

UK govt says vaccine roll-out passes 10 million

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More than 10 million people have received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine across Britain, according to government figures published on Wednesday.

The [health ministry](#) said 10,021,471 people have had a jab since the start of a mass vaccination campaign in early December.

A further 498,962 have had a second dose.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who has set a target of vaccinating 15 million of the most vulnerable by mid-February, hailed the "milestone".

"There are many people and groups responsible for the UK's vaccination programme," he said, heralding everyone from scientists to delivery drivers to pharmacists for their roles.

"And it is thanks to their effort—the most colossal in the history of our National Health Service—that we have today passed the milestone."

Britain has been hit hard by the pandemic, and on Wednesday recorded another 1,322 deaths within 28 days of a positive test, taking the overall toll in the outbreak to 109,335.

A further 19,202 positive cases were recorded in the last 24 hours. In all, nearly 3.9 million people have had the disease.

Flanking Johnson, England's Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty said the latest statistics showed this third wave of the pandemic in Britain did appear to have peaked.

"That doesn't mean you could never have another peak, but at this point in time provided people continue to follow the guidelines, we're on a downward slope of cases, of hospitalisations and of deaths," he said.

Britain was the first Western nation to approve the use of the Pfizer/BioNTech jab outside a clinical trial, and has been administering doses alongside one developed by Oxford University and AstraZeneca.

A third, from Moderna, has also been approved and will come on stream in the coming months. Regulators are currently studying trial data from a fourth developed by Novavax.

Johnson, who has been criticised for his handling of the pandemic, is pinning his hopes for easing a third national lockdown on continuing the successful vaccine roll-out.

The British premier is planning to detail his plans for lifting restrictions in England on February 22, with the week of March 8 earmarked for schools to begin to reopen.

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