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Naval Chiefs at Russian Submarine Ceremony Ignore Coronavirus Safety Rules

By The Barents Observer

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Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Admiral Nikolai Evmenov handing over the St. Andrew's naval flag to the commander of the Knyaz Vladimir. **Press Service of the Defense Ministry / TASS**

Russian officials handing over a ballistic missile submarine to the Northern Fleet on Friday did not wear masks or practice social distancing, despite the ceremony taking place in the city with the highest number of coronavirus cases in the northern Arkhangelsk region.

The flag-raising ceremony for the *Knyaz Vladimir* (Prince Vladimir) took place in the Sevmash shipyard in Severodvinsk and was attended by the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Admiral Nikolai Evmenov, the Commander of the Northern Fleet Aleksandr Moiseev and other dignitaries.

Severodvinsk has reported 1,605 cases of Covid-19, according to regional health authorities in

Arkhangelsk. Of the infected, 1,163 work at the Sevmash and Zvezdochka naval shipyards, regional news outlet 29.ru reported on Friday.

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The Vkontakte social media page monitoring the coronavirus situation in Arkhangelsk region reported 42 new cases over the past day, 32 of them shipyard employees.

Due to the serious coronavirus outbreak in Severodvinsk, the city has been closed to the public since Saturday.

Photos of the ceremony published by the Sevmash shipyard and the Defense Ministry's press service showed dozens of non-crew members shoulder-to-shoulder on the deck of the submarine.

The *Knyaz Vladimir* is expected to sail from Severdovinsk toward her new homeport of Gadzhiyevo on the Kola Peninsula in the nearest future.

The submarine is a Borei-A class submarine that can carry 16 Bulava missiles. Each missile is believed to hold 6 to 10 nuclear warheads.

Sevmash is building a total of eight Borei-A class submarines. Half of them will be based with the Northern Fleet on the Kola Peninsula, while the other half will sail with Russia's Pacific Fleet.

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