



HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA
MBABANE (Eswatini)

PRESS RELEASE

#LargestVaccinationDrive

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India launched the #LargestVaccinationDrive on 16 January 2021, a Pan-India Rollout of Covid19 Vaccination. Over 3000 sites across all States and Union Territories of India virtually connected during the launch and around 100 beneficiaries were vaccinated at each site on the day of the launch.

2. This would be the world's largest vaccination programme, covering the entire length and breadth of India. The vaccination programme is based on principles of priority groups to be vaccinated and Health Care workers, both in Government and private sector, would receive the vaccine during this phase.

3. The vaccination programme would use Co-WIN, an online digital platform, developed by India's Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, under which real-time information of vaccine stocks, storage temperature and individualized tracking of beneficiaries of vaccine can be accessed. This digital platform has been created to assist programme managers across all levels while conducting vaccination sessions. Adequate doses of COVISHIELD and COVAXIN, both developed by a self-Reliant India (Aatma Nirbhar Bharat).

4. English rendering of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India's speech delivered at the launch is enclosed for dissemination.

Mbabane
18 January 2021

English rendering of PM's address at the launch of Pan-India Rollout of COVID-19 Vaccination Drive

Posted On: 16 JAN 2021 1:11PM by PIB Delhi

My dear countrymen,

Namaskar!

The entire country is eagerly waiting for this day. For months together, the children, old and the young in every household in the country had the same question as to when the Corona vaccine would come. So now the Corona vaccine has come, and in a very short time. A few minutes from now, the world's largest vaccination campaign is going to be launched in India. I congratulate all my countrymen for this. Today, a number of scientists and those involved in the research of vaccines deserve praise, who were engaged day and night for the past several months in developing vaccines against the Corona. They did not care for any festival, day or night. It usually takes years to develop a vaccine. But, in such a short time, not one, but two 'Made in India' vaccines have been developed. Not only that, many more vaccines are also progressing at a rapid pace. This is a shining proof of India's strength, India's scientific proficiency and India's talent. For such achievements, national poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar had said, "When human beings insist, even stones become water!!

Brothers and sisters,

India's vaccination campaign is based on very humane and important principles. Those who need the most will be vaccinated first. Those who have the highest risk of corona infection will be vaccinated first. Our doctors, nurses, safai karamcharis (sanitation staff) in hospitals and paramedical staff are the first to be vaccinated. Whether they are in government hospitals or in private, they will be vaccinated on a priority basis. Thereafter, those who are responsible for protecting essential services and the country or law and order will be vaccinated. For example, our security forces, police personnel, fire brigade personnel, safai karamcharis (sanitation staff) etc. will be on priority. And, as I have said earlier, their number is about three crores. The cost of vaccination of all these people will be borne by the Government of India.

Friends,

For the elaborate preparedness of this vaccination campaign, trials and dry runs have been conducted in every nook and corner of the country in collaboration with the state governments. The specially created Co-WIN digital platform provides for registration to tracking of vaccination. You will receive information about the second dose after the first vaccine on your phone. And, I would like to remind all the countrymen again that it is very important to have two doses of corona vaccine. Do not commit a mistake of forgetting about the second dose after taking the first dose. And, as the experts say a gap of about one month will also be maintained between the first and the second dose. You also have to keep in mind that your body will develop the necessary immunity against the corona after two weeks of the second dose. Therefore, please do not be careless, or remove your masks or forget about the distance of two yards as soon as you get vaccinated. I implore you not to do these things. One more thing I would like to insist is that you have to display the same patience during vaccination as you did while fighting the corona.

Friends,

Never before has this kind of such a large-scale vaccination campaign been carried out in history. You can gauge the magnitude of the campaign from the first stage itself. There are more than 100 countries in the world with a less than three crore population. And India is inoculating three crore people in its first phase of vaccination. In the second phase, we have to take it to 30 crores. Those who are elderly, who suffer from serious illness, will be vaccinated in the next stage. Can you imagine that there are only three countries in the world above a population of 30 crore – India itself, China

did not go home for many days. There are hundreds of friends who never made it to their homes; they sacrificed their lives to save each and every life. Therefore, the society is repaying its debt in a way by administering corona's first vaccine to the health care people. This vaccination is also a tribute by the indebted nation to all those colleagues

Brothers and sisters,

There were many calamities, epidemics, fierce wars fought in human history, but no one imagined a corona-like challenge. It was an epidemic whose experience was known neither to the science nor society. The images and news that were coming from all the countries were unsettling for the whole world as well as every Indian. In such a situation, the world's prominent experts were making different kinds of apprehensions about India.

