitled to compensation of Rs3 lakh. If the death occurred without the Rs 1 lakh being released to the patient, the kin can claim Rs 4 lakh. [Read More](#)

Experts urge govt to ban asbestos use

YANGON — Experts have called for a ban on the use of asbestos, a mineral that is found in building materials and known to cause a range of fatal lung diseases, including cancer. They also say regulations are needed to ensure it is handled correctly where present in existing buildings.

Asbestos was widely used in the construction sector in Myanmar until the 1990s, particularly in government buildings, and mining stopped only in around 2004. But while many countries have banned its use in recent decades, asbestos is still imported.

Mr. Ken Takahashi, a professor at the University of Occupational and Environmental Health (UOEH) in Kitakyushu City of Japan, said that a lack of records made it difficult to assess the scale of the problem.

He said Myanmar should introduce a complete ban on the use of asbestos. [Read More](#)

Press Release of the Association of the Relatives Of The victims (Afeva)

The Association of the Relatives of Asbestos Victims (AFEVA) of Casale Monferrato and Cavagnolo and the CGIL, CISL and UIL Trade unions wish to release the following statement with reference to the today's ruling by the Turin preliminary hearing magistrate (GUP) on the so called Eternit-bis trial:

We waited two years for this result and words cannot describe all the feeling the great effort with nothing to show for has left us with.

Hearings, debates, arguments and an (avoidable) one year break waiting for the decision of the Constitutional Court, more arguments, six hours in Chambers.. and the magistrates who seemed to never want to bring it to an end, ... has segmented the Eternit- bis trial all over Italy.

These are the reasons why we are deeply dissatisfied by the decision.

First of all because the charges have been reduced to manslaughter while the defendant's behavior was disconcertingly willful.

All the investigations, the witnesses at the first trial had proved it: clearly (but unfortunately not so to this Investigating magistrate). Thanks to his research centres, Stephan Schmidheiny was aware of the deaths asbestos would cause but continued as usual. In the name of profit, the Eternit owner treated the death of hundreds, thousands of people as a 'necessary cost'. Whatever the legal and juridical tradition, this is called willful murder.

The second but no less important reason is the implication of the statute of limitations: hundreds of cases awaiting justice, some even not even included in the first trial, have been washed away. For the umpteenth time, we are having to deal with the absurd (to say the least) consequences of the law on the statute of limitations which protects a criminal even after formal charges have been pressed against him, with no regard for the victims.

The hope is that by sharing the decision making among several courts, it will be faster and simpler to reach the truth, making it impossible for the defendant, Schmidheiny to paradoxically gain an advantage from the 'too many' deaths he caused. The recent Ivrea [Olivetti] case highlighted how the Italian courts are able to make better and reasonably swifter decisions for the victims with smaller numbers. In the coming months the many Eternit –bis trials will be a new test case for the Italian justice system.

In conclusion, if Afeva and the Unions had doubled their efforts after the 2014 Court of Cassation verdict, now given the number of Prosecutions we will have to at least increase them four-fold. We

will, we undertake to, although we are aware that not even these trials will offer justice to the new mesothelioma cases which unfortunately ravage Casale and its neighboring areas. Our aim, and therefore our commitment, is not to leave anyone behind.

It's going to be a long road and unfortunately as from today it branches off in many directions. Our hope (and our commitment) is that that all these separate cases may be united by a satisfactory verdict in the future.

For the Afeva Directive, Giuliana Busto, President of Afeva, November 29th 2016, (translation by V Franzinetti)

National workshop on asbestos-related diseases held in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The WHO Country Office in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Institute for Occupational Health (a WHO collaborating centre), hosted a national workshop on asbestos-related diseases (ARDs) on 12 October 2016 at the Medical Faculty of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje.

The workshop was organized alongside the 12th meeting of the South East European (SEE) Network on Workers' Health and the second national congress on occupational health.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- present proposals concerning the national plan for the elimination of ARDs (NPEAD) and identify further steps required for its successful implementation, in line with the national strategy for health and the Sustainable Development Goals;
- provide an update on the progress achieved in the region on the development of national programmes for the elimination of ARDs;

[Read More](#)

New tool to help communities manage naturally occurring asbestos

The NSW Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA) today launched a new educational video for people living and working in regional areas about the risks of naturally occurring asbestos.

HACA Chair Peter Dunphy said the video informs people what to look for and how to manage naturally occurring asbestos safely.

“Asbestos is naturally occurring and can typically be found in rock, sediment, or soil throughout regional NSW,” Mr. Dunphy said.

“It is generally discovered when building roads, working on construction sites and undertaking excavation activities. [Read More](#)

Occupational diseases threaten VN workers

VietNamNet Bridge – Vu Duc Kham, 43, was just coming out of anesthesia after seven hours of having his lungs washed at the Coal and Mineral Hospital in Ha Noi.

His lungs were found to be covered with silica after 17 years working underground as a coal miner in northern Quang Ninh Province. He did not know he contracted silicosis until he underwent a medical check-up at the beginning of this year.

