

# Fears Rise for Over 50 Missing From S. Korean Ship That Sank Near Russia

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Fishing vessel Oryong 501 operated by Sajo Industries, which sank in the Bering Sea on Monday.

SEOUL — More than 50 crew members from a South Korean fishing ship that sank in the western Bering Sea were feared dead Tuesday, as furious relatives blamed the ship's owner and its captain for not doing enough to save their family members from the frigid waters a day earlier.

Russian coast guard helicopters and at least five fishing ships were scouring the area in search of the missing, with authorities finding at least one empty lifeboat Tuesday. Officials from the ship's South Korean parent company said they were hanging onto a "glimmer of hope," but with continued rough seas and bad weather, there were dwindling expectations that the fishermen would be found.

At a gathering at the company's headquarters, relatives of the missing fishermen wondered whether the captain was too late in taking emergency measures after the ship started sinking amid high waves Monday. Some blamed Sajo Industries, the canned tuna company that owns the ship, for not ordering him to evacuate the vessel earlier, according to Kim Kang-ho, a

company official.

"Stop blaming the captain! The company should have ordered an evacuation in such a crisis," a person believed to be a relative was seen in TV footage shouting at a company official.

Authorities rescued seven crew members and recovered one body after the ship sank, but bad weather and rough water conditions complicated the search for the others, an official from the South Korean fisheries and oceans ministry said on condition of anonymity because of office rules.

The crew included 35 Indonesians, 13 Filipinos, 11 South Koreans and one Russian inspector, the fisheries and oceans ministry official said. Russian authorities said there were 62 people aboard the ship, which sank in the western part of the Bering Sea, near Russia.

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