



PROJECT DETAILS

PC global is a project about the integration of developing countries in the global value chain of computer production. We provide information about working conditions and ecological effects of production and about e-waste. Our objective is to create alternatives to the 'race to the bottom' of labour, environmental and social rights. Activities include: public events, publications, educational material, documentary and networking.

NEWS ON WORKERS' RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



Case of Gold Peak

- 2003, three factories of the Gold Peak Industrial Holding Company (GP) in China, producing cadmium batteries for laptops, contaminate 400 workers - at least

eight officially diagnosed with cadmium poisoning

- 2004, the first group of GP workers sue the company. Their bid for a just settlement fails
- June 2005, court finds in favour of GP
- Jan 2006, another three workers are poisoned with cadmium and more than two dozen workers have higher than normal level of cadmium. Evidence shows poor levels of occupational health and safety training, education and safeguards in GP factories. Workers have been threatened with criminal charges by GP for petitioning the central government in Beijing
- Globalisation Monitor (GM), a Hong Kong based NGO, takes up the case and demands justice
- July 2006, GP sues GM and two other HK groups for 'defamation'
- September 2006, protests held outside GP's shareholder's meeting in Hong Kong.

For more information and tips for action, visit GM website: <http://globalmon.org.hk>

Case of Foxconn - Apple

- June 2006, British *Mail on Sunday* publishes article about labour conditions in China of Foxconn Technology, the contract manufacturer which produces iPods for Apple, amongst other products for various companies. Report

....



reveals that workers work 12 hours a day for less than the minimum wage, at US\$50/ month. A few days later, two Chinese reporters are sued by Foxconn over another report published in the *Chinese Business News* revealing similar situations for workers.



- In response to reports, Apple launches investigation into Foxconn
- September 2006, Foxconn reduces suit to only one symbolic yuan after national and international pressure
- Blog set up by the Chinese reporters receives thousands of entries in the first hour. Entries include Foxconn workers elaborating on harsh conditions factories. Weblog mysteriously disappears from web. However, selected comments were translated to English by activists based in Shenzhen, China, see www.pcglobal.org
- The local Chinese government has said that Foxconn must have trade union branches from ACFTU by end of the year

For more information: www.pcglobal.org

NEWS ON ACTIVISTS-NGOS

♣ *Greenpeace International*, September. New campaign: 'Think Different: Green My Apple'. Greenpeace asks Apple consumers to run the campaign and create the campaign materials themselves. All the information and the raw materials needed to get started can be found at: <http://www.greenpeace.org/apple/>

♣ *International Electronic Network* Aim: to stimulate & strengthen actions by civil society worldwide and improve corporate policy & practice on human rights compliance and sustainable production in the electronics industry. The coordination point is hosted by Somo, Amsterdam. www.somo.nl



NGO FOCUS This newsletter, we focus on two NGOs in Asia that are promoting the situation of workers, particularly in China. Two members of these organisations are coming to Germany for workshops in November (see 'events' below)

♣ **ASIA MONITOR RESOURCE CENTRE (AMRC)** is an independent NGO focusing on Asian labour concerns. Founded in 1976, AMRC promotes workers' rights and democratic labour movements in Asia-Pacific. The Centre supports a democratic and independent labour movement promoting the principles of labour rights, gender consciousness, and active workers' participation. AMRC provides information, consultation, internships, and conducts research, training, advocacy, campaigns, labour networking, and related services to trade unions, pro-labour groups, related NGOs, academics, researchers, and professionals on labour issues. <http://www.amrc.org.hk>

....



♣**CHINESE WORKING WOMEN NETWORK** was set up in 1996 as a NGO with the mission of promoting betterment for the lives of Chinese migrant women workers and developing feminist awareness of workers' empowerment. It consists of labor organizers, feminists, university professors, researchers, social workers, cultural activists, workers and students. <http://www.cwwn.org/>

WHAT TO READ

Challenging the Chip: Labor Rights and Environmental Justice in the Global Electronics Industry Editors: Ted Smith, David Sonnenfeld, and David Pellow, Temple University Press, 2006

Edited by activists and seasoned analysts of environmental justice and labor rights issues, this book chronicles the impacts of the global electronic industry on the environment and on workers. It also highlights the creative ways in which activists, government agencies, and others have attempted to reform the industry - through resistance, persuasion, and regulation. A large number of Asian organisations active in this field are also introduced. For another review, see <http://www.metamute.org/en/Environmentalism-for-Net-2.0>

'Report on the working conditions in the Mexican electronics industry: New Technology Workers', CEREAL (Centre for Reflection and Action on Labor issues), June 2006 As a partner of CAFOD contributing to the 'Clean up your computer' report of 2004, CEREAL documents two case studies of violations of human rights in the electronics industry, showing that little has changed since the initial report. Widespread discrimination, sexual harassment, low wages, employment instability and lack of trade union freedom are widespread in the industry. There are still huge gaps between companies' stated policies and codes of conduct and the day-to-day experience of workers. While some companies have begun auditing working

conditions in supplier's factories and contributed comments to the report, the study highlights that there is still a long way to go to guarantee workers are treated with dignity. <http://www.cafod.org.uk>

***Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace*, Pun Ngai, Duke University Press 2005**

Academic Pun Ngai chronicles the struggles of the *dagongmei*, working girls from rural areas who migrate to urban factories enduring sweatshop conditions in the factories of post-Mao China. Spending eight months in an electronics factory in the Special Economic Zone of Shenzhen,



Ngai dissects the methods of modern transnational capital and also reveals the sisterhood and resistance of the working women. Ngai illuminates the workers' perspectives and experiences, describing the lure of consumer desire and the tiny details of factory life.

'Guide to Greener Electronics' Greenpeace, August 2006 The report ranks the 14 top mobile and PC companies on their use of harmful chemicals and electronic waste recycling. Nokia and Dell share the top spot in the ranking. Nokia leads the way on eliminating toxic chemicals, since the end of 2005 all new models of mobiles are free of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and all new components to

....



be free of brominated flame retardants (BFRs) from 2007. Companies like Apple, Acer and Motorola were ranked at the bottom in the report.<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/news/green-electronics-guide-ewaste250806>

‘Toxic Chemicals in Computers’, Greenpeace, September 2006 Determining the hazardous substances of five brands of laptop computers<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/toxic-chemicals-in-computers>



EVENTS

Two activists from Hong Kong/China have been invited to discuss conditions in hi-tech sweat-shops and alternatives to the global ‘race-to-the-bottom’:



Panel Discussions in Köln 27-11-06 and Berlin 29-11-06

Discuss the situation of factory workers in China from feminist perspectives. Why are MNCs investing in China? What is the critical Chinese perspective on the Code of Conduct? What organising strategies exist?

Workshop in Berlin 30-11-06

Elaborating on the above topics, the workshop will be an exchange between activists from Hong Kong and German organisations

For all the details, see www.pcglobal.org

Contact: sarah.bormann@weed-online.org

PUN NGAI Author of ‘Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace’, Assoc. Professor for Social Science at Univ. of Hong Kong and President of Chinese Women Working Network

MAY WONG Associated with Asia Monitor Resource Centre, campaigning on Gold Peak issue.

PC global is supported by:



Nordrhein-Westfälische Stiftung für Umwelt und Entwicklung

....