“My lung washing liquid looks dark and scary,” he said.

According to Le Quang Chung, deputy director of the hospital, the Coal and Mineral Hospital has so far washed out the lungs of more than 2,000 people with silicosis, most of whom are workers in the coal and mineral mining sector.

“Silicosis-infected patients cannot recover perfectly from the infection as the result of pulmonary fibrosis. Without proper treatment, the disease might result in complications which reduce patients’ lifespan,” Chung said. [Read More](#)

Silicosis catches them young in the quarries

For 19-year-old Lakshmi (name changed), silicosis came at an early age.

“I used to break cobblestones here since I was a child. A few years ago, I started having breathing problems and was later diagnosed with silicosis,” she said.

During the six years she broke cobblestones along with other children, the threat of this incurable disease loomed, but she did not have a choice.

A fatal respiratory disease that results from breathing in silica dust from the mines and sandstone quarries, silicosis has been diagnosed in more than 5,000 workers in Rajasthan in the last four years by government medical boards.

Now, it threatens the children engaged in the task, some as young as six years old, in villages such as Budhpura, Dabi and Dhaneshwar in Bundi district. [Read More](#)

Silicosis and silicotuberculosis in India

Silicosis is a progressive interstitial lung disease, characterized by shortness of breath, cough, fever and bluish skin; it can present in three different forms: acute, accelerated and chronic.¹ It is caused by the lung tissue reaction to the inhalation of silica and occurs most commonly as an occupational disease of people working in the quarrying, manufacturing and building construction industries. Exposure to large amounts of free silica can go unnoticed because silica is odourless, non-irritant and does not cause any immediate health effects. As silicosis is incurable, clinical management includes removing the worker from the industry and giving symptomatic treatment. Public health goals are to detect early cases through monitoring of currently and formerly exposed workers, to establish surveillance programmes, to slow progression and to reduce disability.²

In 1995, the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization began a public awareness and prevention campaign to eliminate

silicosis from the world by 2030.³ Several countries – Brazil, Chile, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam – have established national programmes for the elimination of silicosis. [Read More](#)

Tibetans in anguish as Chinese mines pollute their sacred grasslands

JIAJIKA, CHINA — High in western China's Sichuan province, in the shadow of holy mountains, the Liqi River flows through a lush, grassy valley dotted with grazing yaks, small Tibetan villages and a Buddhist temple. But there's poison here.

A large lithium mine not only desecrates the sacred grasslands, villagers say, but spawns deadly pollution. The river used to be full of fish. Today, there are hardly any. Hundreds of yaks, the villagers say, have died in the past few years after drinking river water.

China's thirst for mineral resources — and its desire to exploit the rich deposits under the Tibetan plateau — have spread environmental pollution and anguish for many of the herders whose ancestors lived here for thousands of years. [Read More](#)

The Cobalt Pipeline

Tracing the path from deadly hand-dug mines in Congo to consumers' phones and laptops

The sun was rising over one of the richest mineral deposits on Earth, in one of the poorest countries, as Sidiki Mayamba got ready for work.

Mayamba is a cobalt miner. And the red-dirt savanna stretching outside his door contains such an astonishing wealth of cobalt and other minerals that a geologist once described it as a "scandale geologique."

This remote landscape in southern Africa lies at the heart of the world's mad scramble for cheap cobalt, a mineral essential to the rechargeable lithium-ion batteries that power smartphones, laptops and electric vehicles made by companies such as Apple, Samsung and major automakers.

But Mayamba, 35, knew nothing about his role in this sprawling global supply chain. He grabbed his metal shovel and broken-headed hammer from a corner of the room he shares with his wife and child. [Read More](#)

Child Labor in Cobalt Mines is a Stain on the Global Electronics Industry

A recent Washington Post story on the dangerous cobalt mines throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo — within which thousands of impoverished miners, including children, toil for long hours for a few dollars a day — follows a long trail of press reports and NGO studies. NGOs have documented such abuses for almost a year. But the report by Todd C. Frankel brings a renewed sense of urgency. It is time for manufacturers to stop passing the buck and take strong action on cleaning up their supply chains.

Cobalt is a shiny silver-grey metal that is also found in pigments that give paint and glass their stellar blue color. It has also become integral to the global electronics supply chain. The metal allows lithium-ion batteries to power much of what we use in our daily lives. [Read More](#)

Inside India's mines: Between Jan and June 2016, a death every third day

Just after the dawn on May 28, a mining accident at the Turamdih Uranium Mine near Jamshedpur, run by the state-owned Uranium Corporation of India Ltd (UCIL), killed three miners. 24-year-old Sonaram Kisku, a tribal contract worker, 42-year-old safety officer Surya Kant Singh and Milan Karmakar, 35, a general foreman died after they accidentally got buried under the wet radioactive slurry that they were reportedly clearing at a depth of over 250 metre in the Turamdih mine, 6 km from Jamshedpur in Jharkhand.

