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Syktyvkar Identified as a Russian Virus Epicenter

By The Barents Observer

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Syktyvkar's Yezvinsky hospital is currently under full quarantine. **Pixabay**

The number of coronavirus infections in Russia's republic of Komi has increased steadily since the first case was confirmed on March 16. Regional health authorities now say that a total of 54 people are confirmed to be carriers of the virus.

This number is among highest number in the country. Only the Moscow region, St. Petersburg and the Sverdlovsk region have higher number of cases, figures from a national coronavirus mapping service indicate.

An additional, a total of 2015 people are under medical observation, of whom 1,076 may have contracted the virus abroad, regional health authorities said.

The Yezvinsky hospital in the regional capital of Syktyvkar is the hotbed of the virus. On March 20, a total of 15 patients were confirmed to be carrying the virus. The hospital is

currently under full quarantine.

According to regional deputy health minister Igor Maklakov, all personnel and patients are being tested and no one is allowed to enter or leave the premises.

At the same time, regional authorities say they are experiencing a shortage of protective gear. The problem was addressed in a meeting with regional Governor Sergey Gaplikov last week, and a local garment factory was commissioned to produce the equipment.

“The work is proceeding according to plans [and] we have concluded agreements with the Sosnogorsk sewing factory, and already get finished products,” says Aleksandr Burtsev, leader of the regional civil defense and emergency situation committee. A total of 77 protective suits and 10,000 masks had been produced by Monday this week, Burtsev explains.

From March 31, the Komi government introduced a self-isolation regime that allows citizens to move outside of their homes only in cases of work needs and emergency situations. Locals can also go to grocery stores and walk their dogs within 100 meters of their houses.

The republic of Komi has a population of about 850,000 and is located next to northern regions of Arkhangelsk, the Nenets autonomous district and the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district.

In Arkhangelsk the official number of infected people is 5, while the Yamal-Nenets and Nenets regions have not recorded any cases.

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