

Cambodia, starting to reopen, begins vaccinating 5-year-olds

November 1 2021, by Sopheng Cheang



Children wait before receiving a shot of the Sinovac's COVID-19 vaccine at a Krang Thnong health center outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Monday, Nov. 1, 2021. Cambodia on Monday began vaccinating 5-year-old children against the coronavirus as its leader announced the official reopening of the country, including the phased reentry of tourists. Credit: AP Photo/Heng Sinith

Cambodia on Monday began vaccinating 5-year-old children against the coronavirus as its leader announced the start of the country's reopening, including the phased reentry of foreign tourists.

Speaking on state television, Prime Minister Hun Sen said 5-year-olds are being vaccinated to boost their immunity before they start attending school, which begins at age 6.

More than 85% of Cambodia's almost 17 million people have received at least one COVID-19 shot since vaccinations began in February. China's Sinovac and Sinopharm vaccines account for most inoculations.

Vaccinations for 2 million children age 6 to 11 began Sept. 17 and are nearly complete. There are about 300,000 5-year-old children and they will be given Sinovac.

Hun Sen also noted the start of the reopening of the country on Monday with restrictions totally lifted on domestic tourism, schools and other sectors. He said most Cambodians are now vaccinated and have an understanding of the virus and how to stay safe.

The government announced plans last week to reopen the country in several stages to fully vaccinated foreign tourists starting Nov. 30.

The program will allow those visitors to skip quarantine if they stay at least five days in designated areas, the Tourism Ministry announced.



A young girl, center, receives a shot of the Sinovac's COVID-19 vaccine at a Krang Thnong health center outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Monday, Nov. 1, 2021. Cambodia on Monday began vaccinating 5-year-old children against the coronavirus as its leader announced the official reopening of the country, including the phased reentry of tourists. Credit: AP Photo/Heng Sinith



A young girl, center, receives a shot of the Sinovac's COVID-19 vaccine at a Krang Thnong health center outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Monday, Nov. 1, 2021. Cambodia on Monday began vaccinating 5-year-old children against the coronavirus as its leader announced the official reopening of the country, including the phased reentry of tourists. Credit: AP Photo/Heng Sinith



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The first such areas are two seaside provinces, Sihanoukville and Koh Kong, on the Gulf of Thailand.

On arrival, visitors must show proof they have been vaccinated and take a rapid results test for COVID-19. They can proceed without quarantine if the results are negative.

Siem Reap province, home to the famous Angkor temples, is to be added

to the quarantine-free province list in January.

Cambodia's Health Ministry on Monday reported 91 new COVID-19 cases and six deaths, bringing the country's totals since the pandemic began to 118,613 cases and 2,794 deaths.

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