Mexico to receive first batch of coronavirus vaccines

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Mexico will receive its first batch of Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccines on Wednesday, Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said Tuesday.

"What they are confirming to us is that the first shipment to Mexico will arrive tomorrow," he said.

The first 1.4 million doses of the vaccine produced by the partnership between US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and German biotechnology company BioNTech will arrive from Belgium.

Mexico has been promised 34.4 million doses by the end of January.

Ebrard did not say, though, when immunization would begin in Mexico, a country of 129 million that has recorded 1.3 million cases and more than 118,000 deaths from COVID-19.

Mexico has reported the fourth highest number of deaths from the coronavirus in the world.

The government has said the first vaccines will be administered to frontline health care staff.

Mexico also has preliminary deals to purchase 77.4 million doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine and 35 million doses of the Canadian-Chinese CanSinoBio vaccine.

It can also secure 51.6 million doses through the COVAX vaccine distribution scheme, a World Health Organization initiative to facilitate poor countries' access to coronavirus vaccines.

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