* Three workers of Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL) — T Hanmantha Rao and G Posham, both were timber men, and D Kistaiah, a mason — were crushed to death when a portion of the roof

of a structure inside the coal mine collapsed on them when they came in to drink water around mid-day on April 14. Of the four workers at the Shanthikhani main site near Mandamarri, one escaped with minor injuries. [Read More](#)

Jharkhand disaster: Miners say they warned bosses of imminent danger but were ordered back to work

Three months ago, workers at the Eastern Coalfields' Lalmatia site in Jharkhand noticed large fissures on the surface of material excavated from the open cast mine. Their supervisors tried to report these several times to site managers, they said, but they were ignored.

"Lallu Khan, our site in-charge, complained to the management four to five times the previous month that the earth was cracking, it was unsafe to work there," said Jamil Akhtar, who has been working as a supervisor since 2014. "But Pramod Kumar, the mine manager, Eastern Coalfields, made him restart work each time he tried to halt operations."

On December 29, workers on the afternoon shift were conducting operations on top of the 150-metre high pile of excavated earth – higher than a 30-storey building. A little after 7 pm, the ground slid 35 metres, taking the workers and their machines with it. Lallu Khan and the other 22 workers were crushed to death by boulders and massive mounds of debris. [Read More](#)

Miners breathe again after lung lavage

HÀ NỘI -- "I'm glad that the cough, as well as the coal dust, has gone after I underwent lung lavage", said Phạm Văn Thành, from Khe Chàm Coal company.

Like so many miners who receive treatment at the Coal and Mineral Hospital, Thành said he hoped it would help him return to a healthy life.

Being affected with pneumoconiosis, a lung disease, he has often suffered from breathing difficulties over the past four years.

"Although I had asked the company management if I could shift to other jobs to avoid frequent contact with coal dust, my cough hasn't stopped," he said, adding that he worked as a miner for 36 years.

"Thanks to lung lavage, my health became much better," Thành said with a bright smile.

Phan Văn Độ, another worker from Dương Huy Coal Company, said he used to suffer with a persistent cough due to inhaling coal dust. [Read More](#)

'Death by design': the human and environmental costs of electronics. Sign the petition to demand safer, more sustainable products!

Our addiction to smartphones, tablets and laptops is causing environmental degradation and health tragedies in communities all over the world. This is revealed in the recent documentary *Death by Design*, created by filmmaker Sue Williams. She traveled from China, to towns across America, to Ireland and Germany to investigate the dark side of the rapidly growing consumption of electronic devices.

Death by Design was recently screened at the Boston Environmental Film Festival, where four films on different environmental films were screened followed by Q&A sessions with filmmakers and experts. Ted Smith and Amanda Hawes, from the International Campaign for Responsible Technology (ICRT), participated in the discussion following the screening.

To coincide with the documentary screening, ICRT and GoodElectronics launched a petition urging tech brands to implement the Challenge to the Electronics Industry. The petition highlights the story of Yvette Flores, whose story is featured in the film. She was working at an electronics plant in Silicon Valley while pregnant. The toxic lead oxide to which she was exposed caused her son to be born with severe developmental disabilities. Yvette has since become an advocate for safer and more sustainable electronics manufacturing processes.

Oct 05, 2016, [Read More](#)

Samsung in flames

The spontaneous burning and explosion of Samsung phones has pushed the tech giant into what could be one of the most damaging and costliest product safety scandals in the electronics industry history. After weeks of consumers' phones catching fire whilst charging, which led to the aviation sector banning Galaxy Note 7 on airlines for fear of midflight explosions, the world's top mobile phone producer finally issued a global recall of the Galaxy Note 7 due to serious "safety risks" for consumers. Samsung products, however, have been causing serious health and safety risks for years to the workers who build the phones, according to members in the Good Electronics Network.

"When airlines ban the use of Samsung's Note 7 in the air, passengers get a sense of the fear that many Samsung workers face every day for their own health and safety," said Sharan Burrow, International Trade Union Confederation General Secretary. This safety scandal---which became headline news when a Samsung Note 7 exploded in a jeep setting it on fire---raises serious questions about Samsung's transparency, product safety, corporate policies and priorities. Alejandro González Oct 18, 2016 [Read More](#)

In Your Phone, In Their Air

A trace of graphite is in consumer tech. In these Chinese villages, it's everywhere. At night, the pollution around the village has an otherworldly, almost fairy-tale quality.

"The air sparkles," said Zhang Tuling, a farmer in a village in far northeastern China. *"When any bit of light hits the particles, they shine."*

By daylight, the particles are visible as a lustrous gray dust that settles on everything. It stunts the crops it blankets, begrimes laundry hung outside to dry and leaves grit on food. The village's well water has become undrinkable, too.

Beside the family home is a plot that once grew saplings, but the trees died once the factory began operating, said Zhang's husband, Yu Yuan.

