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**BULGARIA'S HEALTH MINISTER WANTS TEMPORARY BAN ON FOREIGNERS ENTERING COUNTRY EXTENDED BEYOND MAY 13**

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The Sofia Globe (10 May 2020)

Bulgaria's Health Minister Kiril Ananiev wants the temporary ban on foreigners entering Bulgaria, decreed as a measure against the spread of Covid-19, extended after the State of Emergency ends on May 13.

Interviewed on May 10 by public broadcaster Bulgarian National Radio, Ananiev said that he also wants the 14-day mandatory quarantine for Bulgarians returning to the country to continue after the end of the State of Emergency.

Weeks ago, Ananiev issued an order banning the entry of non-EU nationals to Bulgaria. The order also listed a number of other countries, including current and former member states of the European Union, the entry of whose citizens – and other travellers from – into Bulgaria is banned.

These include people, irrespective of nationality, arriving from Italy, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg.

The restriction does not apply to the entry into Bulgaria of non-EU nationals who have permanent or long-term residence or who are family members of Bulgarian citizens.

Ananiev told BNR in the May 10 interview that a decision would be made in two weeks about whether to re-open kindergartens.

He will meet Minister of Culture Boil Banov on May 11 to discuss re-opening cinemas and theatres.

Bulgaria's National Assembly is to vote on May 12 on the second reading of amendments to the Health Act to make provision for dealing with the virus situation after the State of Emergency ends. A number of new amendments tabled after the first-reading vote are expected to be up for debate.

Ananiev said that the criteria for imposing or rescinding measures will depend on the statistics regarding Covid-19 in Bulgaria.

On the evening of May 10, the national operational headquarters said that the total number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Bulgaria was 1965, a total of 44 more than as of the evening update on May 9.

A total of 389 people are in hospital, four fewer than as at 5pm on May 9, while the number of patients in intensive care has risen by two to 58.

The number of medical personnel who have tested positive has increased by three to 209.

The death toll has increased by one to 91, after a 72-year-old man died at the Silistra Hospital. The man also had had heart and lung disease.

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