

# **Condemnation against continued violence directed at a Shenzhen labour group: A joint statement from Hong Kong civil organizations**

Wednesday 28 November 2007, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 27 November 2007).

In the recent weeks, we, a group of Hong Kong groups and unions who cover labour issues in China have learned of a series of violent attacks on a labour group and its legal person in Shenzhen. We are very upset, concerned and enraged about the recent development.

The Shenzhen Dagongzhe Centre (DGZ Centre) has been long supported by the general public and Hong Kong groups. It provides a free library, labour law education and free legal consultation to migrant workers in Shenzhen. In recent months, it has been involved in promoting knowledge around the "Labour Contract Law", a new law the national government is introducing to help safeguard workers; and it has provided legal advice in order to de-fuse the current growing tension between employers and workers.

On 11 Oct and 14 Nov 2007, a group of unknown and unidentified people came to destroy the properties of DGZ Centre. On 20 Nov, the legal person of the centre, Huang Qingnan was attacked by two people with choppers, on the way to visit a injured worker, after just leaving centre. Huang is seriously injured. In recent month, workers reported they had also been assaulted and verbally threatened by their employers when claiming their wages. Reports to the police have not met with success or interest. They are disappointed to find the local government behaving very indifferently.

The attacks on the centre and Mr. Huang prove that interest groups which are trying to paralyze the implementation of this law, distorting the central governments labour policies and revealing openly their dislike of independent labour organizations. If the DGZ Centre's case is not properly followed up and no proper investigation is undertaken, it will give a regrettable and worrying message that violent prevails. Civil groups in Shenzhen and also other parts of China would face more assaults and their development could be limited.

Although we are in based Hong Kong, we care for China's development and we work for the education and welfare of Chinese workers. In order to develop a harmonious society, fairness and justice must be safeguarded. Therefore, the case of DGZ centre must be resolved and the safety of civil groups in China must be guaranteed.

## ***We demand that the Central government & the Shenzhen city government:***

1. Openly condemns & investigates all violent incidents, and in particular the attack on Huang Qingnan;
2. Helps DGZ Centre to re-start its works and provides Huang Qingnan with appropriate medical treatment and rehabilitation;

The centre staff reported the incident to the local police who sent two policemen over to take photos of the damage. Statements were made to the police by a staff member and Huang Qingnan; the Centre's license holder [the term "registrant" is used in Chinese]. However the police did not take any further action and the staff were informed that it was a minor event since nobody was injured.

**Incident two: 14 November 2007 (Wednesday) at the Dagongzhe—Migrant Worker Centre, Shenzhen.**

On the 14 November 2007, just over one month since the previous attack, at around half past four in the afternoon, when a dozen or so workers and staff were present, four men appeared outside the front door of DGZ Centre and immediately began smashing the door and then the equipment inside with steel water pipes they held in their hands. In the space of a few minutes, the glass door, OSH equipment showcase, desks, water machine, whiteboard and first-aid box etc., were all destroyed. One of the assailants told us in the midst of the attack; “see, you can’t operate like this now”.

They then ran out of the centre right and got into a white mini-van waiting for them. The car-plate read “Guangdong BMXXXX”, but the rest of the plate was covered. At the same time, we saw three policemen, patrolling in dark-blue uniforms, just outside our centre and looking on at the events, without doing anything. When we looked into their eyes, they turned their faces away.

I immediately called the local Tongle police station, the only one in the Longgang district police station. The Tongle station sent a police officer (number 064643) to write down the testimony of the staff member who witnessed the attack. However when staff requested to see the video of the CCTV set up on the centre’s street, it was claimed that the video did not have a “recording function”. The policeman also implied that the incident was minor as nobody was injured in the two attacks and he estimated losses at only some one to two thousand Yuan.

**Incident three: 20 November 2007 (Tuesday) in the street near the Dagongzhe—Migrant Worker Centre, Shenzhen.**

At about three thirty or so in the afternoon of the 20 November, Huang Qingnan, the DGZ Centre’s license holder left the DGZ Centre and was going to the hospital to visit an injured worker. When he passed the gas station, opposite to block 66, Longhu New Village, he saw a worker he knew, who was watching the people playing mahjong there. Suddenly two men with knives came up to Huang and attacked him from the back. They first cut and stabbed his neck, back, followed by his thighs and legs. His legs received most of the cuts and stabs. One resident threw two bricks at the assassins and chased them for several metres, before they took a motorbike and managed to escape. Two patrolling police were around but they did not manage to catch anyone. Huang was severely injured and lost a lot of blood. The local residents called Emergency number 120 and an ambulance arrived to take him to hospital.

He remains in serious condition.

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