

Chinese electric car brand NIO says 2 killed in vehicle fall

June 24 2022



The logo for Chinese automaker NIO is seen at the Shanghai Auto Show in Shanghai on April 19, 2021. Two people involved in testing for the electric car brand NIO died when one of its vehicles fell three stories from a Shanghai parking structure on Thursday, the company said Friday, June 24, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan

Two people involved in testing for the electric car brand NIO died when one of its vehicles fell three stories from a Shanghai parking structure, the company said Friday.

The crash Thursday was under investigation but appeared to be an accident and "not caused by the vehicle," the company said in a statement. It said the employees who died were "digital cabin testers," one from NIO and the other from a partner.

The vehicle fell from the third floor of a parking structure adjacent to the company's Shanghai Innovation Port building, the company said.

Photos in Chinese media showed the vehicle lying on its side with its roof caved in, surrounded by broken glass and emergency workers.

NIO Inc., founded in 2014, is a Chinese-Western hybrid with bases in Shanghai, London and Silicon Valley and the most prominent premium-priced Chinese brand in a crowded electric vehicle industry with dozens of competitors. Its early investors included Chinese tech giants Tencent, Baidu and Lenovo.

The company has a service that allows owners to swap drained batteries instead of recharging them. It has set up 143 battery-swap stations in cities including Beijing and Shanghai.

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Citation: Chinese electric car brand NIO says 2 killed in vehicle fall (2022, June 24) retrieved 5 December 2023 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2022-06-chinese-electric-car-brand-nio.html>

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