"This is what we live with," Zhang said, slowly waving an arm at the stumps. [Read More](#)

How We Think about E-Waste Is in Need of Repair

From its crowded streets, Huaqiangbei, looks like any other crowded Chinese shopping district, packed with street side malls, snack vendors, and people in a sharp-elbowed hurry. But if you slip into any of these malls, it quickly becomes apparent that Huaqiangbei, located in the heart of Shenzhen, China's electronics design and manufacturing hub, is unlike anywhere else on Earth.

SEG Plaza, at the heart of the Huaqiangbei District, doesn't look like a paragon of green innovation when you walk into it. The main floor is packed with kiosks and stalls selling a riot of the sorts of things you find only inside your computers: cables, RAM, CPUs, and fans. They're spooled, hung, and displayed in cases, looking not unlike a high-end butcher shop that might specialize in snakes and other coiled objects. Look up, and you'll see nearly ten floors of similar vendors selling similar wares.

Who bothers coming here? The city's engineers and product designers in search of the pieces and parts necessary that can help them build tomorrow's - or today's electronics. Need an Intel 486 CPU from the early 1990s? Someone at SEG Plaza can get it for you in bulk. [Read More](#)

Resource Efficiency in the ICT Sector

Mobile electronic devices such as smartphones and tablet PCs have become an integral part of our daily lives and are used for virtually all aspects of modern communication and information sharing. While consumers and societies embrace the advantages of these modern information and communication technologies, NGO reports and other surveys reveal devastating environmental and social practices in the mining, manufacturing and disposal of mobile electronic devices. This includes UN-reports of warlords financing their existence with mining and trading of "high-tech minerals"; reports from devastating practices in cobalt-, tin-, gold-, palladium- and rare earth mining; sub-standard working conditions in

manufacturing and assembly and irregular recycling and disposal in third-world countries. In addition to these reports, it is well known that some production processes, such the microchip manufacture consume huge amounts of energy, water and chemicals. Moreover, electronic devices also contain substances which have adverse impacts on human and environmental health if not properly managed at the end of the product lifetime. [Read More](#)

How China Built 'iPhone City' With Billions in Perks for Apple's Partner

ZHENGZHOU, China — A vast, boxy customs center acts as a busy island of commerce deep in central China.

Government officers, in sharply pressed uniforms, race around a maze of wooden pallets piled high with boxes — counting, weighing, scanning and approving shipments. Unmarked trucks stretch for more than a mile awaiting the next load headed for Beijing, New York, London and dozens of other destinations.

The state-of-the-art facility was built several years ago to serve a single global exporter: Apple, now the world's most valuable company and one of China's largest retailers.

The well-choreographed customs routine is part of a hidden bounty of perks, tax breaks and subsidies in China that supports the world's biggest iPhone factory, according to confidential government records reviewed by The New York Times, as well as more than 100 interviews with factory workers, logistics handlers, truck drivers, tax specialists and current and former Apple executives. [Read More](#)

Hearing Under Gun Shadow - NGT nixes green nod to UP plant

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has set aside environmental clearance for a 1320MW thermal power plant in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh, for concealing important facts and data about the project site. The clearance was granted on incomplete information, the tribunal said.

NGT also directed Meja Urja Nigam Private Limited -a joint venture between the National Thermal Power Corporation and the Uttar Pradesh Rajkiya Vidhut Nigam Limited -to restore the land to its pre-construction original condition. The NGT judgment, published on December 22, observed that videography has revealed that the public hearing for the project was conducted in the presence of "gun toting men". In its defence, Meja Urja Nigam's lawyer said that Dadri Khurd village, where the public hearing took place, was situated in a "backward forest area" and it was "not unusual" to find locals moving with guns. NGT in its judgment, however, said "arms like guns are bound to strike fear in the hearts of men around and dominate their free will". [Read More](#)

FIFA faces legal challenge over Qatar migrant workers

Fifa is facing legal action in the Swiss courts over its alleged complicity in the mistreatment of migrant workers in Qatar ahead of the 2022 World Cup, the Guardian can reveal.

Since Fifa voted in December 2010 to hold the World Cup in the tiny Gulf state, Qatar has faced intense criticism over the plight of an army of migrant workers that soared to 1.7 million as the country embarked on a construction spree to build the stadiums and infrastructure required.

But the legal challenge, brought by the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (FNV) on behalf of a Bangladeshi migrant worker called Nadim Sharaful Alam, is the first time that Fifa has been made directly accountable in the Swiss courts. [Read More](#)

Supreme Court gives Kerala 90 days to compensate victims of Endosulfan poisoning

The Supreme Court on Tuesday gave the Kerala government three months to disburse Rs 500 crore as compensation for over 5,000 persons who suffered from various deformities, health complications and lost family members after using Endosulfan pesticides in the state.

A bench headed by Chief Justice JS Khehar also asked the state to consider setting up a centre to provide lifelong medical treatment to all the victims. It hoped the government would look into the feasibility of making such a facility available.

[Read More](#)

Health hazards shorten industrial careers: study

VietNamNet Bridge – Many industrial workers face early retirement caused by occupational health conditions, according to a National Institute of Labour Protection study.

