

Egypt receives 2.2 mln AstraZeneca and Sinopharm vaccine doses

Author:

Reuters

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Thu, 2021-05-13 19:29

CAIRO: Egypt has received a batch of over 1.7 million AstraZeneca vaccine doses through the COVAX initiative and a separate shipment of 500,000 Sinopharm vaccine doses from China, the health ministry said on Thursday. The country received its first COVAX delivery of 854,000 AstraZeneca doses at the start of April. It has also received several shipments of the Sinopharm vaccine, bringing the total number of vaccine doses delivered to 5 million, the health ministry said.

Egypt has an agreement for the supply of 20 million Sinopharm doses, and has been allocated 4.5 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine through COVAX.

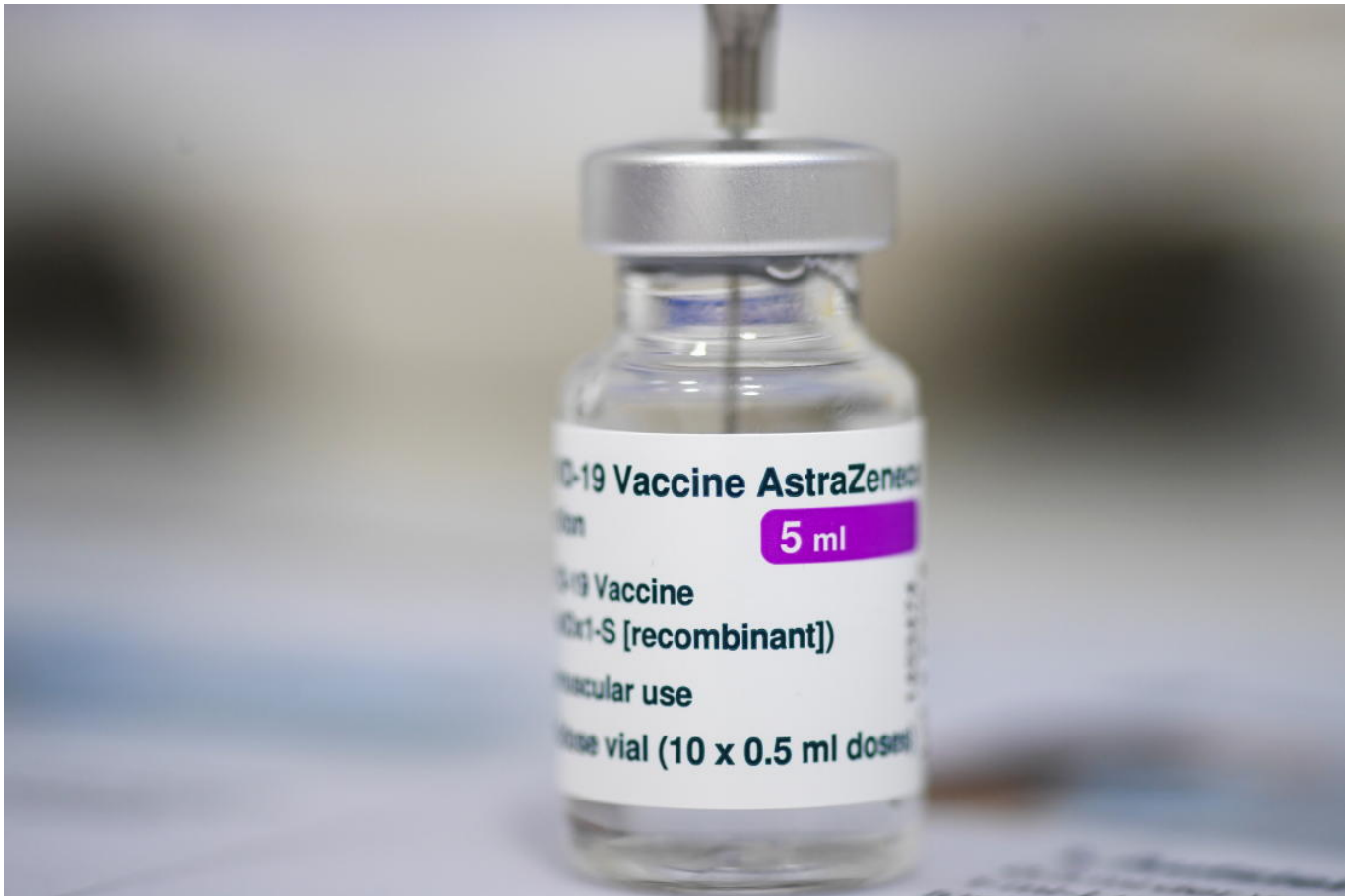
It is preparing to produce the Sinovac and Sputnik vaccines locally.

Egypt, with a population of just over 100 million, is trying to contain a third wave of COVID-19 infections and the government has put in place some restrictive measures until May 21, shortening opening hours and banning large gatherings.

Some 2.7 million people have registered online with the health ministry to receive a vaccine. Authorities opened a mass vaccination center in Cairo this month capable of vaccinating 10,000 people per day.

Egypt had officially confirmed 240,927 coronavirus cases including 14,091 deaths as of Wednesday.

Officials and experts say the real number of infections is far higher, but is not reflected in government figures because of low testing rates and the exclusion of private test results.



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[Sinopharm vaccine](#)

[Egypt](#)

Malaysia says Astrazeneca vaccine safe, will be used on elderly

[Macron holds talks with Mahmoud Abbas, will discuss Gaza situation with Netanyahu](#)

Thu, 2021-05-13 19:10

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron is concerned by the escalation of violence between Israelis and Palestinians and called for a “definite reset” of negotiations between the two sides, the French presidency said on Thursday.

