

Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project Partner Newsletter



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MAJORITY OF PAINTS SOLD IN ASIA HAVE HIGH LEAD LEVELS *MULTI-NATIONALS SHIFTING TO LOW LEAD PRODUCTS*

A startlingly high percentage of household enamel paints in seven Asian countries contain dangerous levels of lead (above 10,000 ppm), and a majority would not meet regulatory standards established in most highly industrialized countries.

Dangerously high lead levels tended to be found in brightly coloured paints — reds, yellows, and greens.

Seven new reports released by NGO partners in IPEN's Asian Lead Elimination Project also found that, with a few exceptions, paint companies with the largest market share in Asia have shifted to products with less than 90 ppm lead content — the standard in the U.S. and other industrialized countries. (see page 3)

"Manufacturers selling

paint in Asian countries are beginning to respond to earlier paint studies conducted by IPEN and its participating organizations, which showed high levels of lead in most enamel decorative paints," said Sara Brosche, manager, IPEN Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project.

"However, these latest paint analyses show lead levels remain acceptably high in too many cases."

Project partner organizations collected a total of 803 paint samples from 404 brands of paint sold in local marketplaces in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

The findings are consistent with paint analyses conducted in other developing countries. To date IPEN and its NGO partners have analyzed more than 1,500 paint sam-

Latest News

New [UNEP](#) Study Finds High Lead Levels in Paints Around the World

The majority of paints analyzed in nine, geographically diverse, developing and transition countries would not meet regulatory standards established in most highly industrialized countries and, in some cases, contain astonishingly high and dangerous levels of lead.

"It is quite breathtaking that parents painting their child's nursery a cheerful red, or handing their child a colourful toy may, through no fault of their own, be exposing that child to a pernicious and damaging toxin: lead," said Nick Nuttall, UNEP's Spokesperson and Director of Communications.

[The report](#) found that in five of the countries, more than half of the decorative paint samples analyzed had lead content greater than 600 parts per million (ppm) lead, the regulatory limit in many countries.

It also found that paints in the two countries with regulatory frameworks for lead in paint - Chile and Uruguay — had much lower levels of lead.

Countries where paint analysis was conducted: Tunisia, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Chile, Uruguay, Ethiopia, Azerbaijan, and Argentina

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The Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project is a project of [IPEN](#) and funded by the European Union.



European Union



a toxics-free future



ASIAN LEAD PAINT ELIMINATION PROJECT PARTNER NEWSLETTER

ASIAN LEAD PAINT ANALYSIS: COUNTRY BY COUNTRY REPORT

Bangladesh

The Bangladesh paint industry has experienced unparalleled growth in recent years.

A total of 51 large, medium and small sized companies sell paint in Bangladesh. Forty-five of these companies manufacture paint within Bangladesh.

Almost two thirds (64%) of 90 paint samples collected by [Environment and Social Development Organization \(ESDO\)](#) had lead concentrations above 600 parts per million (ppm) and would not be permitted for sale or use in most highly industrialized countries.

Overall, 26 paints (29%) contained low levels of lead less than 90 ppm and meet the standard set by US.

The highest concentration detected was 123,000 ppm,

over 1,300 times the recommended limit of 90 ppm.

No paints from three major, multinational companies (Asian Paints, Berger and RAK Paints) contained lead levels greater than 90 ppm.

Bangladesh currently does not have any legislation limiting lead concentrations in paint. However, the president of the Bangladesh Manufacturers Association has urged the government to ban the import and sale of lead pigments.

India

Indian NGO, [Toxics Link](#), conducted the first study in India on lead content in paints in 2007 and found high lead levels in paints in all major brands sold in India.

Despite widespread concern

following the report, the Bureau of Indian Standard has not yet issued a national standard for lead in paint.

Toxic Link's [current study](#) shows that lead levels remain high in paints sold in India and most paints are unsafe.

Ninety percent of 250 paints analyzed for lead content in had lead levels above 90 ppm the proposed draft Bureau of Standards standard.

A total of 111 paints from 103 brands contained dangerously high lead levels above 10,000 ppm.

