

Dear readers,

there are tons of fashion & sustainability news in the media:

- The German consumer magazine Stiftung Warentest examined outdoor clothing and found that working conditions are miserable. Also Oekom Research, an agency that rates the sustainability of industry sectors', published an interesting rating of the textile industry: overall the sector has really bad marks, as compared to other sectors – there still is a lot to do.
- Help might be provided by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, which published its Higgs Index, a collection of indicators for measuring environmental impacts of textile factories.
- The German consumer magazine Ökotest critically examined Fair Trade – and the Kölner Stadtanzeiger had a very critical look at Fair Trade cotton.
- Wages are still a hot topic in many Asian countries. Interestingly, it is predicted that labour costs in China might be as high as in the US in 5 years time – whereas other articles deny this hypothesis. The FWF is launching a project with some brands from the European Outdoor Group to tackle the living wage issue.
- The large German newspapers *Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Die Welt* had a closer look at Primark, which starts its expanding tour in Germany: One heading reads: „buy – wear – trash“.
- NICE Fashion Summit now published all speeches online and a new „Scharzbuch Baumwolle“ was published.
- And many reports about Olympia and sweatshops.

Kind regards

NETZWERK FAIRE MODE & **KERN KOMMUNIKATION**

1. WORKING CONDITIONS

Nike gegen Adidas - Olympisch schwitzen im Sweatshop-Shirt

Der Standard, 26.7.2012

Olympia 2012 in London wird als besonders fair gepriesen. Die Zustände bei der Textilproduktion wird dabei wenig beachtet ... Der Frage, wo Sporttextilien dieser Olympischen Spiele gefertigt wurden - und unter welchen Bedingungen -, ist die Clean-Clothes-Kampagne in ihrer Studie "Fair Games?" nachgegangen.

175 Arbeiterinnen und Arbeiter von zehn Fabriken, die insgesamt 32.750 Personen beschäftigen, wurden von Oktober bis Dezember 2011 im asiatischen Raum interviewt. Acht dieser zehn Fabriken stellten Produkte für die Olympischen Spiele her - und lieferten an Unternehmen wie Adidas, North Face, Nike oder Speedo. ...

... "Geld ist nicht das Problem der internationalen Markenfirmen", lautet auch die Analyse von Michaela Königshofer, Leiterin der Clean-Clothes-Kampagne. "Es wird aber auf unfaire Art und Weise verteilt. Unternehmen investieren das Maximum in die Präsentation der Marke, jedoch das Minimum in die Produktion der Ware. Für die Näherinnen und Näher bedeutet das ein Leben in Armut trotz täglicher Schufferei."...

Jackenhersteller zahlen oft nur miserable Löhne

Die Welt, 26.7.2012

Dumpinglöhne und Mängel beim Arbeitsschutz: Laut Stiftung Warentest drücken sich Hersteller von Outdoor-Mode vor der sozialen Verantwortung in den Produktionsländern. Es gibt aber auch Ausnahmen.

... In puncto Unternehmensverantwortung gaben die Tester 8 von 17 Textilherstellern lediglich die Note "ausreichend". Zwei weitere Marken, nämlich Maier Sports und The North Face, wurden mit "mangelhaft" bewertet. Alle untersuchten Jacken seien in Asien, meist in China, gefertigt worden.

In erster Linie bemängelt die Stiftung, dass dort von vielen Anbietern Löhne gezahlt werden, "die kaum zum Leben reichen". Überstunden seien an der Tagesordnung. In einem untersuchten Fall hätten fast alle Arbeiter zusätzlich zu ihrer 48-Stunden-Woche 87,5 Überstunden gemacht statt der gesetzlich erlaubten 36 Stunden. ...

Sweatshops Are Fashion's Dirty Little Secret. But They Don't Exist in L.A. -- Do They?

LA Weekly, 26.7.2012

... Sweatshops are fashion's dirty little secret. For years they supplied the majority of the clothes being manufactured worldwide. But the answer to whether they still exist in Los Angeles depends on whom you ask.

And to ask in a room full of manufacturers is to insult the bride at her own wedding: uncomfortable, vaguely repulsed expressions all around. In fact, the California Fashion Association started 17 years ago because of sweatshops. Specifically, the El Monte crisis of 1995. ...