But friends,

We have made the large population of India which was being described as our weakness our strength. India made sensitivity and participation the basis of the battle. While being vigilant round the clock and keeping an eye on every development, India took the right decisions at the right time. India had set up a high level committee within two weeks when the first case of Corona was detected on January 30. On this day last year, we had started surveillance. January 17, 2020 was the date when India issued its first advisory. India was among the first countries in the world to start screening passengers at its airports.

Friends,

The will, the courage, the collective power that India has displayed in the fight against Corona will serve as an inspiration for many generations to come. Recall the Janata Curfew, which was also a test of the restraint and discipline of our society against the corona, and in which every countrymen succeeded. The Janata Curfew prepared the country psychologically for lockdown. We kept the confidence of the country high by clapping, clanging utensils and lighting lamps.

Friends,

The most effective way to prevent the infection of an unknown enemy like corona was that one should stay put wherever he was as its implications were beyond the comprehension of many developed countries. Therefore, a decision regarding lockdown was taken in the country. This decision was not easy. We were aware that it was impossible to keep such a large population indoors. And here, everything in the country was going to be closed, there was going to be a lockdown. We also had an assessment of the impact it would have on the livelihood of the people and on the economy. But the country gave top priority to saving the lives of every Indian by following the mantra of 'Jai Shri Krishna' (if there's life, then there's the world). And we have all seen how immediately the entire country, the whole society, stood by this spirit. I also interacted directly with the countrymen many times to inform them about the small but important things. On the one hand, while free food was provided to the poor, on the other, the smooth supply of milk, vegetables, ration, gas, medicines, etc such essentials was also ensured. In order to ensure proper arrangements in the country, the Ministry of Home Affairs started the 24x7 control room on which thousands of calls have been answered; people have been given solutions.

Friends,

In this fight against corona, we have set an example to the world at every step. At a time when some countries had left their citizens in China in the midst of widespread corona, India brought back every Indian stranded in China. And not only nationals from India, we also brought back the citizens of many other countries. More than 45 lakh Indians were evacuated to India from abroad under the Vande India Mission during the corona period. I remember when testing machines were falling short for Indians in a country; India sent the entire testing lab there so that the people coming to India would not face any problem.

Friends,

Today the entire world is acknowledging the way India has fought this epidemic. India also showed the example before the world how the central and state governments, local bodies, every government institution, social institutions, can work together. India has shown how ISRO, DRDO, army personnel, farmers and labourers can all work with a single-minded resolution. India was also among the leading countries which focused on the 'distance of two yards and mask is must'.

Brothers and sisters,

Today, it is the result of all these efforts that the mortality rate in India due to corona is low and the recovery rate is very high. There are many districts in the country where not a single life was lost due to the corona. In these districts, every person has reached his home after recovering from the corona. There are many districts where not a single case of corona infection has been detected in the last two weeks. Even, India is moving ahead of the world as far as recovering from the economy affected through lockdown is concerned. India is among the few countries that provided essential medicines and essential medical assistance to more than 150 countries in the world, despite so many difficulties. Be it Paracetamol or Hydroxychloroquine or testing materials, India made every effort to save the people of other countries also. Now that we have developed our vaccines, the world is looking at India with hope and expectation. As our vaccination campaign progresses, many countries in the world will benefit from our experiences. We are committed that India's vaccines, our production capacity, serve the interest of the whole humanity.

Brothers and sisters,

This vaccination campaign will run long. We have got the opportunity to contribute to saving the lives of each and every individual. Therefore, volunteers are coming forward in the country to be part of the process associated with this campaign. I welcome them and would urge more volunteers to come forward and devote their time for this noble work. Yes, as I said earlier, masks, distance of two yards and cleanliness, will remain necessary even during and after the vaccination. If you are vaccinated, it does not mean that you discard other ways of protection from corona. Now we have to take a new resolution -- medicine as well as discipline. With this wish that all of you stay healthy, I wish the entire country all the best for this vaccination campaign! I also particularly congratulate and express my gratitude to the scientists, researchers and all those engaged in lab work who spent their entire year as a sage in their labs to provide these vaccines to the country and to humanity. Many many best wishes to all of you. Take early advantage of it. May you and your family remain healthy! May the entire humankind come out of this hour of crisis and all of us remain healthy! With this wish, many many thanks to you!

DISCLAIMER: This is the approximate translation of PM's speech. Original speech was delivered in Hindi.