Laborers, particularly female workers, at industrial and export and processing zones often retire at just 30-40 years old when confronted with diseases caused by workplace conditions, the Lao dong (Labour) newspaper reported.

A recent study from the National Institute of Labour Protection under the Viet Nam Labour Federation revealed that diseases such as blood shortage, blood sugar reduction and otorhinolaryngology diseases are common diseases for workers.

The report determined that only 5.2 per cent of surveyed workers were ranked as having very good health, while 39.5 per cent of them are in moderately good health conditions.

It said that improper working conditions, high working intensity and poor living conditions are key factors affecting workers' health. [Read More](#)

Seeding Doubt - How Self-Appointed Guardians of "Sound Science" Tip the Scales toward Industry

At a time when public mistrust of science runs high, and non-experts are hard-pressed to separate fact from industry-sponsored spin, Sense About Science, a charity based in London with an affiliate in New York, presents itself as a trustworthy arbiter. The organization purports to help the misinformed public sift through alarmist claims about public health and the environment by directing journalists, policymakers, and others to vetted sources who can explain the evidence behind

debates about controversial products like e-cigarettes and flame retardants.

One reason the public is so confused, suggested Tracey Brown, the group's director, in a recent Guardian op-ed, is that the media feeds alarmism by focusing on who sponsors scientific studies, rather than asking more important questions about whether the research is sound. Even when there is no evidence of bias, Brown contended, journalists attack industry-funded research, running exposés on subjects such as fracking, genetically modified plants, and sugar. Brown lamented that what she called "the 'who funded it?' question" is too often asked by "people with axes to grind." [Read More](#)

Lethal Legacy- General Electric's Peterborough plant was a symbol of opportunity for generations of workers — but did it also make them sick?

Despite working at the plant since he was 16, Ed Condon carried himself with a gentleness factory life didn't afford him — never swearing, smoking or drinking. Retirement, his family hoped, would finally heal the bone-deep cracks in his hands, stop the nosebleeds he stubbornly brushed off. There would be more twilight drives down River Rd. with his wife, more rambles in the woods with his three grandchildren.

But Ed Condon always believed the chemicals would kill him first.

In the end, his family says, he was right.

Where he once dreamed of more woodland walks, a simple cross now commemorates him.

"He had such amazing integrity and honour. And he was such an honest man," says his daughter Cindy Crossley, who lost her father to an inoperable brain tumour in 2012. "He was my everything." [Read More](#)

Let's stop the manipulation of science

Around a hundred scientists ask Europe and the international community to act against endocrine

disrupting chemicals. They condemn the use of strategies for manufacturing doubt employed by industries in the climate change battle.

For decades now, science has come under attack whenever its discoveries raised questions about commercial activities and vested interests. Scientific evidence has been willfully distorted by individuals denying the science and actors sponsored by industry interests creating the false impression of a controversy. This manufacturing of doubt has delayed protective actions, with dangerous consequences for the health of people and the environment.

The “manufacturers of doubt” work across several areas, including the tobacco and petrochemical industries, and the agro-chemical sector. The petrochemical industry alone is the source of thousands of toxic chemicals and contributes to the massive increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide that drives climate change. [Read More](#)

Class-action lawsuit filed against Johns Hopkins Hospital over black lung program

One of America’s most renowned medical centers — The Johns Hopkins Hospital — intentionally defrauded hundreds of sick coal miners out of compensation and health benefits while pocketing large sums from coal companies, according to a class action lawsuit filed by the families of two coal miners who died of black lung disease.

The lawsuit, which also targets a longtime Hopkins doctor, draws heavily from revelations in an investigative report by the Center for Public Integrity, in partnership with ABC News, about a unit of radiologists who for decades provided coal companies X-ray readings that almost always said the miner didn't have black lung, helping the companies avoid paying benefits under a program administered by the federal government.

In response to a request for comment, a Johns Hopkins spokesperson said, "We are reviewing the complaint." [Read More](#)

India to halt all coal plant construction by 2022

Climate home report's that a draft plan by India's government suggests the country will cease construction of all new coal plants by 2022 at the latest. Basically, that means no new coal plants after the 50GW already under construction are completed. Alongside the admission that no new coal plants are needed beyond those already underway, the plan also calls for the addition of 100GW of solar and wind—a figure that would double the country's current renewable energy capacity.

If all this pans out, that's an extremely big deal and would put India way ahead of schedule of its Paris Agreement climate commitments. Under that deal, India pledged to meet 40% of its electricity needs from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030, whereas this plan delivers 53% non-fossil fuel sources as early as 2027. As with any such commitment from a nation this size, the move will also have significance well beyond its borders. [Read More](#)

Systematic Review of Screening and Surveillance Programs to Protect Workers from Nanomaterial's

Background - Screening and surveillance approaches for workers exposed to nanomaterial's could aid in early detection of health effects, provide data for epidemiological studies and inform action to decrease exposure. The aim of this review is to identify such screening and surveillance approaches, in order to extract available data regarding (i) the studies that have successfully been implemented in present day, (ii) identification of the most common and/or toxic nano-related health hazards for workers and (iii) possible exposure surveillance markers. This review contributes to the current understanding of the risk associated with nanomaterials by determining the knowledge gap and making recommendations based on current findings.

