

# U.S. Bans Imports From 3 Chinese Companies Over Ties to Forced Labor

The government targeted companies involved in making seafood, aluminum and footwear, citing their links to labor programs affecting Chinese minorities.

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The bans add to a list of companies, in industries as varied as textiles, solar panels and seafood processing, that the United States says participate in forced labor programs in China's Xinjiang region. CNS Photo, via Reuters

**By Ana Swanson**  
Ana Swanson covers trade and has written extensively about the U.S. effort to block goods made with forced labor.

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The Department of Homeland Security on Tuesday added three Chinese companies to a list of firms whose products can no longer be exported to the United States, as part of what it described as an escalating crackdown on companies that aid in forced labor programs in Xinjiang.

The companies include a seafood processor, Shandong Meijia Group, that an investigation [by the Outlaw Ocean Project](#) identified as a business employing laborers brought to eastern China from Xinjiang — a far-western region of China where the government has detained and surveilled large numbers of minorities, including Uyghurs.

Another firm, Xinjiang Shenhua Coal and Electricity, is [an aluminum processor](#) whose metal can be found in cars, consumer electronics and other products, a U.S. official said. The third, Dongguan Oasis Shoes, brought Uyghurs and people from other persecuted groups to its footwear factory in Guangdong, the U.S. government said.

With those additions, 68 companies now appear on the so-called entity list of firms that the U.S. government says participate in forced labor programs, nearly double the number at the beginning of the year.

Robert Silvers, an under secretary at the Department of Homeland Security who is chair of a committee overseeing the list, said that the government was accelerating the pace of additions to the list, and that the public should expect that to continue.

“We are going to hold companies to account if they engage in forced labor practices,” he said.

Industries using cotton and tomatoes were among the first to reckon with links in their supply chains to fields in Xinjiang. But in more recent years, companies making [solar panels](#), flooring, [cars](#), electronics, seafood and other goods have discovered that they, too, use components that were made in Xinjiang.

The United States put [the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act](#) into effect two years ago to ban imports made wholly or partly in Xinjiang.

The Chinese government [runs programs](#) in the region to transfer groups of local people to factories, fields and mines around Xinjiang and in other parts of China. The authorities say these programs are aimed at alleviating poverty, but human rights experts say they are often coercive.

The two-year-old law also created the entity list, a list of companies that U.S. officials have tied to forced labor programs. The government initially did not add many companies to the list despite the reported scope of Xinjiang’s labor programs.

Mr. Silvers said the list “absolutely required a ramp-up period.”

“We had no procedures, no staff, no rules of the road for doing this work,” he said. He added that the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act came with no new funding for the department. “So we have dug deep and pulled resources away from other areas to surge toward this priority area,” he said.

Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the homeland security secretary, said in a statement that the department would continue to investigate companies that use forced labor and hold those entities responsible. “We urge stakeholders across industry, civil society and our international partners to work with us to eliminate the scourge of forced labor,” he said.

Last month, the department announced that 26 companies linked to the apparel and textile industry had been added to the list. It will announce further additions on a rolling basis, as soon as it has evidence that a designation is warranted, Mr. Silvers said.

Last month, [major automakers](#) saw their products halted at U.S. ports after they were found to be importing a part made by a company tied to forced labor in Xinjiang.

**Ana Swanson** covers trade and international economics for The Times and is based in Washington. She has been a journalist for more than a decade. [More about Ana Swanson](#)

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