Palestinian militants fired more rockets into Israel’s commercial heartland on Thursday as Israel kept up a punishing bombing campaign in Gaza and massed

tanks and troops on the enclave's border.

Other world leaders also called for calm, with US President Joe Biden saying Thursday he hoped fighting "will be closing down" sooner rather than later.

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also appealed in a video call for an end to the fighting.

"The main goal is to stop violent acts from both sides and ensure the safety of the civilian population," the Kremlin said in a statement.



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Israeli troops mass at Gaza border amid rocket fire, air strikes and clashes in Israel0IC to hold emergency meeting to discuss Jerusalem and Gaza, at request of Saudi Arabia

[UAE allows Pfizer COVID-19 dose for emergency use in 12-15 year olds](#)

Thu, 2021-05-13 18:18

The UAE has approved the Pfizer and BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use in children aged 12-15, the government said on Thursday, having already permitted its use for 16 years and above.

The UAE's health ministry approved its use, the government's Twitter account said. The US Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday approved the use of the vaccine in children as young as 12.



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UAE urges locals, residents to book COVID-19 vaccination

UN peace envoy warns of 'all-out war' as Israeli bombardment of Gaza continues

Author:

Wed, 2021-05-12 22:05

GAZA CITY: The UN's Middle East peace envoy on Wednesday warned of "all-out war" unless there was an "immediate ceasefire" as Israel's bombardment of the Gaza Strip saw a dramatic rise in the Palestinian death toll.

Loud explosions continued throughout the day as Israel pounded Hamas targets and forces in Gaza responded by launching hundreds of rockets deep into Israeli territory.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health said that at least 56 people had so far been killed, including 14 children, five women, and an elderly man, while more than 335 had been injured.

In a statement, Tor Wennesland, UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, said: "Cease fire immediately. We are escalating toward an all-out war. Leaders on all sides must take responsibility for de-escalation.

"The cost of the war in Gaza is devastating and paid for by ordinary people. The UN is working with all parties to restore calm. Stop the violence now."

Palestinian and Israeli reports said efforts were being made by Egypt, the UN, and a number of other countries to restore calm and return to the ceasefire agreement.

The bloodshed was triggered by weekend unrest at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which is sacred to both Muslims and Jews.

Military exchanges have escalated over recent days, sparking international pleas for an end to the violence.

On Wednesday, Israel targeted a number of Hamas government buildings and houses, private cars, agricultural plots, and military training sites belonging to the movement and Islamic Jihad were also hit.

Bombing was stepped up following the destruction of two residential towers in Gaza City, and Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, retaliated by firing a barrage of rockets toward Tel Aviv and Beersheba. The commander of the Gaza brigade, Basem Issa, along with others were reported to have been killed during the strikes.

The Islamic Jihad announced that a number of its leaders belonging to its missile unit, most notably Muhammad Abu Al-Ata, died when an apartment in the center of Gaza City was hit.

Al-Qassam Brigades and Al-Quds Brigades fired hundreds of rockets toward Tel Aviv and Beersheba – cities far from Gaza that had not previously been targeted.

Mother-of-three Sherine Awad, 38, told Arab News: “The terror and fear do not stop. After the towers were hit, I moved from my apartment because it is in a high-rise. I moved to my friend’s house with my children, but last night a house was bombed near the place I took shelter in.

“This is not life. We cannot bear all this. The bombing does not stop, and the terrifying sounds are nonstop. My children are in a state of fear and shock. Our life has taken a U-turn from what was planned for the Eid reception.”

The streets of Gaza City were mostly empty on Wednesday except for some pedestrians and cars, while most of the shops remained closed barring some grocery stores.

Ahmed Al-Kahlout, a grocer on Nasr Street, told Arab News that on the last day of Ramadan people still needed supplies and “fear does not prevent them from buying food.

“There are deaths, but people in their homes want to eat. This is not the first time Gaza has faced an escalation, but this time it is the most severe since the 2014 war,” he said.

Despite both sides in the conflict threatening further bombing, Palestinians in Gaza are hoping the latest round of bloodshed and destruction will end soon.

“We hope this will end. It will definitely end, but when? Nobody knows. Hopefully, it will be soon,” Awad said.



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[Gaza strip](#)

Israel destroys tower block, kills Hamas commander as Gaza civilian death toll mounts

[El-Sisi: Egypt's water rights 'will not be violated'](#)

Author:

Wed, 2021-05-12 22:00

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has said that Egyptians' concerns over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) are "legitimate" and warned that Egypt will not give up its water rights.

"I appreciate your concern about the dam crisis, and I share this concern with you and consider it a healthy phenomenon that stems from Egyptians' fear and love for their country, but I call on Egyptians to be patient," he said,

adding that negotiations will take time.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of several projects, El-Sisi said that pressure is being applied to solve the crisis through negotiations.

“Our rights will not be violated,” he added.

Cairo has witnessed intense diplomatic activity recently, with Jeffrey Feltman, US envoy to the Horn of Africa, and Felix Tshisekedi, president of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the current session of the African Union, holding talks in an effort to reach a settlement.

Talks over the filling and operation of the dam between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan have come to a halt.

Earlier, Ethiopia’s Foreign Ministry’s spokesman, Dina Mufti, expressed hopes that negotiations will resume following Tshisekedi’s efforts to break the deadlock.

Feltman called for a “profitable solution” for all parties involved.

Ethiopia began work on the 1.8-kilometer dam in 2011. Egypt fears the GERD will threaten its water supply from the Nile, while Sudan is concerned about the dam’s safety and its own water flow.

Both Cairo and Khartoum are calling for a binding and comprehensive deal that guarantees the rights and interests of all three countries.



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Egypt: Ethiopia refuses mediation to solve Renaissance Dam crisisEgypt hopes to resume talks with Ethiopia on Grand Renaissance Dam