



'Mass suicide' protest at China Foxconn factory

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Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2085005/300-Foxcon-staff-Xbox-360-plant-China-threaten-mass-suicide-pay.html>

Three hundred staff at a Foxconn factory that builds Xbox 360s have threatened to commit mass suicide if their wage demands are not met, it emerged today.

Employees working for electronics giant Foxconn in Wuhan, China, claim the company has failed to hand over wages they're owed. According to reports, the row broke out following demands for a pay increase for 100 employees on January 2.

Management at Foxconn - the world's largest contract electronics manufacturer and a crucial link in the supply chains of Apple, Dell, Nintendo and Sony - then responded with an ultimatum. It said employees could quit with one month's compensation awarded for each year with the plant or go back to working. Many employees quit, but Foxconn then allegedly dishonored the agreement and awarded former employees nothing. Around 300 workers returned to the plant in an uproar, and staged their protest on the plant's roof on January 3.

Wuhan's mayor intervened through hours of negotiations, walking them back from the roof's edge until 9pm when workers agreed to return to work, according to China.com.

Calls to Foxconn were not immediately returned.

A spokesman for Microsoft, the owner of the Xbox 360 brand, told CBS Seattle:

"Microsoft takes working conditions in the factories that manufacture its products very seriously, and we are currently investigating this issue. We have a stringent Vendor Code of Conduct that spells out our expectations, and we monitor working conditions closely on an ongoing basis and address issues as they emerge.

Microsoft is committed to the fair treatment and safety of workers employed by our vendors, and to ensuring conformance with Microsoft policy."

Contract manufacturer Foxconn, which also counts Dell, Hewlett-Packard and Nokia among its clients, came under fire in 2010 when workers successfully committed suicide in a plant that manufactured components for Apple.

Then, Foxconn told media that it considered every worker's life to be valuable while some plants required workers to sign contracts stating that they wouldn't kill themselves.

Wired magazine was granted access to the factories, which installed nets that would catch anyone attempting to jump.

Touring the Longhua plant in 2011, Terry Gou, the chairman of Foxconn parent Hon Hai Precision, said suicide rates among workers in his plants were smaller compared to the country's and added a country's suicide rate typically climbs when its GDP does, Forbes reported.



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