

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Tarun Dewan](mailto:Tarun.Dewan@spgpc.org)  
**To:** [eugenio.marcia@dol.gov](mailto:eugenio.marcia@dol.gov)  
**Cc:** [commerce@indiagov.org](mailto:commerce@indiagov.org)  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2010 5:31 PM  
**Subject:** Representation from India - for Soccer Balls

Ms Marcia Eugenio  
Director  
US Department of Labor

Madam,

This is with reference to our earlier mail dated 10th December, 2009, sent to US Labor Secretary, requesting for removal of "Soccer Ball from India" from your report on Child Labour. We have been informed by Indian Embassy Washington that additional information can be submitted by 22nd Jan. We are attaching two files providing detailed information on the working of Sports Goods Foundation of India and achievements made by them in eradication of child labor from Sports Industry in India.

We would be glad to provide any other information required by you.

Regards,

Tarun Dewan  
Secretary  
Sports Goods Export Promotion Council  
1E/6, Ram Tirth Nagar  
New Delhi 110 055 (INDIA)  
Ph: 91-11-23516183, 23525695  
Fax: 91-11-23632147  
[www.sportsgoodsindia.org](http://www.sportsgoodsindia.org)

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**From:** [Tarun Dewan](mailto:Tarun.Dewan@spgpc.org)  
**To:** [globalkids@dol.gov](mailto:globalkids@dol.gov)  
**Cc:** [Banashri Bose Harrison](mailto:Banashri.Bose.Harrison@spgpc.org)  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 10, 2009 11:21 PM  
**Subject:** Representation from India - for Soccer Balls

Ms Hilda Solis  
US Labour Secretary  
Department of Labour  
USA  
Copy: Ms Sandra Polaski  
Deputy Under Secretary  
International Labour Affairs Bureau

US Department of Labour

Madam,

This is with reference to the annual report on Child Labour brought out by US department of labour in which 122 products have been identified from 58 countries where either child labour or forced labour is used. One of the products identified as using Child Labour is "Soccer Balls from India".

Sports Goods Export Promotion Council is a Trade Promotion Organisation sponsored by Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. All the leading Manufacturers / Exporters of Sports goods are our members. As a nodal agency of Sports Goods manufacturers of India, we would like to offer our comments on the report on Child Labour brought out by your department.

### **Comments**

It is claimed that the report has been prepared based on primary and secondary data, whereas in case of "Soccer Balls from India", all the data referred in the bibliography is secondary. Following three sources have been mentioned as basis for including "Soccer balls from India" in this report:-

#### **a) HBO Documentary:**

This documentary was telecast on HBO in USA, based on a report by an Indian NGO "Bachpan Bachao Andolan". The balls of a reputed brand "MITRE" has been shown in this documentary and "MITRE" has already filed a court case in US against HBO on showing the documentary about their product without verifying the facts.

#### **b) Article by Secretary General WFSGI:**

The article mentions about the efforts made by WFSGI along with FIFA to eliminate child labour from the Soccer Ball Industry in Pakistan. Even the photograph shown in the article is from Pakistan. Only in one of the Para in article, it mentions that Indian Sports manufacturers have also adopted the Pakistan's model to fit their unique circumstances. It may be mentioned here that Pakistan, which was in the news a few years ago for use of child labour in soccer balls, is not one of the countries listed by the Department of Labour report for Soccer Balls, whereas India has been included. Presumably Pakistan has been excluded due to its efforts to remove child labour from this sector. This makes India's inclusion even more astonishing since we did not have widespread use of child labour in production of soccer balls in India and in any case have been successful through our focused efforts to make it child-labour free.

This can be verified from the Annual handbook of WFSGI published every year which recognizes the efforts made by Indian Soccer ball industry to keep itself child labour free. The comments from present Secretary General, WFSGI on the report are enclosed for your reference.

#### **c) Report in Newspaper "The Hindu":**

Report clearly mentions the name of same NGO "Bachpan Bachao Andolan" which is conducting this malafide campaign. You should be aware that some NGOs exaggerate an issue to get publicity and, consequently, more funding. On the other hand, newspaper reports like to sensationalize. Use of such sources as a basis for indicting a whole industry is not a credible approach.

### **Additional Information**

We would also like to inform you that Soccer ball manufacturers based in India had formed Sports Goods Foundation of India way back in 1998 which is an organization working on elimination and rehabilitation of child labour in the Sports Goods Industry. 95% of the export of footballs from Punjab to various foreign countries is done by the members of foundation which is providing livelihood to over 20,000 workers. A report on the activities of Sports Goods Foundation of India and efforts put in by this organization in successful elimination of child labour from soccer ball manufacturing can be found at [www.sgfi.org](http://www.sgfi.org).

In light of above facts you would agree that above reports do not provide sufficient ground for inclusion of "Soccer Balls from India" in the report.

We would be grateful if the report is reviewed and the name of "Soccer Balls from India" is removed from list of products identified as using Child Labour. We would be pleased to submit any additional information required by the department relating to this issue.

Kind regards,

Tarun Dewan  
Secretary  
Sports Goods Export Promotion Council  
1E/6, Ram Tirth Nagar  
New Delhi 110 055 (INDIA)  
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