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Chinese Exports in New Safety Scare

DATE: 2007/08/24

China's export industry faced new safety concerns today after authorities in New Zealand began probing claims that imported children's clothes had contained dangerously high levels of formaldehyde.

A consumer watchdog television programme claimed this week that formaldehyde levels on some Chinese-made clothes were 900 times above safety levels. The New Zealand Commerce Commission and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs have started an investigation. A New Zealand clothing retailer has also withdrawn a range of children's pyjamas made in China after reports that they had caught fire, injuring two boys. This comes just days after toy giant Mattel recalled over 18m toys made in China because they contained loose magnets that could cause serious harm if swallowed.

China's textile industry has grown fast in recent years, driven by exports to markets such as Europe and the US. This has sparked concerns that domestic textile manufacturers could suffer, leading to sometimes bitter battles over import quotas. The head of China's safety watchdog has claimed that the safety warnings are a new form of protectionism by the west. Li Changjiang accused some governments of "demonising Chinese products".

But Peter Mandelson, the EC trade commissioner who had conducted the negotiations over Chinese textile imports, hit back at this claim. "The allegation that European companies' action against toxic Chinese goods is politically motivated and shows bias against China is totally false," said Mr Mandelson in a statement. The Mattel recall led to claims that some Chinese companies are not adhering to safety standards, and fears in Beijing that the "Made in China" brand could be damaged. China and the US are due to hold negotiations over the issue later this month, and again in September.

Excessive levels of formaldehyde have been linked to eye, skin and nasal irritations, respiratory problems and asthma. The chemical also been labelled as a human carcinogen. But according to the British Retail Consortium (BRC), UK consumers should not suffer the kind of problems that were apparently found in New Zealand. "There is no evidence of problems of this kind in Europe," said a spokesman for the BRC. "The EU sets strict legal limits on the use of chemicals in products in order to protect consumers. All responsible retailers ensure their suppliers comply and frequently impose even more stringent restrictions," he added.

Source: Guardian Unlimited (Graeme Wearden)

China's Textiles Mills Dumping Dye Wastes to Reduce Costs

DATE: 2007/08/24

Last summer, Chinese government investigators carried out a surprise inspection of Fuan Textiles mill plant in southern China. What they found caused alarm at dozens of American retailers was the company's fabric in their clothes. The factory, majority owned by Hong Kong-based Fountain Set Holdings Ltd., had turned the water of the nearby river dark red. The inspecting authorities discovered a pipe buried underneath the factory floor that was dumping roughly 22,000 tons of water contaminated from its dyeing operations each day into a nearby river, according to local environmental-protection officials. This is allegedly being done by the company to save costs.

Some textile factories in China are accused of dumping dye wastes into rivers to cut costs. While China's river pollution worsens, U.S. companies that use the textiles are coming under fire for not taking a hard enough line against suppliers in China. Activists in China are trying to make the supply-chain link to U.S. clothing companies more clear, to raise pressure on factories accused of dumping waste. In more than two decades since international companies began turning to Chinese factories to churn out the cheap T-shirts, jeans and sneakers that people around the world wear daily, China's air, land and water have paid a heavy price. China has faced harsh criticism in recent months over the safety of exports ranging from tainted toothpaste to toxic toys. But environmental activists and the Chinese government are increasingly pointing to the flip side: the role multinational companies play in China's growing pollution by demanding ever-lower prices for Chinese products. Prices on fabric and clothing imported to the U.S. have fallen 25% since 1995, partly due to the downward pricing pressure brought by discount retail chains.

China's factories have kept costs down by dumping waste water directly into rivers. Treating contaminated water costs more than 13 cents a metric ton, so large factories can save hundreds of thousands of dollars a year by sending waste water directly to rivers in violation of China's water-pollution laws.

Source: Agencies

SIGL-Direct Import Goods Report

DATE: 2007/08/24

Supplier Country	Category	Year	Quota Lvl	Working Lvl	MS Licensed	MS Pending	MS%QL Used	MS%WL Used	SC Licensed	SC%WL Used
China (720)	2	07	70.636.000	70.636.000	30.490.652	0	43.17	43.17	37.830.259	53.56
China (720)	4	07	595.624.000	595.624.000	315.680.141	0	53.00	53.00	370.933.224	62.28
China (720)	4C	07	49.635.333	49.635.333	29.262.998	0	58.96	58.96	34.899.113	70.31
China (720)	5	07	220.054.000	220.054.000	139.427.688	0	63.36	63.36	170.853.133	77.64
China (720)	6	07	388.528.000	388.528.000	244.843.013	0	63.02	63.02	280.580.370	72.22
China (720)	7	07	90.829.000	90.829.000	61.587.877	0	67.81	67.81	69.611.789	76.64
China (720)	20	07	18.518.000	18.518.000	8.847.817	0	47.78	47.78	11.122.532	60.06
China (720)	26	07	29.736.000	29.736.000	22.187.464	0	74.61	74.61	24.869.834	83.64
China (720)	31	07	250.209.000	250.209.000	143.333.789	0	57.29	57.29	171.307.798	68.47
China (720)	39	07	14.862.000	14.862.000	4.801.546	0	32.31	32.31	7.172.007	48.26
China (720)	Silk/Rami 115	07	5.347.000	5.347.000	3.313.026	0	61.96	61.96	4.008.408	74.97