Olympic mascots made for Locog in Chinese 'sweatshop' factories – report **guardian.co.uk, 24.7.2012**

Olympics merchandise for London 2012 is being produced in sweatshop conditions with staff earning as little as £6 a day, despite organisers promising to clean up its supply chain, according to a new report.

Activists in China spoke to dozens of factory workers and discovered staff were forced to work up to 120 hours overtime a month, nearly three times the legal limit.

... The report added that a sustainable and ethical sourcing code issued by Locog in 2008 was inadequate. It said: "The rampant rights violations reveal that Locog codes are really no more than lip service with no commitment to the enforcement of labour rights standards.

"The IOC should establish a policy and action plan for future Olympic Games ... adopt a code of conduct for the suppliers which should include terms like living wages, freedom of association and the right to remedy."

Child labour: A necessary evil? **Deccan Herald, 7.8.2012**

... 'The Economist' carried an article 'Sweating for Fashion' which says "Nike, for example, has been accused of using child labour in Cambodia; Adidas of using prison labour in China; Benetton of using child workers in Turkey." Where is the public outrage, where are the tears by human rights organisations in India and abroad for this kind of inhumanity? Why cry foul only at those children in the fireworks factories of Sivakasi; the diamond polishing factories of Surat, the silk reeling yards in Karnataka or the carpet weaving godowns of Punjab? They have made world headlines (and blockbuster films too) even though it has not reduced the sale of crackers or diamonds or silk or carpets in countries which condemn the practice. ...

... The problem of child labour is a complex issue, something that cannot be solved through legislation or with simplistic solutions. It is driven mainly out of poverty and in societies where women have limited choices in questions of marriage or family planning. Desperate for money, and unable to feed their families, they sometimes inevitably place their offspring in bonded labour or worse. The next best thing they can do is to hand over the elder siblings to factories, hotels or even homes where they are assured of at least one proper meal every day. ...

2. WAGES

FWF launches living wage study with the European Outdoor Group **FWF Blog, 27.7.2012**

... The Fair Wear Foundation-European Outdoor Group Living Wage Study is designed to address one of the main questions – What is the relationship between product pricing and wage levels. The study will examine what happens to prices of typical products when wages are increased to meet a variety of living wage benchmarks.

... The FWF member companies that will participate in the project are: Deuter Sport and Vaude Sport (Germany), Haglöfs (Sweden), KTC Limited (Hong Kong), KJUS, Mountain Force and ODLO Sports (Switzerland).

Comment: Apparel costing for a living wage **Just Style, Doug Miller, 23.7.2012**

The vexed question of a 'living wage' continues to tax some of the major apparel retailers and brand owners. But how can a sourcing company calculate a living wage, let alone ensure its implementation? Doug Miller, Professor (Emeritus) of Worker Rights in Fashion, has some suggestions.

... However these are in essence all benchmarking tools, and none of them actually provides a sourcing company with a method for the actual implementation of a 'living wage' increase. ...

Two see the first three articles in this discussion on the cost of labour, follow the headline links below:

- **COMMENT: IT'S NOT ABOUT THE COST OF LABOUR**

- **COMMENT: WHY IT IS ALL ABOUT THE COST OF LABOUR!**
- **COMMENT: CAUGHT IN THE COST OF LABOUR TRAP**

Garment workers demand basic salary at Tk 7,000

Daily Star Business Report, 26.7.2012

A platform of garments workers' associations yesterday submitted a demand to the minimum wage board to raise the minimum basic salary of the workers to Tk 7,000 from Tk 3,000 now.

... The major expenses include house rent at Tk 3,000, daily commodities at Tk 5,100, medical and transportation costs at Tk 1,100, children's education expenses at Tk 1,500 and others Tk 2,250, they said. ...

China will maintain labor cost advantage in foreseeable future

People's Daily, 2.8.2012

It is an exaggeration to say China's labor costs will catch up with the U.S. and European countries in short term.