Indonesia

The Indonesian paint market is one of the fastest growing markets in the world, and while several Indonesian regulations could apply to lead in paint, none specifically sets limits on lead con-

centrations in products.

In the [current study](#), conducted by [Balifokus](#), more than 75 percent of 78 paint samples had concentrations above 90 ppm.

Twenty-six percent of samples had dangerously high lead levels above 10,000 ppm.

All samples of paints from two-thirds of the 43 brands of paint analyzed had lead levels above 90 ppm.

The average lead concentration was 18,500 ppm.

Nepal

The Nepalese paint industry is expected to grow as much as 35% in the next few years and approximately 6 paint manufacturers make up 70 percent of the market.

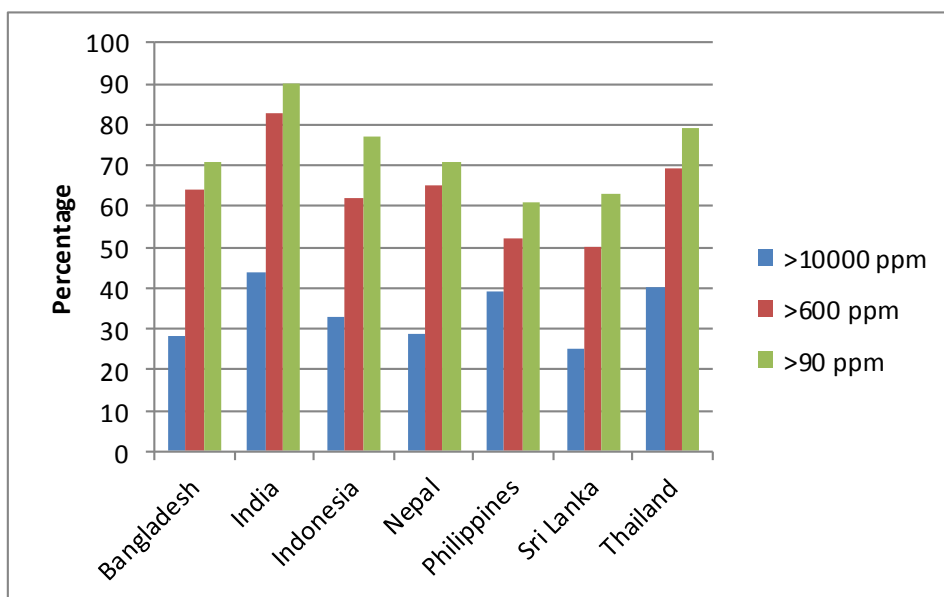
NGO [Centre of Public Health and Environmental Development \(CEPHED\)](#) has issued reports on lead in paint on three previous occasions.

In this most recent [report](#), seventy-one percent of the 49 paints analyzed had lead levels above 90 ppm. Extremely dangerous high lead levels were found in 29 percent of all paints tested.

More than half of all brands of paints in Nepal contain extremely high levels of lead.

No regulation or laws specifically limit lead in household paint, but there are voluntary standards for

PERCENTAGE OF PAINTS WITH HIGH LEAD LEVELS



enamel paints.

Philippines

In its most extensive analysis of lead in paint in the Philippines to date, [EcoWaste Coalition](#) collected 122 paint samples.

Seventy-five of these samples contained lead above 90 ppm and 48 had levels exceeding 10,000 ppm. The highest level recorded was 156,000 ppm.

Compared to results from previous studies in 2008 and 2010, lead content in paints sold in the Philippines has not changed dramatically since 2008.

The Philippines lacks any specific regulation that bans or restricts the use of lead paint.

EcoWaste, which has also publicized high levels of lead in toys and other children's products, supports a new Chemical Control Order (CCO) now under consideration by the Department of

Environment and Natural Resources.

If approved, the CCO will prohibit lead compounds in all types of paints.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has had a mandatory standard in force since January 1, 2013, which limits the lead content in enamel paints for household use to 600 ppm and paints for toys and children's accessories to 90 ppm.

Though a smaller percentage of paint samples had high paint levels when compared to a similar analysis in 2009, it is clear more needs to be done.

