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CLW Labor News Brief (Oct. 10 - Nov. 10)

Monday, November 3, 2014

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Shenzhen Workers Demonstrate for Wages [LINK](#)

(RedChinacn.net, 10/11/2014) According to photos and comments posted on the internet by workers, 162 workers from Shenzhen Asiacorp Electronics, a factory which produces digital voice recorders and electronic cosmetics such as razors, demonstrated in the street and demanded unpaid wages on October 11. The Japanese boss of Asiacorp Electronics disappeared without paying more than one million RMB in wages, according to workers in the posts.

HP Cut Orders, Foxconn Workers Walk Off Job [LINK](#)

(Sina Tech, 10/13/2014) At least a thousand Foxconn workers in Chongqing went on a strike demanding higher pay on October 8. They held a banner saying that "We aren't robots. We need to eat and feed our families." The strike was caused by reduced overtime hours related to cuts in orders from HP. After four hours of negotiation, Foxconn management and workers finally reached an agreement. CLW released a press release on the strike.



Workers from Shenzhen Asiacorp Electronics holding signs that say "Give back my sweat and blood money" at the gate of the company.

According to the Sina article analysis linked above, this strike reflects larger patterns at Foxconn, the world's largest contract manufacturer of electronics devices. The company is stuck in a dilemma between thin profit margins and frequent labor disputes. Understood in this context, Foxconn is looking for a way out. However, Foxconn's efforts to improve production efficiency by using robots at Foxconn has reduced workers' wages because, in addition to reducing costs of manufacture, automation has also cut down workers' overtime hours.

Hundreds of Workers Strike Over Wages Deductions [LINK](#)

(10/16/2014) According to online pictures and worker posts, on October 15, hundreds of workers from Qiangling Zhaoming company, located in Lianshui Prefecture, Huai'an of Jiangsu Province, went on a strike to protest against wage deductions. The factory produces efficient lighting (such as LEDs) and is owned by American company TCP Lighting, based out of Aurora, Ohio. One worker at the plant wrote that they had to labor 15-20 hours per day, without overtime pay. In addition, workers were forced to work on holidays did not receive due overtime wages. Workers only had 15 minutes for lunch and used toilets only at a specific time. The company promised to pay 4,000 RMB (\$653) per month, but workers only received 3,500 RMB (\$571). Management was also accused of abusive practices like yelling at workers.

Dongguan Yue Yuen Factory Builds Labor Union [LINK](#)

(Sina Guangdong, 10/28/2014) Since the massive Yue Yuen strike in April over unpaid social insurance, the official chapter of the labor union in Guangdong Province entered the factory to help build the union within the enterprise. On October 28, the labor union of Yue Yuen Industrial Holdings was officially established, electing the chairman and vice chairman of the labor union. In addition, the ratio of Yue Yuen workers who are union members has reached 69% from the previous 5%.

Robots KO Millennial Workers; Fantasy and Reality for the Manufacturing Industry [LINK](#)

(Tengxun Technology, 2014.11.10) Is it possible to introduce robots into the assembly line to replace human workers? It's an idea that has been increasingly popular recently. "Yes, robots are faster and don't complain about overtime." Industrial robots have already been lauded as the transformative upgrade needed to deal with the increasingly difficult labor issues plaguing Chinese manufacturing. However, whether or not robots can truly replace human workers remains unknown. On the contrary, the production of Chinese made robots appears to be repeating the same old patterns of Chinese manufacturing, according to this report.