

Honda's Chinese Suppliers Continue Strikes

Elaine Kurtenbach, AP Business Writer

SHANGHAI (AP) — Honda Motor Co. said Tuesday it was assessing the impact of a walkout by some workers at one of its parts suppliers in China, just days after resolving a strike that froze car production at four factories.

The strike by some workers at Foshan Fengfu Autoparts Co. in Foshan, a city in southern China's Guangdong province, began Monday morning, said company spokesman Keitaro Yamamoto.

The factory, which is 65 percent owned by Honda subsidiary Yutaka Giken Co. and 35 percent by Taiwanese firm Moonstone Holding Co., makes exhaust pipes and other parts for Honda's Odyssey, Accord and Fit models.

Yamamoto, in Tokyo, said the company was still trying to confirm how many workers were involved in the strike and why they walked off the job. It is also studying what impact the walkout might have on production.

The strike came just days after Honda resumed production following a two-week strike at a wholly owned partsplant that had crippled four factories in China due to a lack of parts.

That dispute was resolved last week and workers returned to work Friday after a wage deal was reached, Honda said.

The conflicts reflect rising tensions between workers and foreign companies that rely on China as a source of cheap labor and a fast-growing market. Companies in China are finding it harder to attract and keep workers, who are demanding better pay and working conditions.

Merry Electronics Shenzhen Co. said Tuesday that it had resolved a strike that began over the weekend by workers who were disgruntled over pay and working hours.

"The strike is over now and the problem has been resolved," said a female staffer who answered the phone at Merry Electronics' factory, which has more than 10,000 workers. She would give only her surname, Zhen.

Workers were unhappy over working extra weekend shifts without extra pay and because the company had allegedly not followed up on an earlier promise to raise base pay to 1,050 yuan (\$154) from the current 900 yuan (\$132), the state-run newspaper China Daily and other reports said.

Video clips on a labor-oriented Web site showed hundreds of workers in white shirts and black pants blocking streets near the factory.

Honda's Chinese Suppliers Continue Strikes

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

Details on the amount of money sought by the workers at Honda's Foshan Fengfu were not available and calls to the factory rang unanswered, apart from one staffer who picked up the phone and only said she was "not allowed to tell the truth to media."

Honda staff in China refused comment on the strike.

The Hong Kong newspaper South China Morning Post reported that workers at Foshan Fengfu were unhappy about losing pay from days lost when Honda suspended production during the earlier strike.

It said about 250 workers were on strike. Honda says the plant employs a total of 600 workers.

The strikes could hinder Honda's efforts to expand production capacity in China by nearly one-third by 2012 to meet surging demand in the world's biggest auto market.

Labor conflicts are not uncommon in China, but most go unreported. The latest spate of higher profile disputes followed news of suicides at Taiwan's Foxconn Technology Group, a contract manufacturer in China of iPhones and other name-brand electronics.

Activists blamed the suicides on stressful conditions and overwork. Foxconn has since announced a 30 percent pay raise, with another to follow in October, among other measures aimed at improving worker welfare.

—

Associated Press writer Tomoko Hosaka in Tokyo and researcher Ji Chen in Shanghai contributed to this report.

Source URL (retrieved on 09/23/2014 - 9:30pm):

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2010/06/hondas-chinese-suppliers-continue-strikes>