The [current report](#), released by [Centre for Environmental Justice](#), finds that lead levels in only 47 of the 94 analyzed paints were low enough to be sold legally in Sri Lanka. And a quarter of all paints analyzed had dangerously high levels above 10,000 ppm.

MANY MULTI-NATIONALS SHIFTING TO LOW LEAD PAINTS

The Asian country reports demonstrate that many large paint manufacturers are beginning to sell unleaded paints.

Bangladesh: All samples from Berger and Asian Paints were below 90 ppm.

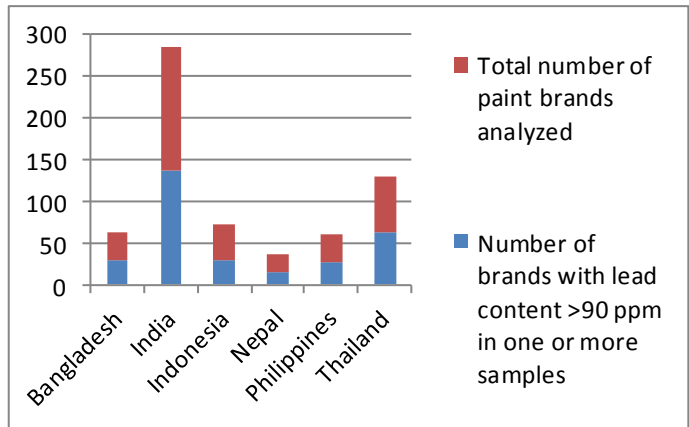
Indonesia: All samples from AKZO Nobel (ICI) were below 600 ppm and some were below 90 ppm.

Nepal: All samples from

Asian and Berger Jenson & Nicholson were below 90 ppm.

Philippines: Most samples from Pacific Paint (Boysen) Philippines, Inc. and Charter Chemical and Coating Corporation were below 90 ppm.

Thailand: AZKO Nobel samples were below 90 ppm. Some TOA brand samples were below 90 ppm, but others contained high levels of lead.



PERCENTAGE OF PAINT BRANDS WITH LEAD CONTENT GREATER THAN 90 PPM

As in other countries, bright colored samples had the highest lead content.

Thailand

Thailand has a voluntary standard limiting lead in household enamel paints to 100 ppm.

[Analysis](#) of 120 paint samples, collected by EARTH, showed that more than three-quarters contained lead in excess of 100 ppm,

suggesting that voluntary standards may not be sufficient.

The majority of bright colors contained extremely high levels of lead — above 10,000 ppm — with 95,000 ppm the highest level of lead detected.

The report also found that only fifteen of 42 paint manufacturers produced paint products with a lead concentration within 100 ppm.

A 90 PPM STANDARD

IPEN [recommends](#) 90 ppm as an achievable and protective goal for lead in household enamel paint worldwide.

When a paint manufacturer does not intentionally add lead compounds in the formulation of its paints, the lead content of the paint will be very low — almost always less than 90 parts per million (total lead, dry weight).

If a paint manufacturer is careful in selecting ingredients that do not contain lead as a contaminant, the lead content of the paint will often be as low as 10 parts per million or less.

While international health organizations generally believe that no level of lead exposure is safe, 90 ppm is the current standard for household paints in the U.S. and Canada, and would ensure that a manufacturer can sell its paint anywhere in the world.

ASIAN LEAD PAINT ELIMINATION PROJECT PARTNER NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK OF ACTION, OCT. 20-26

More than 30 NGOs from all regions of the world hosted activities to raise awareness of the hazards in lead. In addition to releasing reports on lead paint (see pages 2 & 3), Asian Lead Elimination Project partners hosted numerous activities, many of which attracted widespread media coverage in each country.

Bangladesh

120 teachers and students at Surovi School learned about the dangers of lead exposure and then donned protective gear and sampled the soil for lead contamination. Students also marched with banners, forming a "human chain" in favor of lead elimination.

More than 205 children in Dhaka and Rajshahi participated in an art competition entitled "Lead Free Paint: Healthy Child, Safe Environment."

Finally, ESDO organized an photo exhibit showing the sources and impact of lead exposure.

