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China safety body says rules ignored in mine flood

XIANGNING, China – Mine officials ignored safety rules and danger warnings in their haste to open a coal mine in northern China, leading to a flood that has trapped 153 workers since the weekend, a government safety body said Wednesday.



Officials say there have been no signs of life at the Wangjialing mine in Shanxi province since 108 miners escaped or were rescued following the flooding Sunday. Desperate relatives have traveled from afar to the site to demand that efforts to save the missing miners be speeded up.

About 1,000 rescuers have been working around the clock at the mine in southern Shanxi province, tunneling and laying pipes to drain away water, but hopes are fading. The flood was triggered after workers who were tunneling broke through into an old shaft filled with water, the State Administration of Work Safety said in a notice posted on its Web site.