

RUSSIA TURNS TO CHINA TO MAKE SPUTNIK V JABS TO MEET DEMAND

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Russia is turning to multiple Chinese firms to manufacture the Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine in an effort to speed up production as demand soars for its shot.

Russia has announced three deals totaling 260 million doses with Chinese vaccine companies in recent weeks. It's a decision that could mean quicker access to a shot for countries in Latin America, the West Asia, and Africa that have ordered Russia's vaccine, as the U.S. and the EU focus mainly on domestic vaccination needs.

Earlier, criticism about Russia's vaccine have been largely quieted by data published in *The Lancet* that said large-scale testing showed it to be safe, with an efficacy rate of 91%.

Yet, experts have questioned whether Russia can fulfill its pledge to countries across the world. While pledging hundreds of millions of doses, it has only delivered a fraction.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said demand for Sputnik V significantly exceeds Russia's domestic production capacity.

To boost production, the Russian Direct Investment Fund, which bankrolled Sputnik V, has signed agreements with drug makers in India, South Korea, Brazil, Serbia, Turkey, Italy and others. There are few indications, however, that manufacturers abroad, except for those in Belarus and Kazakhstan, have made any large amounts of the vaccine so far.

Airfinity, a U.K.-based science analytics company, estimates Russia agreed to supply 630 million doses of Sputnik V to over 100 countries, with only 11.5 million doses exported so far.

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