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INDIA TO SUPPLY COVID VACCINES TO 6 COUNTRIES FROM TOMORROW IN A PHASED MANNER: MEA

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The Ministry of External Affairs said India will supply COVID-19 vaccines to partner countries over the coming weeks and months in a phased manner keeping in view the domestic requirements.

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The ministry also said that India is awaiting confirmation of necessary regulatory clearances from Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Mauritius for supply of the vaccines.

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In a statement, the MEA said India has received several requests for the supply of Indianmanufactured vaccines from neighbouring and key partner countries.

"In response to these requests, and in keeping with India's stated commitment to use India's vaccine production and delivery capacity to help all of humanity fight the COVID pandemic, supplies under grant assistance to Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles will begin from January 20," it said.

"In respect of Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Mauritius, we are awaiting their confirmation of necessary regulatory clearances," it added.

India has already rolled out a massive coronavirus vaccination drive under which two vaccines, Covishield and Covaxin, are being administered to frontline health workers across the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched the vaccination programme covering the entire length and breadth of the country and urged people to show patience during the COVID-19 immunisation drive as they had shown till now in fighting the pandemic.

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had earlier this month approved Oxford COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, manufactured by the Serum Institute, and indigenously developed Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country.

According to the government, the shots will be offered first to an estimated one crore healthcare workers and around two crore frontline workers, and then to persons above 50 years of age, followed by persons younger than 50 years of age with associated comorbidities.

As of today, a total of 4,54,049 beneficiaries have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the country, which is more than double the number of coronavirus active cases, the Union Health Ministry said.

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