



13-Year Old Boy Dies at Shoe Factory in Dongguan

Monday, December 8, 2014

Chinese news recently reported about the death of a 13-year old child worker at the Rihui Shoe Factory in Daojiao Township of Dongguan City. After the boy's uncle pleaded for three hours at the factory gate for someone to help him, a manager gave him 200 RMB (\$32) and told him to go to the hospital. But it was already too late.

CLW sent an investigator to gather more information. Rihui mainly produces women's footwear for Chinese companies; it also supplies shoes for the international brand Ralph Bossi. The factory employs over 100 workers and each gate of the factory grounds has a guard dog which barks at any strangers who get close. The dogs leaves the gate every fifteen minutes or so.

The factory has been certified through BSCI (Business Social Compliance Initiative). The day that the investigator went to Rihui, the company was preparing for an inspection on the following day. For this, management was ensuring that office personnel readied documentation, including labor contracts for those workers who had been working without one.

Workers described some of their working conditions to CLW: they work overtime until 10:00 PM, the factory provides them with room and board, food expenses are not deducted from their wages, and the only portion of their living expenses which are deducted are water and electricity payments. Workers who do not live in the dormitory are given a living subsidy of 20 RMB (\$3.24) per month. The factory does not buy social insurance for the workers as required by law, and monthly wages come out to approximately 3000-3500 RMB (\$486-\$567).

Many of the workers interviewed by CLW were unwilling to talk much about the child worker incident or said that they did not know about it. People at the restaurants and stores in the vicinity of the factory all said that they also did not know much about the dead child worker. The guard in front of the factory gate said he had just started working at the factory and was unaware of the situation.

Links to Chinese news stories:

www.hkcna.hk/content/2014/1205/319001.shtml

<http://gs.people.com.cn/BIG5/n/2014/1206/c188868-23133064.html>

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