Results - Initially 92 studies were identified, from which 84 full texts were assessed for eligibility. Seven studies met all the inclusion criteria, i.e.

those performed in Taiwan, Korea, Czech Republic and the US. Of these, six compared health indicators between exposed and unexposed workers and one study described a surveillance program. All studies were at a high risk of bias. Workers were exposed to a mix of nanomaterials in three studies, carbon-based nanomaterials in two studies, nano-silver in one study and nano-titanium oxide in the other study. Two studies did not find a difference in biomarkers between exposed and unexposed workers. In addition, differences in early effects on pulmonary function or neurobehavioral tests were not observed. One study found an increased prevalence of allergic dermatitis and “sneezing” in the exposed group. [Read More](#)

Low levels of manganese in welding fumes linked to neurological problems

Welders exposed to airborne manganese at estimated levels below federal occupational safety standards exhibit neurological problems similar to Parkinson’s disease, according to new research at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. Further, the more they are exposed to manganese-containing welding fumes, the faster the workers’ signs and symptoms worsen.

The findings, published Dec. 28 in *Neurology*, suggest that current safety standards may not adequately protect welders from the dangers of the job.

“We found that chronic exposure to manganese-containing welding fumes is associated with progressive neurological symptoms such as slow movement and difficulty speaking,” said Brad A. Racette, MD, a professor of neurology and the study’s senior author. “The more exposure you have to welding fumes, the more quickly those symptoms progress over time.” [Read More](#)

It’s So Hard to Make Blue Jeans without Nasty Chemicals

What’s in your jeans? A rogue’s gallery of unpronounceable chemicals whose effects on humans are suspect.

Perfluorochemicals, phthalates and azo dyes are among the substances that are widespread in making clothes. Under pressure from consumers demanding safer alternatives to harmful chemicals, American companies including Levi Strauss & Co. are taking a more European approach. The European Union has banned or restricted more than 1,000 chemicals; in the U.S., fewer than 50.

Consumer demand for safe products has global companies scrambling for greener ingredients, but obstacles are daunting. Suppliers are often reluctant to share their formulations, buyers balk at higher costs, and in some cases cost-effective safer substitutes simply aren’t available. [Read More](#)

Report on the recognition of MSDs as occupational diseases in 10 European countries

A report published on 20 October by the French organisation Eurogip reviews the current situation regarding the recognition of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) as occupational diseases in 10 European countries*.

The study reveals major differences in the number of MSDs reported by employees as occupational diseases: France, Belgium and Denmark boast high ratios per 100 000 insured workers (463, 263 and 257 respectively); Italy has a median ratio (150); Germany, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland have the lowest ratios (between 23 and 13 reported cases). [Read More](#)

Shift Work and Sleep

In today’s competitive economy, an increasing number of U.S. businesses operate to meet customer demand for 24/7 services. These around-the-clock operations are required in order to maintain a place in the global market where transactions with clients, suppliers, and colleagues can span multiple time zones. Consequently, for many men and women, the workday no longer fits the traditional 9-to-5 model. They may clock in at midnight and out at 8 in the morning, or they may follow a rotating shiftwork schedule consisting of periodic day shifts, evening shifts, and night shifts.

Since our body clocks typically are set for a routine of daytime activity and nighttime sleep, working irregular shifts or night hours can be associated with disrupted or insufficient sleep. In turn, drowsiness, fatigue, and circadian rhythm disruption from too little sleep or interrupted sleep are associated with risks for dysfunction of the immune system, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic health problems. As nontraditional schedules become more common, it becomes increasingly important to understand who may be at risk of unintended job-related outcomes, and why. From that knowledge, employers, workers, and practitioners can better craft practical, effective interventions. [Read More](#)

How the Chemical Industry Joined the Fight against Climate Change

It might seem surprising to find the world's chemical companies on the front lines of preventing climate change, fighting to disrupt their own industries.

But in a sweeping accord reached on Saturday in Kigali, Rwanda, companies including Honeywell and Chemours, a DuPont spinoff, were among the most active backers of a move away from a profitable chemical that has long been the foundation for the fast-growing air-conditioning and refrigeration business.

The companies were driven less by idealism than by intense competition, and a bet that they could create more environmentally friendly alternatives.

Still, some environmentalists say the aggressive move away from hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, provides a template for other industries to follow. [Read More](#)

Working life in latest corporate supply chain "Promised Land" – Vietnam

I have just returned from a whirlwind trip in Vietnam inspecting a Korean-owned garment factory complex of 10,000 workers that produces university logo apparel for Nike and clothes for a dozen brand-name companies like Pink and Ralph

Lauren's Polo. Lots of problems with the working conditions and a non-existent occupational health and safety program – more to come later on all that. We conducted our inspection on behalf of the Washington-based Workers Rights Consortium.

