

Foxconn worker dies in China; 10th in a year

May 25 2010, By WILLIAM FOREMAN , Associated Press Writer



In this photo taken on Feb 24, 2010, a recruiter from Foxconn talks to job applicants outside the factory in Shenzhen in southern China's Guangdong province. A Chinese employee of Foxconn Technology Group fell from a building and died Tuesday, May 25, 2010, state-run media said, in the 10th such death this year at the world's largest contract maker of electronics, such as the iPod, Dell computers and Nokia phones. (AP Photo)

(AP) -- A Chinese employee of Foxconn Technology Group fell from a building and died Tuesday, state-run media said, in the 10th such death this year at the world's largest contract maker of electronics, such as the iPod, Dell computers and Nokia phones.

Police have yet to determine if the victim, Li Hai, 19, committed suicide after working at the plant for only 42 days, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. Foxconn did not immediately comment on the death.

The death is the ninth at Foxconn's massive plant in the southern city of

Shenzhen, which employs more than 300,000 people. Two other workers have tried to kill themselves by jumping from buildings in Shenzhen but they survived. Another suicide occurred at a smaller plant in northern Hebei province in January.

Labor activists say the string of suicides back up their long-standing allegations that workers toil in terrible conditions at Foxconn. They claim shifts are long, the [assembly line](#) moves too fast and managers enforce military-style discipline on the work force.

In Hong Kong on Tuesday, about a dozen labor activists protested at Foxconn offices in the Chinese territory. They held signs that said, "Foxconn lacks a conscience" and "Suicide is no accident." The protesters from the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions burned cardboard cutouts resembling iPhones.

But Foxconn has insisted that workers are treated well and are protected by social responsibility programs that ensure their welfare. The Shenzhen factory is perennially a popular place to work, with hordes of applicants lining up for jobs during the hiring season.

On Monday, Foxconn Chairman Terry Gou told reporters, "We are certainly not running a sweatshop. We are confident we'll be able to stabilize the situation soon."

Tuesday's reported death came just three days after a 21-year-old man who worked in the logistics department jumped from a four-story building shortly after finishing the [night shift](#) Friday. His motivations were still not known.

The highest-profile [Foxconn](#) death happened last July when Sun Danyong, 25, jumped to his [death](#) after being interrogated over a missing [iPhone](#) prototype.

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