Source: CNTEX

High Levels of Formaldehyde in Chinese Clothing

DATE: 2007/08/23

WELLINGTON - [20.08.07] Officials in New Zealand have launched an investigation after children's garments imported from China were found to contain very high levels of formaldehyde, which were 900 times above the recommended safety limit. The move comes after a number of Chinese-made consumer products have been recalled. The Warehouse, a New Zealand retailer, issued a recall at the weekend for children's pyjamas made in China after two children were burned when their flannelette nightclothes caught fire. Last week, Mattel said it was recalling 18.2 million toys made in China because of hazards such as the use of lead paint, and there have been other scares involving toothpaste and food.

But highlighting potential problems with China's textile and clothing sector will be a major concern for the Chinese government given that textiles and clothing made up more than 13% of exports in the first half of this year.

Formaldehyde is used as a preservative to combat mildew and is also used in some fixatives for

Source: China Textile Network Company

textile printing as a cross linking agent in pastes to fix the print pigment to the fabric surface. There has been concerns about the link between cancer and formaldehydes and subsequently the concentrations of formaldehyde in fixatives have been reduced to less than 20 parts per million (ppm) by many retailers and textile standards. Responsible brands such as Puma have totally banned the use of formaldehydes in its footwear.

The New Zealand government ordered the latest probe after scientists testing clothes for national TV network T3's "Target" consumer watchdog programme discovered formaldehyde in wool and cotton clothes imported from China. The show's producer Simon Roy said scientists from the government agency AgriQuality tested a variety of new childrens' and adults' clothes and the results were so astounding they thought they had made a mistake. "Our results were shocking, ranging from 230ppm (parts per million) to 18,000 ppm," he said. "Some of the clothes tested have a reading of 900 times the level that actually causes harm." The television station says it will not release details of brand names or importers ahead of the show's airing on Tuesday.

Further twist

In a further twist, The EU's Trade Commissioner, Peter Mandelson, dismissed as "totally false" today [20.08.07] a claim made by a Chinese official that the EU was using concerns over Chinese export standards as a form of protectionism. "The allegation that European companies' action against toxic Chinese goods is politically motivated and shows bias against China is totally false," Mandelson said in a strongly-worded statement.

"As trade commissioner, I will not accept claims of toxicity being used as a pretext for protectionism. Equally, I will give firm backing to European companies having to reject goods that are dangerous to consumers," he added. The statement comes in response to the allegation voiced by China's quality-control chief Li Changjiang on state TV who said that "Demonizing Chinese products ... is simply a new form of trade protectionism."

Source: Ecotextile News

Shoemakers told to pay Nike compensation

DATE: 2007/08/22

A court in Shanghai has ordered two Chinese shoe manufacturers and a French supermarket to pay American sporting goods giant Nike 350,000 yuan (46,000 U.S. dollars) in compensation for copyright infringement. Jinjiang Longzhibu Shoes Co Ltd and Jinjiang Kangwei Shoes Co Ltd manufactured shoes bearing a logo that was "basically the same" as one of Nike's - a silhouette of former basketball star Michael Jordan slam-dunking - the Shanghai No. 2 Intermediate People's Court said yesterday. And the Shanghai branch of France-based retailer Auchan was guilty of selling the products without permission from Nike, it said. "All three have conducted copyright infringement against Nike," the verdict read.

The shoemakers were ordered to pay 100,000 yuan and 90,000 yuan in compensation and Shanghai Auchan Hypermarket Co Ltd 160,000 yuan. The three will also have to publish an apology to counter the negative effects of the infringement. As one of the most popular international brands in China, Nike has been a target for many counterfeiters in recent years.

Source: China Textile Network Company

Customs officers in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, said recently they had this year seized more than 70,000 pairs of copied shoes bound for export. And in its latest raid, nearly 40,000 pairs of Nike shoes were confiscated, along with quantities of Adidas and Puma products. The Shanghai High People's Court said early this year that courts in Shanghai had seen an increase in intellectual property rights (IPR) cases. Most copied brands, such as Levi Strauss, Nike and Adidas, came from the United States, Britain, Japan and Germany.

