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Coronavirus Outbreak Hits Novatek's Arctic LNG Construction Site

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Novaya Gazeta reported that employees are continuing to work as usual. **Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency**

The Murmansk region's coronavirus outbreak is largely concentrated at a construction site run by one of Russia's biggest liquefied natural gas (LNG) producers, the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper reported Wednesday.

The region in Russia's Arctic recorded 137 new infections on Wednesday, most of which were among employees at Novatek's construction site in the village of Belokamenka. A total of 206 coronavirus cases have been reported in Belokamenka, making up more than three-quarters of the Murmansk region's 265 cases.

A state of emergency has been declared at the site, which is building a large-capacity offshore LNG facility, but employees are continuing to work as usual, Novaya Gazeta reported.

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The newspaper cited workers as saying that they haven't been provided with face masks or gloves and that social distancing isn't observed in their workplace.

Murmansk region governor Andrei Chibis said that Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry had deployed a mobile hospital to Belokamenka in response to the outbreak.

Between 9,000 and 11,000 workers from across Russia, Belarus and Turkey reportedly live and work at the construction site.

Novatek is Russia's largest non-state-run gas producer and the country's second-largest gas producer overall.

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