



# 1,000 Workers Strike at Factory That Makes Keyboards for Apple and IBM

Wednesday, November 23, 2011

Guangdong's rising tide of worker unrest continues unabated, this time at a factory owned by what is considered one of the world's largest keyboard manufacturers. Yesterday, 1,000 workers staged a strike at the Jingmo Electronics Corporation's Shenzhen factory, which is located in the 3<sup>rd</sup> industrial district of Shajing township and employs 3,000 people. This corporation is owned by the Taiwan-based Jingyuan Computer Group, which mainly produces keyboards and other computer components. According to its public statements, the company has been an Original Design Manufacturer (ODM) and Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) for name-brand multinationals that have included Apple, IBM, LG, Tulip, Legend and Founder Great Wall.

On the morning of November 22nd, 1,000 workers at the factory held a meeting in which they decided to strike, owing to the unreasonable overtime demands made on them by management. One by one, they walked off the job and moved to block National highway 107 in protest. By the time the protesters decided to end the demonstration and disperse, authorities had assigned several hundred police officers, including riot police, to the protest.

According to what workers have told China Labor Watch, the motivation behind the strike was the factory's decision to make workers work nightly overtime. The factory decided to require workers to work from 6 p.m. until 12 p.m., and sometimes even until 2 a.m. the next morning, in addition to their regular work hours (7-11:30 a.m., 1-5 p.m.) Workers now commonly worked anywhere from 100 to 120 hours of overtime a month. Moreover, the factory refused to let the workers work this overtime on Saturday, which would necessitate paying them double wages in accordance with Chinese Labor Law.

Apart from the overtime issue, the workers said that they also had other grievances with the factory. These include the high rate of workplace injuries (there have been nearly 20 recently), mass layoffs of older workers and the lack of any benefits. Apart from these more tangible hardships, factory managers often verbally abuse and bully the workers, causing them severe emotional distress.

As a result of the strike, the factory now states they will reduce each employee's average overtime and allow them to work overtime on Saturday. China Labor Watch calls upon Apple, IBM and the other clients of this factory to assume responsibility for these workers' dissatisfaction and work with the factory to improve the working conditions in the factory. We particularly urge Apple to take responsibility, as there are more than 300 workers working on the Apple keyboard assembly line. Additionally, Executive Director of China Labor Watch Li Qiang added that the factory itself needs to change its management system to accommodate the workers' increased awareness of protecting their own rights.

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