During a raid on two shops in the city, a district industry and commerce bureau found more than 200 fake Giorgio Armani, Puma and Nike items of apparel. The owners of the two shops said they bought the pieces for 5 to 10 yuan and sold them for much more. Nike registered the Jordan logo in China in 1993. In January, its employees purchased four pairs of sports shoes bearing a similar logo from the three Auchan stores in Shanghai. On Feb. 2, Nike's lawyers sent letters to Auchan, informing them of the infringement and asking them to produce purchase and sale records for the product. But the shoes were still on sale at two of the stores at the end of the month, Nike told the court. It filed a suit against Shanghai Auchan and the two shoemakers in May, demanding total compensation of 1 million yuan.

Source: China Daily

Diolen Introduces Diofort® Multifilament Yarn

DATE: 2007/08/22

The Netherlands-based Diolen Industrial Fibers has introduced Diofort®, the first high-tenacity multifilament yarn made with Wilmington, N.C.-based Fortron Industries LLC's Fortron® polyphenylene sulfide (PPS) for use in fabrics, nonwovens or textiles, or as reinforcement. The yarn " which can be combined with carbon, glass and other polymer fibers to produce blended fabrics " features chemical resistance, flame retardancy, high durability, low water absorption, toughness and the ability to withstand extremely high temperatures.

Diofort's production process comprises plasticizing and extruding Fortron PPS in a multifilament extruder at the desired diameter, then stretching individual filaments in a defined temperature range.

Diofort can be used to reinforce hydraulic oil hoses in power steering systems, reducing vibration and noise; and applied in fuel lines or charge-air coolers to simultaneously provide resistance to high pressure and temperature and hose flexibility, industrial filter systems for flue gases and aggressive liquids, and composites for use in aerospace systems.

Source: Textileworld

Interstoff Asia Essential - The Home of Cutting-Edge Fabrics
3 - 5 October 2007
Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

DATE: 2007/08/22

Interstoff Asia Essential three-day seminar programme features top-level speakers from all over the world. The seminar programme at Interstoff Asia Essential - a key information source for thousands of apparel and textile industry professionals from all over the world - will feature top-level speakers from Austria, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Taiwan and the USA in autumn 2007. The seminars will run for three full days alongside the fabric fair, scheduled for 3 - 5 October at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre.

The Interstoff Asia Essential seminars bring crucial business information to the textile and garment industry, focusing on both high-profile current industry topics and fundamental business issues. Three specialist areas are covered, design & trends - including colours, styles and textures forecast for next season; business strategy - including quality control, marketing and operational issues; and technology - including developments in production methods, products and applications.

Seminars are open exclusively to visitors and exhibitors of Interstoff Asia Essential. Due the popularity of the seminars, pre-booking is advised.

Seminar speakers and topics for autumn 2007

Day One - Design and Trends

- Trend Forecast for Autumn / Winter 2008, by Ms Nelly Rodi, Founder & Creative Director of the Nelly Rodi Agency, Paris, France
- Textiles and Natural Dye, by Masako Oka, President of Oka Masako Design, Japan
- Pantone View Colour Planner Winter 2008/09 - 'Be Different', by Mr. Todd Schulman, Vice President Fashion & Home, Pantone Inc., USA
- New Fibres, Myth & Reality, Impact on Fashion, by Ms Sylvie Tastemain, Founder of l'Atelier Tastemain, France
- Trends for Women's Wear, Men's Wear and Children's Wear for Autumn / Winter 2008, by Promostyl, France

Day Two - Business Strategy

- Environmental Impact on the Fashion Supply Chain, by Mr. Terry Tang, Senior Clothing Technologist, Clothing Industry Training Authority, Hong Kong
- A Systematic Approach to Limiting Restricted Substances in Textile Products, by Dr. Diana Poon, Senior Consultant of Corporate Research and Development, SGS Ltd., Hong Kong

Day Three - Technology

- Innovative Textiles and their Applications, by Mr. Aldo Tempesti, Director of TexClubTec - Italian Association of Technical and Innovative Textiles, Italy
- The Botanical Principle, by Mr Peter Kreuger, Technical Marketing Manager of Lenzing Fibres, Austria
- Taiwan's Green and Ethical Efforts in Functional Textile Innovation, by Mr. Justin Huang, Secretary General of the Taiwan Textile Federation, Taiwan
- A Breakthrough in Functional and Ecological Fabrics, by Mr. Xu Sanxing, President of Jiangsu Changzhou Sinodenim Co., China

For more information on the seminars or on Interstoff Asia Essential, visit www.interstoff-asia.com or email textile@hongkong.messefrankfurt.com. Online registration for visitors is available [here](#).

Source: Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd.