Dear Asia Pacific Industrial Relations Net members and readers,

We are happy to bring the latest news for this October issue. The highlights and new features on this AP-IRNet newsletter include:

- Two featured publications: Minimum wage and its relevance to socio-economic progress in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic: A workers’ perspective; Myanmar garment sub-sector value chain analysis;
- As well as updated news on industrial relations issues in the region.

To ensure that you receive our community updates in the future, please register as an AP Industrial Relations Net member. You can also view more news, resources and events on industrial relations issues in Asia and the Pacific by clicking here.

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**Featured Publications**

**Minimum wage and its relevance to socio-economic progress in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic: A workers’ perspective**

Publishing Year 2015

This paper examines empirical aspects of the regulatory and institutional frameworks and the process of minimum wage adjustment in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, as well as its actual implementation in different sectors – private, public and informal. Included is a review of collective bargaining coverage to measure how such agreements affect wage increases. It also analyses the relationship between the minimum wage and certain socio-economic developments, such as gross domestic product growth rates, consumer price indices, inflation rates, employment...
trends, the national and international poverty lines, labour productivity and social security coverage.

Myanmar garment sub-sector value chain analysis
Publishing Year 2015

Following the repeal of European and American export sanctions on Myanmar, the country’s garment sector is now experiencing new levels of growth. The Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) reports that new garment factories are opened every week, and the number of workers involved in the industry is forecasted to grow from the current 260,000 employees to 600,001 in the next three years.

News Highlights

Cambodia: Situation ripe for strikes: study
The Phnom Penh Post, 30 Sep 2015 - The Short-sightedness, weak adherence to the law and poor working conditions in Cambodia’s garment sector are creating a fertile field for strikes to prevail over negotiations, a recent study released by the Arbitration Council Foundation, an independent labour mediator, has found.

Cambodia: Cambodia garment unions push for minimum wage rise
BangkokPost, 25 Sep 2015 - Negotiations on raising the minimum wage for hundreds of thousands of workers in Cambodia’s vital garment sector were set to begin in the capital Friday.

Cambodia: Strikes a Symptom of Ailing Industry: Study
Khmer Times, 20 Sep 2015 - Demands for higher wages and meal allowances, disputes over unfair dismissals and alleged union discrimination are among the main causes behind the rise in the number of strikes at textile and footwear factories, according to a new study by the Arbitration Council Foundation (ACF).

Bangladesh: Most Bangladeshi garment workers are women, but their union leaders weren’t. Until now.
PRI, 16 Sep 2015 - Only 15 people can fit into the small room on the third floor of a brick-and-corrugated-tin building in Bangladesh’s capital, Dhaka. More people listen from a hallway just outside the room. They all work at Dacca Dyeing, a garment factory that makes clothes for Gap and Target, among other companies. They want to start a union.

China: Discrimination and gender stereotyping still entrenched in Shenzhen’s job market
China Labour Bulletin, 14 Sep 2015 - Company recruiters continually complain to anyone who will listen that it is impossible for them to find the right people for the jobs they are offering. Apparently, at no point do they stop to consider that it is their own pre-conceptions about who the right person should be that is creating their problems, or that, by adopting an equal opportunity approach to recruitment, they would have a much greater chance of finding the right person.

Indonesia: Not just investment: Jobs for locals
The Jakarta Post, 16 Sep 2015 - Investment should go hand-in-hand with job creation. In most government policy arsenals, investment is a key tool designed to
foster employment of its citizens as taxpayers.

**Vietnam: Vietnam raises minimum wage 12.4%**

IndustriALL, 10 Sep 2015 - IndustriALL Global Union welcomes the latest minimum wage increase by Vietnam’s National Wage Council. Coming into effect on 1 January 2016 the 12.4 per cent raise continues the country’s road to a living wage.

**Nepal: Trade Union Roadmap for Nepal Reconstruction Backed by Government**

ITUC, 4 Sep 2015 - The ITUC has welcomed the Nepal government’s support for a trade union Roadmap for reconstruction and development, in the wake of the devastating April 25 earthquake which cost nearly 9,000 lives and left some 22,000 people injured.

**Pakistan: Call to amend laws to protect industrial workers**

LabourWatchPakistan, 3 Sep 2015 - The rate of fatal and non-fatal accidents of the workers engaged in electricity, mining, engineering, textile, construction and chemical and other industrial and commercial industries and agriculture sector have been rising every year on account of prevalence of outdated safety laws promulgated years ago and absence of effective independent labour inspection machinery as required under the principles of ILO Convention No. 81 ratified by the Government of Pakistan.

**Indonesia: Indonesian Unions Mobilise Over Minimum Wages, Layoffs and Labour Laws**

ITUC, 2 Sep 2015 - Indonesia’s main trade union centres KSBSI, KSPI and KSPSI have launched a national campaign over minimum wages and labour laws with a 25,000-strong demonstration of workers in Jakarta.