

India's Serum Institute applies for COVID-19 vaccine approval

December 7 2020



India is the world's second worst affected country by Covid-19, recording nearly 9.7 million infections and more than 140,000 deaths

An Indian company that is the world's biggest manufacturer of vaccines said Monday it was seeking fast-track approval for a coronavirus shot

that could be sold for as little as \$3.

The country of 1.3 billion is the world's second-worst hit by the pandemic, and has already recorded nearly 9.7 million infections and more than 140,000 deaths.

Serum Institute of India chief executive Adar Poonwalla said approval for distribution of the AstraZeneca/Oxford [vaccine](#)—of which the company is already making 50-60 million doses a month—"will save countless lives".

"As promised, before the end of 2020, @SerumInstIndia has applied for emergency use authorisation for the first made-in-India vaccine, COVISHIELD," Poonawalla tweeted.

The announcement came after US giant Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech last week sought approval for its [coronavirus](#) vaccine in India, local media reported late Sunday.

AstraZeneca's vaccine can be stored at the temperature of a normal fridge, while Pfizer's needs to be kept at minus 70 degrees Celsius (minus 94 degrees Fahrenheit).

Poonawalla told television broadcaster NDTV last month the doses would be sold to the Indian government at around 250 rupees (US\$3.00).

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Citation: India's Serum Institute applies for COVID-19 vaccine approval (2020, December 7) retrieved 26 April 2024 from

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