Certain foreign chambers of commerce and financial institutions recently published reports saying that many foreign companies have felt pressures from increasing labor costs in China, and are considering relocating their production facilities to certain Southeast Asian countries where labor costs are much lower. The French bank Natixis forecast in a recent study that labor costs in China would match those of the United States within four years, catching up with eurozone countries in five years and with Japan in seven years.

China labour costs like US ,within years'

9news, 29.7.2012

Rapid wage increases are threatening China's competitiveness, but improved productivity and other advantages mean it will continue to attract investors, analysts say.

Labour costs in China would match those of the United States within four years, catching up with eurozone countries in five years and with Japan in seven, the French bank Natixis forecast in a study last month.

China "will soon no longer be a competitive place for production given the strong rise in the cost of production", the bank said. ...

Adidas pullout highlights rising labor costs

Shanghai Daily, 25.7.2012

SPORTSWEAR giant Adidas last week confirmed the closure of its only wholly owned factory in China, citing a "realignment of its global resources" but more likely signaling the reality of rising labor costs on the Chinese mainland.

The German-based athletics sportswear company said it would shutter manufacturing operations in the city of Suzhou in Jiangsu Province in October, affecting 160 employees.

Adidas said it will continue to source goods from about 300 factories across China.

... About 80 percent of 1,856 export companies surveyed by the General Administration of Customs late last year reported a significant rise in costs.

The monthly minimum wage in China rose from US\$59 in 2005 to US\$160 in 2011, exceeding wages in Vietnam and Indonesia. Does this signal the demise of China as the "world's factory?" ...

Mei Xinyu, a researcher at the Ministry of Commerce, said there's no reason to look askance at the Adidas withdrawal from Chinese manufacturing. Rather, it is an acknowledgement on their part, that it's cheaper to source products in China than to manufacture themselves. ...

Increase in minimum wages for 41 industries proposed

The News (Pakistan), 29.7.2012

The Sindh Minimum Wages Board on Friday proposed an increase in wages proportionally by 14.2 percent with effect from July 1, 2012, of all other categories of workers.

The categories include skilled, semi-skilled and highly skilled workers employed in 41 categories of industries as specified in Sindh Labour Department's notifications numbers (SO(L-II)-13-4/78 dated 15th Nov, 2010 and SO(L-II)-13-22-2007 dated 13th Jan, 2012).

3. ENVIRONMENT

Clothing and footwear industry races towards sustainability

BusinessGreen Com, 26.7.2012

New industry body-backed index will allow companies to track environmental impact of their products down the value chain

Nike, Marks & Spencer, Levi's, and Walmart are just some of the high profile brands to confirm they are backing a new tool designed to measure sustainability across the clothing and footwear supply chain.

The Higg Index is set to be unveiled today by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), a trade body made up of brands, retailers, manufacturers, NGOs, academics and government representatives, which claims to represent more than a third of the global apparel and footwear industries. ...

Round Table on Organic Cotton – blog discussion

TE Blog, Liesl Truscott, 3.8.2012

To build on the momentum set by the webinar we thought we would keep the discussion active through the Farm Blog. Please feel free to write directly into the comments box at the end of this page or send your contribution to us at farm@textileexchange.org and we will post it for you.

Our first blog comes from Dr. Monika Messmer, a plant breeding expert and organic specialist at FiBL in Switzerland. Monika is working closely with organic cotton growers in India and has experience in participatory seed programs. She has put forward the following comments about the issues we raised in the webinar - and I believe Monika's contribution makes a very good start to an open and active discussion on the challenges we face and how the Round Table holds so much promise for a truly multi-stakeholder approach to finding workable solutions. ...

Nachhaltigkeit der Textilindustrie Textilindustrie vernachlässigt Umweltschutz

FR, 25.7.2012

Die Textilindustrie bleibt eine ökologische Sünderbranche. Die Firmen zahlen Hungerlöhne, erwarten Überstunden und nutzen giftige Chemikalien. Umdenken Fehlanzeige. Eine Studie identifiziert ausgerechnet die Konzerne Nike, Adidas und Puma als Vorreiter. ...

Ratingsieger mit C+ ist der weltgrößte Sportartikler Nike, gefolgt von Adidas mit derselben Note. Das gilt auch für Puma auf Rang fünf. In anderen Branchen erreichen die Besten B-Noten. Das zeigt, dass in der Textilindustrie noch einiges im Argen liegt.

An der Tagesordnung seien ungebrochen Löhne unterhalb des Existenzminimums, extreme Überstunden, giftige Chemikalien speziell in chinesischen Textilfabriken und enorm hoher Wasserverbrauch, kritisiert Oekom. ...

Zero discharge progress criticised

Ecotextile 31.7.2012

Greenpeace has given a luke-warm reception to the latest update on the plans by leading apparel brands for zero discharge of harmful chemicals from their textile supply chains by 2020.

Leading apparel brands such as Nike, adidas, Puma, G-Star, C&A, H&M, Li Ning and now also Levi Strauss have updated the textile industry on their latest progress towards the zero discharge of harmful chemicals from their supply chains by 2020. But details of their progress to date has been criticised by Greenpeace as being too focussed on discharge testing instead of looking more closely at the type of chemicals being used. ...

Life Cycle Assessment: an effective or overly complex solution?

TE Blog, 31.7.2012

With growing concerns surrounding the environmental impacts of goods and services there has been a rising interest in Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). Exponents of this approach claim that it can help companies identify environmental 'hot-spots' in their supply chain and work towards addressing these (Maung, 2008). Data acquisition is however notoriously difficult when the supply chain is long and the approach has been questioned on the basis of cost (González et al., 2002). ...

... with the recent announcement by Caroline Spelman MP that companies on the London Stock Exchange will have to report their levels of greenhouse gas emissions, we are likely to see further expansion in this area.

There are, however, some concerns over the application of LCA to agricultural systems ...

Empowering the people with information on pollution

By Sarah Zheng, 5.8.2012

... Ma along with his staff and volunteers established an unprecedented, easy-to-use database of 97,000 cases of air, water and hazardous waste pollution, based on government data and reports (<http://ipe.org.cn/en/>).

... Ma and his team spearheaded a drive to persuade IT companies, including Apple, the world's biggest technology firm, to commit to making its suppliers cleaner and details about its suppliers more public.

... "Our aim is to expand information disclosure to allow communities to fully understand the hazards and risks in their environment, thus promoting widespread participation in environmental governance."

Inside the Sustainable Apparel Coalition

Marc Gunter Blog, 25.7.2012

The story of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition begins with a letter designed to get the attention of even a busy CEO. At the top: the logos of Walmart and Patagonia. John Fleming, who was then Walmart's chief merchandising officer, and Yvon Chouinard, Patagonia's founder, signed the letter, which invited chief executives of some of the world's biggest clothing companies—fierce competitors, ordinarily—to join together to develop an index to measure the environmental impact of their products. ...

Their pitch, in part, read like this: Creating a single approach for measuring sustainability in the apparel sector will do much more than accelerate meaningful social and environmental change. Standardization will enable us to maximize sustainability benefits for all buyers without investing in multiple sustainability technologies and certification processes, and ultimately empower consumers to trust claims regarding sustainably sourced apparel. ...

- **SUSTAINABLE APPAREL COALITION: HIGGS INDEX**

4. COTTON and other fibres

High rates give hope to cotton farmers

TNN 6.8.2012

NAGPUR: After going through a tough phase last year, cotton farmers can expect slightly better rates for their produce in 2012. With the current outlook for prices, farmers would be spared an absolute loss even if they may not reap good profits by sowing cotton as it happened a couple of years ago. Cotton, which has been linked to the region's farm crisis, is harvested from November to February. However, their fortunes would crash if the government once again imposed a ban on exports. ...

The cotton conundrum

The Hindu, 6.8.2012

It is a strange thing for a country that is the second largest producer of cotton in the world to do. Yet, India is now importing a large quantity of cotton using precious foreign exchange, and exerting what could have been an avoidable pressure on the trade deficit. And, it does this after exporting large quantities in the same season just a few months ago. In the ongoing cotton season (October 2011- September 2012), India exported 120 lakh bales, significantly higher than the Cotton Advisory Board's (CAB) estimated exportable surplus of 80-85 lakh bales. And now, together, the mills are likely to import more than 15 lakh bales. Incidentally, the current season's exports and imports are the highest in the last seven years!

