

Former Samsung executive accused of trying to copy an entire chip plant in China

The data breach allegedly cost Samsung \$230 million.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol recently declared the chip manufacturing industry to be in an “all-out war,” and the latest developments certainly support that statement. Prosecutors in the Suwon District have indicted a former Samsung executive for allegedly stealing semiconductor plant blueprints and technology from the leading chipmaker, *BusinessKorea* reports. They didn’t name the 65-year-old defendant, who also previously served as vice president of another Korean chipmaker SK Hynix, but claimed he stole the information between 2018 and 2019. The leak reportedly cost Samsung about \$230 million.

The defendant allegedly planned to build a semiconductor in Xi’an, China, less than a mile from an existing Samsung plant. He hired 200 employees from SK Hynix and Samsung to obtain their trade secrets while also teaming up with an unnamed Taiwanese electronics manufacturing company that pledged \$6.2 billion to build the new semiconductor plant — the partnership fell through. However, the defendant was able to secure about \$358 million from Chinese investors, which he used to create prototypes in a Chengdu, China-based plant. The plant was reportedly also built using stolen Samsung information, according to prosecutors.

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