But with wages in China becoming "too expensive," Vietnam has become the new destination for many brands in apparel, electronics and other consumer goods. According to a breathless article in The Economist in August, "Foreign direct investment in Vietnam hit a record in 2015, and has surged again this year. Deals reached by \$11.3 billion in the first half of 2016, up by 105% from the same period last year." [Read More](#)

Minimum wage setting, implementation and working conditions in the formal and informal sectors of the garment industry in Pakistan

This report, drafted in 2015, analyses the legal and policy frameworks and the implementation of minimum wages in Pakistan, with a particular focus on the textile and garment sectors. The report has been undertaken by the ILO's Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains: A Programme for Action in Asia and the Garment Sector. It also contributed to and complements the ILO's work on minimum wage setting across the region...

[See pg. 62 for section on role of "mega suppliers"]...Largest of all is Li & Fung, which has been called "the most important company that most American shoppers have never heard of". The company considers itself global supply chain managers that coordinate "dispersed manufacturing" – a term it coined. It is also known as an apparel sourcing agent and a mega-supplier. Essentially, Li & Fung acts as a global coordinator: they link companies together to create ephemeral supply chains that exist for only as long as the order is being filled. The company has a turnover of \$19.3 billion and operates in 40 countries. [also refers to Yun Yuen and Success Apparel]... Author: ILO, Published on: 18 October 2016; [Read More](#)

The Ghosts of Gadani

The Burns Centre at Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK) is no place for weak hearts.

On the morning of Tuesday, November 1, some 10 men lay in the various ward rooms of the hospital, asphyxiated, fighting for every breath that they could take, struggling to hang on to their lives. They had all been rushed some 57km from Gadani, the world's third largest shipbreaking yard at Gadani.



All had been hired just two days earlier, on arrival of the 24,000-ton oil tanker MT Aces. All had received 60 to 100 per cent burns; none were expected to live. Most of them had been kept on life-support. Some were heavily sedated. [Read More](#)

Cancer all-clear for night work based on 'bad science', warn scientists

It was this year's big workplace health story. A major Oxford University study published online on 6 October 2016 concluded the classification of night work as a cause of breast cancer 'is no longer justified'.

It was good news. A BBC headline blared "Breast cancer risk 'not increased' by night shifts"; the Daily Mail chipped in with "Working night shifts does NOT raise the risk of breast cancer." And Cancer Research UK (CRUK), which co-financed the study, said it hoped the conclusion "reassures women who work night shifts."

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), another co-founder, also welcomed the 'vital' study. It was one

occupational health priority that could be shoved down the to-do list. [Read More](#)

Tinnitus too common among noise-exposed workers

Fifteen per cent of workers who have been exposed to occupational noise at some point in their careers have tinnitus, a debilitating often high-pitched ringing in the ears, found a new study from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). This is compared to five per cent of workers who have never been exposed to occupational noise.

"Tinnitus is prevalent and very common; especially common among noise-exposed workers," says Elizabeth Masterson, lead author and epidemiologist at NIOSH in Cincinnati. "Hearing loss prevention and early detection and intervention to stop the hearing loss is critical." [Read More](#)

Workers for McDonald's in Malaysia say they were victims of labour exploitation

Workers at McDonald's restaurants in Malaysia claim they earned as little as 60p an hour and were cheated out of months of salary, a Guardian investigation has found. The workers allege they were subjected to months – and in some cases years – of exploitation by Human Connection HR, a labour supply company contracted by McDonald's in Malaysia to provide workers to its restaurants in Kuala Lumpur.

The workers, who come from Nepal, say they had their passports confiscated, in contravention of Malaysian law.

They claim they were deceived about their wages and were charged additional fees when they arrived in Malaysia, resulting in a 25% deduction in their basic monthly salary. [Read More](#)

COPD, a disease of the non-smokers too

PUNE: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) has become the fifth deadliest disease across the globe. COPD is always known to be

a smoker's disease. Now, non-smoking COPD has now become one of the major issues in developing countries, say experts.

Chest physician Nitin Abhyankar said, "Lower living standards in a country like India have claimed many lives due to COPD. It is mostly deadly, because we cannot identify the disease and treat it at the right time. Especially when the patient is non-smoking, the diagnosis takes longer."

Apart from bio mass fuels, the current condition of air pollution has also made COPD a major concern in the urban areas. In terms of air pollution, 10 of the 20 most polluted cities in world are from India. In a survey by the Central Pollution Control Board, lung function reduced in 40.3% individuals in Delhi, as compared with 20.1% in control group. [Read More](#)

Publication Highlights Economic Toll of Workplace Tobacco Use

An info graphic published online by the CDC Foundation draws attention to the economic effects of workplace tobacco use, which costs the U.S. economy approximately \$300 billion every year in direct medical care and lost productivity, according to a recent study. The info graphic is one of several resources for employers collected in the latest issue of Business Pulse, a publication that focuses on how occupational health and safety issues affect businesses.