5. STANDARDS & CERTIFICATES

Fairer Handel. Unfaire Geschäfte

ÖKO-TEST August 2012

... wer nach fairen Klamotten sucht, landet in einer unüberschaubaren Welt: bei der Social Fashion Company und T-Shirts mit dem Etikett Fair, bei El Puente (Fair Fashion), bei der Bio Shirt Company (menschenwürdige Produktionsbedingungen), beim Otto-Versand (Cotton made in Africa), bei Pants to Poverty (Fairtrade Certified Cotton) oder bei www.fairbleiben.com, wo es Klamotten von Fairliebt oder Earth Positiv gibt. Als wäre das nicht

schon verwirrend genug, gibt es ganz unterschiedliche Standards und Zertifizierungssysteme, die Fairness belegen sollen. Auf der einen Seite zum Beispiel die Fair-Wear-Foundation und die Ethical Trading Initiative mit hohen Anforderungen, auf der anderen Seite die Business Social Compliance Initiative und die Worldwide Responsible Accredited Produktion. Das sind zwei Unternehmensinitiativen mit niedrigen Vorgaben. Was aber macht ein T-Shirt zu einem fairen T-Shirt, was zeichnet einen fairen Orangensaft aus?

BCI and CmiA form new partnership **Ecotextile News, 30.7.2012**

The Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) and its Cotton made in Africa (CmiA) initiative and the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), have signed an interim partnership agreement that should see increased effectiveness and efficiency in promoting greater sustainability to African smallholder farmers while also allowing CmiA verified cotton to be sold as Better Cotton. ...

... As of 1 July 2012, CmiA verified cotton (from the 2012 harvest onwards) can be sold as Better Cotton.

Fairtrade. Das Baumwoll-Dilemma **Kölner Stadtanzeiger, 30.7.2012**

Bananen, Kaffee, Kakao: Der Handel mit Fairtrade-Produkten floriert. Nur bei Kleidung ziehen die Verbraucher nicht mit. Indische Bauern müssen ihre als Fairtrade-Rohstoffe angebaute Baumwolle verramschen. ...

... Das zeigt sich in Südindien. Für die Baumwollbauern in Tamil Nadu ist der faire Handel eine Geduldsfrage - eine Investition, die sie langsam überfordert. Sie haben auf Subventionen der Regierung verzichtet, weil sie sonst genmanipulierte Saaten hätten einsetzen müssen, was dem Fairtrade-Konzept widerspricht. Sie haben sich vor vier Jahren dem Fairtrade-Programm der Firma Agrococel angeschlossen, weil es hieß, die großen Händler in Europa würden bald nach der "sauberen" Ware rufen.

Doch seit Jahren haben sie hier kein Gramm Baumwolle mehr als Fairtrade-Cotton losgeschlagen. Weggefallen sind damit auch die Fairtrade-typischen Prämien: Geld, das die Bauern in Infrastruktur, Gesundheit und Bildung investieren. "Wir haben die Kosten, aber nicht den Nutzen", sagt Krishnan Sainathan von der Firma Agrococel, die das Programm hier einführte. Und doch will man den Glauben nicht loslassen: "Wir wollen Landflucht bekämpfen, eine Alternative zur Gentechnik bieten - aber wir brauchen Unterstützung." ...

6. COTTON

Raw cotton export touches all-time high level **Business Recorder, 29.7.2012**

With a substantial growth of over 78 per cent, raw cotton export has reached all time high mark of 1.66 million bales at the end of last fiscal year 2011-2012 (FY12) mainly due to bumper cotton crop in the country and high demand in the world market. Exporters told Business Recorder on Saturday said that bumper cotton crop during the last cotton season has supported to post all time high export.

While cheap availability of cotton in the domestic market and high demand on international front has also contributed to achieve this milestone. In term of volume, Pakistan has exported some 1.66 million bales during last fiscal year as against 0.937 million bales in fiscal year 2010-2011, showing an increase of 77.8 percent or 0.729 million. In term of dollar, raw cotton export has registered a healthy growth of over 26.65 per cent at the end of last fiscal year. The country has exported raw cotton worth \$462 million in FY12 compared to \$365 million in FY11, depicting an increase of \$97 million. ...

7. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Mindestlohn und ökologische Standards im Vergabegesetz verankern **Bundestagsfraktion Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, 30.7.2012**

"Der Mindestlohn ist nur ein Baustein des künftigen Vergabegesetzes. Wer die Diskussion darauf verengt, hat die Herausforderungen der Zukunft nicht verstanden", kommentiert der wirtschaftspolitische Sprecher der Landtagsfraktion von BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN, Christoph Erdmenger, die gegenwärtige Diskussion um die

Inhalte des künftigen Vergabegesetzes des Landes. Es müssten soziale und ökologische Aspekte in das Gesetz aufgenommen werden und gleichzeitig müsse die Vergabe entbürokratisiert werden. ...

8. REGIONS

BANGLADESH

Call for better labour relations. Transcom Chairman Latifur Rahman suggests sincere effort to improve working conditions

Daily Star, 31.7.2012

Winner of Oslo Business for Peace Award Latifur Rahman yesterday called for bringing about improvement in labour relations in industries for sustainable business.

... He called upon entrepreneurs in the garment sector to rethink trade unionism, which he said is a part of sustainable business.

He said the BEF, which is also connected with the International Labour Organisation, should play a proactive role in improving labour relations. ...

B'desh assures garment importers of solving workers issues

Fibre2Fashion, 28.7.2012

The Government of Bangladesh has assured leading purchasers of its garments in the West that it would address

Earlier in 2010, months of unrest compelled the Government as well as the factory owners to hike wages by 80 percent to a minimum US\$ 37 per month. ...

Labour issues cloud bright RMG future. Mozena dwells on 'perfect storm' at Star discussion

Daily Star, 27.7.2012

Bangladesh has every prospect to be the world's largest garment seller, but its exports to the US may land in deep trouble unless the government sincerely resolves a number of issues mostly relating to improving labour rights within this year.

Dan W Mozena, US ambassador to Bangladesh, made these remarks yesterday. ...

... "The US is trying to convey a clear understanding of the reality of the market in America for Bangladesh's readymade garments. That market is currently under threat due to a perfect storm," the ambassador said during a discussion at The Daily Star office.

Devaluation of euro against Taka, US dollar hits hard RMG exporters

Financial Express, 27.7.2012

The devaluation of euro against Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) and the US dollar has hit hard Bangladeshi exporters.

The exporters' profit margin has fallen from EU export as they are paying for imported raw materials in US dollar while receiving a significant amount of payment for exports from European customers in euros.

The European buyers, who pay in dollars, are also bargaining to reduce the price of Bangladeshi items following fall of euro, businesses said. ...

Bangladesh Government Linked to Illegal Blacklisting of Apparel Workers

Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights, 26.7.2012

Bangladesh's Government operates a blacklist targeting and firing garment workers seeking their legal rights, according to new information obtained by the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights.

Institute director Charles Kernaghan stated today, "The Bangladesh Government is in direct violation of many of the International Labour Organization's core worker rights conventions, which the country ratified in June 1973, including Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize (ILO Convention 87), and the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining (ILO Convention 98)." ...

Trade unions in Bangladesh always 'politicised'

The Independent Bangladesh, 26.7.2012

The local industry owners differ with the concept of freedom of expression in the factories prescribed by the Western diplomats. "We differ with their concept because of our geopolitical perspective which is very much different from the Western societies," said a leading industrialist and president of an association. He told the Independent that they did not have any objection to forming trade unions in their factories but the problem is that trade union in Bangladesh country has always been politicised. ...

... Mozena mentioned the progress achieved on labour issues but reminded the business leaders that the employers need to develop greater attention for freedom of association.

Garment workers' leaders for steps to fix minimum wage at Tk 7,000

Financial Express, 26.7.2012

Seven workers' organisations in the readymade garment (RMG) sector demanded effective measures to fix minimum monthly wage for labours at Tk 7,000 to help them lead a normal life meeting minimum civic amenities.

They made the demand to protect the poorly paid communities as frequent increase in house rent in the densely populated workers-intensive residential areas takes away a major portion of their income. ...

