

India approves emergency use of 2nd locally-made COVID-19 shot

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An Indian health worker inoculates a catholic nun with the Covishield vaccine—one of six approved by New Delhi against Covid-19—at Saint Mary's Basilica in Secunderabad, the twin city of Hyderabad, on August 19, 2021.

India on Friday authorised the emergency use of a second homegrown COVID-19 vaccine, which is also the first approved for children older

than 12 in the country.

India's Department of Biotechnology announced its approval for ZyCoV-D, by Indian pharmaceutical firm Zydus Cadila, as the "world's first and India's indigenously developed DNA-based vaccine for COVID-19."

The approval for ZyCoV-D, which can be applied using a needle-free injector, comes with [vaccination rates](#) picking up across the country over the last few weeks.

"This three-dose vaccine... when injected produces the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and elicits an [immune response](#)," the biotechnology department, which partnered with Zydus Cadila, said in a statement.

"The plug-and-play technology on which the plasmid DNA platform is based can be easily adapted to deal with mutations in the virus, such as those already occurring," it added.

ZyCov-D is now the sixth vaccine to be approved by New Delhi after Moderna, Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covishield, Covaxin—which was developed by Indian firm Bharat Biotech, Russia's Sputnik V, and Johnson and Johnson.

More than 574 million jabs have been administered so far in India.

The country broke its daily record earlier this week by administering more than 9.2 million vaccine doses in the mass vaccination programme which began in mid-January.

India hopes to inoculate its entire eligible population by the end of December. But with only about 10 percent—or 127 million people—having received both doses of a two-shot regime, some health

experts say the country will need to further boost its indigenous [vaccine](#) production.

Logistical challenges make Indian vaccines, which don't need any special storage facilities, the easiest to transport and use across the country.

The nation of 1.3 billion people was hit by a massive spike of coronavirus cases in April and May that pushed the health care system to breaking point.

India has so far recorded at least 433,589 deaths and more than 32 million COVID-19 infections.

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