India

Bollywood film star, Sha Rukh Khan issued a statement in support of Toxics Links' lead elimination campaign, which said, in part, "Lead causes irreversible brain damage in children. It is preventable. Avoid exposures in children by choosing house paints that are lead free."

More than 350 students also participated in school programs on lead paint hazards. A petition circulated by Toxics Link asked Indian officials to eliminate lead in paint.

Finally, Toxics Link organized a 2-day conference on the health impacts of lead in New Delhi.

Indonesia

Balifokus' activities included Parents Forum at several Centers for Early Childhood Education in Bali., a radio talk show, and the formation of a Stakeholder Forum. The fo-



PHOTOS (clockwise starting on top left) People visit a lead paint exhibit in the Philippines; Jambo the Teddybear promotes safe paints in Nepal; children compete in an art competition in Bangladesh; a conference on lead poisoning in Delhi; shoppers sign a petition in Indonesia; Balifokus discusses the hazards of leaded paint.



forums provided parents with information about lead exposure.

One forum triggered school management to begin working with parents to prevent lead exposure.

Nepal

CEPHED organized activities throughout the week includ-



on in Thailand; children march for lead free paint in the Philippines; children compete to create the best painting on a lead free paint theme in a competition for safe paints in Sri Lanka; ; and (center) a radio show in

ing a kick-off ceremony to launch a set of lead elimination brochures, posters, bookmarks, etc. to be disseminated throughout the week and beyond; a high level policy meeting with government officials, school programs, and a vigorous media campaign.

CEPHED's director also spoke at the South East Asia Regional Conference on Lead Poisoning in Delhi.

Sri Lanka

CEJ designed and printed greeting cards urging elimination of lead paint and sent them to NGOs and government officials around the country.

It also conducted a petition and awareness campaign through the Eco-store, an organic food store established by CEJ.

Thailand

More than 150 people participated in EARTH's Lead Poisoning Prevention Day of Action. In addition to the report release, the event included a panel discussion and public exhibitions on the harms lead causes.

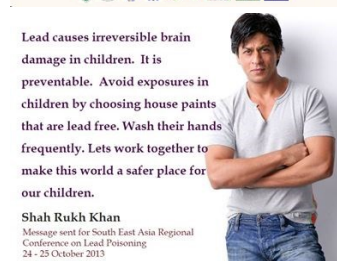
The event was co-hosted by 5 other organizations, and 2 government agencies participated in organizing public exhibitions.

Twenty-two members of the media covered the event.

Philippines

Over 1,000 enthusiastic students unfurled a giant "Lead Free Kids for a Healthy Future" banner at a rally which included "Brain Protector, a superhero for the elimination of lead

Other activities included a resolution by legislators in support of lead elimination and a report on lead in toys, which found that 46 out of 100 tested toys were contaminated lead.



Top to bottom: Sri Lanka greeting card ; Thai poster; message from Bollywood superstar

IPEN Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project Partners

Bangladesh

[Environment and Social
Development Organization](#)



India

[Toxics Link](#)



Indonesia

[Balifokus](#)



Nepal

[Center for Public Health and
Environmental Development
\(CEPHED\)](#)



Philippines

[EcoWaste Coalition](#)

[EcoWaste Coalition](#)

Sri Lanka

[Center for Environmental
Justice \(CEJ\)](#)



Thailand

Ecological Alert and Recovery
Thailand — EARTH



IPEN Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project

The Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project has been established to eliminate lead in paint and raise widespread awareness among business entrepreneurs and consumers about the adverse human health impacts of lead-based decorative paints, particularly on the health of children under six years old.

The project is being implemented by IPEN over a period of three years in seven countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand) with a total EU funding of EUR 1.4 million.

The project includes

- Periodic testing of lead in paints
- Information for small and medium paint manufacturer, dealers, and retailers to help them to shift from lead-based to no-added lead paints
- Third party certification and labeling that includes information on lead
- Help to government institutions to enact a lead paint standard
- Awareness raising programs about lead paint and its impact, especially on children's health and the environment.



The Asia Lead Paint Elimination Project is a project of IPEN. IPEN is an international organization promoting safe chemical policies and practices that protect human health and the environment.

This project is funded by the European Union

Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines
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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development while maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedom. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and people beyond its borders."