OPINION. Labour unrest in the RMG sector

Financial Express, 26.7.2012

... A reason behind the labour unrest is the absence of legal and institutional arrangements to ensure labour rights in the RMG sector. Many of the garments factories in Bangladesh are alleged not to comply with the Labour Law and ILO conventions. The Labour Act-2006 (Labour code) clearly mentions that the wage of a worker must be paid within seven workings days [Section 123 (1)]. Many garments factories do not allegedly provide appointment letters/contract letters, identity cards and employee handbooks. Proper health safety and security arrangements for the workers are absent in many garments factories. Besides, the workers do not have clear idea about their rights and labour laws.

The main reason for labour unrest is inadequate wages of the workers. The sector employs about 40 per cent of the country's industrial workforce. ...

The writer is a student of the Department of Business Administration, East West University. rahat344@yahoo.com

RMG Worker Unrest. Buyers want wage review. Labour minister for ration system

Daily Star, 26.7.2012

The wages of garment workers should be immediately readjusted in line with inflation and the consumer price index to quell persistent unrest in the industry. This was the demand of top buyers of Bangladeshi garment products yesterday. ...

... The minister invited the buyers to raise their purchase prices. "If you can increase Tk 25, I will give Tk 20 to workers and Tk 5 to manufacturers," said the minister in a lighter vein. The buyers remained silent in response. ...

'House rent hike caused labour unrest'

bdnews24, 25.7.2012

Dhaka, July 25 (bdnews24.com) -- Labour Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain has marked uncontrolled hikes in house rent as the key reason behind demonstrations by workers.

"House rent is being increased twice even thrice in a year. This is sparking unrest among the workers," the Minister told journalists following a meeting with local and foreign buyers and business leaders at the Secretariat on Wednesday. ...

CAMBODIA

Decent work in Cambodia: how far have we come?

Phnom Phen Post, 3.8.2012

Cambodia has come a long way since the early 1990s, with peace and macroeconomic stability ushering in a period of economic "catch up" with its neighbours.

However, while rapid economic growth has clearly raised incomes and improved livelihoods in many corners of the country, recent questions have emerged over how "inclusive" this growth is, and indeed, what else is needed beyond growth for people to live a full and productive life. ...

... This is why Cambodia, with the help of a joint EU-**International Labour Organization** project, **Monitoring and Assessing Progress on Decent Work**, has established a set of decent work indicators (DWIs), the first collection of which were published in a **Decent Work Country Profile**, launched this week in Phnom Penh. ...

MoU the key to compliance

Phnom Penh Post, 26.7.2012

Amid a spate of garment factory strikes – including one at Tai Yang Enterprises that has lasted more than a month – Cambodia's **Arbitration Council** yesterday said it wanted the industry to renew a memorandum of understanding on industrial action that has been in limbo since November.

"[The MoU] is something we would like the industry to come to the table on," Arbitration Council Foundation executive director Sok Lor told the Post. ...

CHINA

Economic slowdown in coastal provinces forces migrant workers to go home

China Labour Bulletin, 27.7.2012

... Observers in Guangdong have said large numbers of small and medium-sized factories have closed their production lines, leading to a very noticeable migration of workers back to their home towns, especially workers over the age of 45, who are at a disadvantage when they try to find a new job. ...

INDIA

New technology to save Tirupur knitwear industry

Fibre2Fashion, 31.7.2012

To save the domestic knitwear industry from waning further, textile units in Tirupur, a city in the south-Indian state of Tamil Nadu, have decided to reduce emission of pollutants during dyeing through adoption of a new technology.

Mills contract 10 lakh bales cotton for imports

India Times, 25.7.2012

Spinning mills in the country have contracted to import 10 lakh bales (170 kg) of cotton from African countries following tight domestic availability and delayed monsoon.

The supply squeeze is owing to lower stocks with growers. Delayed monsoon has led to fears of drop in acreage and production of cotton. Besides, parched US crops have prompted millers in the country– world's second-largest cotton exporter – to import more. ...

THAILAND

Wage hike not hurting job sector

The Nation, 2.8.2012

The Central Wage Committee yesterday revealed that more jobs were becoming available and that the government was doing a good job at controlling inflation and the price of goods. ...