In addition to the health-related costs, the info graphic quantifies the economic effects of smoking on infrastructure, such as additional maintenance costs and higher insurance premiums due to increased risks of fire. Sources cited by the info graphic estimate that annual maintenance costs at workplaces where smoking is allowed are around \$700 greater per 1,000 square feet than at workplaces that do not allow smoking. [Read More](#)

In Brazil, Workers' Rights Are Minced In the Meat Industry

The Brazilian multinational JBS is the biggest meat producing and processing company in the world. Created in the 1950s, in the centre of Brazil, it now operates in 150 countries. Behind this success

however are regular attacks on workers' rights and worker safety, condemned by the labour inspectorate and the country's trade unions.

In January 2015 the Mato Grosso Labour Ministry took legal action against JBS for making its employees work longer hours than allowed by law, and in unhealthy conditions, in its slaughterhouses. Staff complained of poor hygiene linked to the presence of large quantities of blood and viscera that could spread disease. [Read More](#)

EPA wants to restrict sometimes-deadly paint stripper chemical

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency wants to largely ban the use of a chemical in paint strippers that has killed dozens of people, asphyxiating some and triggering heart attacks in others.

The agency announced the proposed rule today, a move that followed pleas from public-health officials to do something about methylene chloride, the chemical in many of the paint removers on home improvement store shelves. Until last year, the cans didn't include warnings about the risk of death from use in enclosed spaces, which is where people have typically died amid its fumes — in bathrooms, basements, tanks and even a squash court. [Read More](#)

At soaring rate, Nepalese seeking jobs abroad come home dead

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — A tiny young woman crouches just outside the airport, crying softly into her thin shawl. It's cold out, but her sleeping toddler is heavy and warm in her arms.

Travelers swarm around: Himalayan trekkers load up expedition backpacks. A Chinese tour group boards a bus. A dozen flight attendants in crisp blue suits and heels click by.

Saro Kumari Mandal, 26, covers her head completely, a bundle of grief.

Hundreds of young Nepali men excitedly wave final goodbyes to friends and family. On this day 1,500 will fly out of the Kathmandu airport bound for jobs mostly in Malaysia, Qatar or Saudi Arabia — jobs

that are urgently needed by the people of this desperately poor country. [Read More](#)

Killer Clothing Was All the Rage In the 19th Century

While sitting at home one afternoon in 1861, poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's wife, Fanny, caught fire. Her burns were so severe that she died the next day. According to her obituary, the fire had started when "a match or piece of lighted paper caught her dress."

At the time, this wasn't a peculiar way to die. In the days when candles, oil lamps, and fireplaces lit and heated American and European homes, women's wide hoop skirts and flowing cotton and tulle dresses were a fire hazard, unlike men's tighter-fitting wool clothes.

It wasn't just dresses: Fashion at this time was riddled with dangers. Socks made with aniline dyes inflamed men's feet and gave garment workers sores and even bladder cancer. Lead makeup damaged women's wrist nerves so that they couldn't raise their hands. [Read More](#)

Even after the Rana Plaza disaster it is hard to get international clothing brands to do the right thing

A new report by four leading workers' rights group shows just how hard it is to get international clothing brands to fix problems in their global supply chains despite the fact that 1,100 workers were killed in an instant in an unsafe garment factory in Bangladesh.

Three and a half years after the Rana Plaza building collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh, five major clothing brands – Walmart, Gap, VF, Target and Hudson's Bay – were found to have continuing hazards and dangerous delays in fixing them. [Read More](#)

Report 'Fabric of Slavery': Large-scale child slavery in Indian

spinning mills making yarn for international garment brands

New research by the India Committee of Netherlands (ICN) shows that various forms of modern slavery, including child slavery, are found in more than 90% of the spinning mills in South India. These spinning mills produce yarn for India, Bangladeshi and Chinese garment factories that produce for the Western market.

The report 'Fabric of Slavery' exposes the scale on which young girls and women are enslaved by employers who withhold their wages or lock them up in company-controlled hostels. They work long hours, face sexual harassment and do not even earn the minimum wage. Gerard Oonk, director of ICN: 'We have raised the issue for five years now, but even to us the scale of this problem came as a shock'. Read the [full press release](#) and the report Fabric of Slavery.

'BRANDED CHILDHOOD'- Garment brands contribute to low wages, long working hours, child labour and school dropouts in Bangladesh

The Hague, 24 January 2017 - The average worker in the Bangladeshi garment industry is getting paid only one third of what is considered to be a living wage.[1] Low wages and long working hours have been found to play a key role in parents' decisions to take their children out of school and let them work in various jobs.[2] Many international garment brands, including but not only H&M, C&A, Esprit, Marks & Spencer, GAP, VF Corporation and Kmart Australia, contribute to this situation.

These are important findings of the report Branded Childhood that is published by Stop Child Labour and SOMO today. Read the [full press release](#) and the [report](#)

ANROEV Secretariat

Environics Trust
Khasra Number 177, Neb Sarai, IGNOU Road,
New Delhi – 110068, India
Email – anroev@gmail.com
URL - www.anroev.org

