

Morocco approves use of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine

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Morocco has approved the emergency use of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, jointly developed with the U.K.'s Oxford University.

The country's Health Ministry said Wednesday that the Serum Institute of India is under contract from AstraZeneca to make the shots.

Last month, the Moroccan government announced it had ordered 65 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines from China's Sinopharm and Britain's AstraZeneca. The country of 35 million people has not yet received the vaccines.

Approval of Sinopharm's vaccine is under review by Morocco's regulators and is expected to be granted in the coming days.

According to the authorization documents, the AstraZeneca vaccine would be administered in two doses with an interval of between four and 12 weeks.

The approval comes as preparations for Morocco's vaccine rollout have reached "advanced stages," the Health Ministry said. A launch date has not been announced.

The immunization plan aims to vaccinate 80% of the population, including frontline workers and people suffering from chronic diseases.

In response to rising coronavirus infections, Morocco imposed a nationwide curfew and ordered restaurants in major cities to close.

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