9. BRANDS

Der Trick mit den Billig-T-Shirts aus Irland

Die Welt, 4.8.2012

Ein T-Shirt für 2,50 Euro, eine Jeans für 9: Die irische Modekette Primark erobert die Kleiderschränke deutscher Teenager. Kritiker sprechen jedoch von "katastrophalen Arbeitsbedingungen". Von C. Bohmann, C. Dierig und H. Seidel ...

Adidas launches waterless dyeing range

Ecotextile News, 1.8.2012

Sportswear giant Adidas has launched a range of t-shirts which, dyed in a process using pressurised CO2 instead of water, is said to use 50% less energy, and 50% fewer chemicals than normal processes. ...

Primark Kaufen, anziehen, wegwerfen

Frankfurter Rundschau, 28.7.2012

Der irische Textildiscounter Primark wirbt mit niedrigsten Preisen für Trend-Klamotten - verführt zum hemmungslosen Shoppen und sorgt für Müllberge. Einige Kundinnen jubeln bereits darüber, sich nun „totshoppen“ zu können. ...

10. NGO CAMPAIGNS & PROJECTS

A Chronology of the Investigation of the Murder of Labor Activist Aminul Islam

International Labor Rights Forum, 6.8.2012

Summary: Aminul Islam, 40, president of the Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers' Federation (BGIWF)'s local committee in the Savar and Ashulia areas of Dhaka and a senior organizer with a well-known labor rights group, the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity (BCWS), was tortured and murdered in early April 2012. [1] To date, nobody has been held responsible for this crime. ...

Insulting offer of adidas food vouchers rejected by workers

Clean Clothes Campaign, 26.7.2012

An offer by adidas to donate food vouchers to Indonesian workers owed millions of euros has been described as downright insulting by union representatives and labour right campaigners. The workers, previously employed at ex-addidas supplier PT Kizone, have been fighting for over a year to get adidas to pay the 1.5 million euros still owed to them in unpaid severance. Adidas' offer: a food voucher worth just 43 euros. ...

- **BACKGROUND ON PT KIZONE & SEE VIDEO & READ MORE.**
- **TELL ADIDAS: IF YOU CAN AFFORD TO SPONSOR THE OLYMPICS, YOU CAN AFFORD SEVERANCE PAY FOR YOUR WORKERS!**

Fair Games? Human Rights of Workers in Olympic 2012 Supplier Factories

Playfair 2012

Workers making Olympic sportswear for London 2012 for top brands and high street names including Adidas and Next are being paid poverty wages, forced to work excessive overtime and threatened with instant dismissal if they complain about working conditions, according to a new report. ...

11. BOOKS, REPORTS, REVIEWS, SCIENCE

Schwarzbuch Baumwolle. Was wir wirklich auf der Haut tragen

Andreas Engelhardt, 221 Seiten
Deuticke im Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2012
ISBN 978-3-552-06197-2
EUR 18,40

Higgs Index

Sustainable Apparel Coalition

The Sustainable Apparel Coalition is an industry-wide group of over 60 leading apparel and footwear brands, retailers, suppliers, nonprofits, and NGOs working to reduce the environmental and social impacts of apparel and footwear products around the world.

The focus of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition is The Higg Index that measures the environmental performance of apparel products. Future versions will include footwear products and measure social performance. ...

12. WORKSHOPS ETC.

SEPTEMBER 2012

MUNICH FABRIC START MIT „ECO VILLAGE“ UND „ORGANIC SELECTION“
München, 04. – 06.09. 2012

OEKO-FOIRE (FAIR)
LUXEMBURG, 14.-16.09.2012

WEAR FAIR
Linz, 28.-30.9.2012

OKTOBER 2012

SUSTAINABLE TEXTILES CONFERENCE. MESSE FRANKFURT, TEXTILE EXCHANGE, ECOTEXTILE NEWS
HONG KONG, 04.-05.10.2012

ETHICAL FASHION NIGHT 2012
GENEVA, 28.10.2012

November 2012

FUTURE FABRICS EXPO
London College of Fashion, 04.-07.11.2012