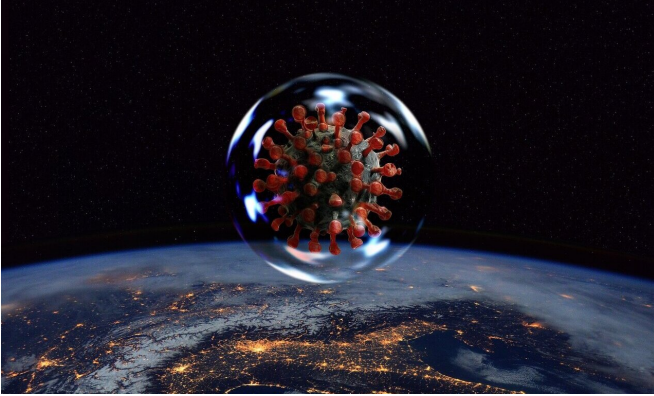


France hits target of 10 million jabs

8 April 2021

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France has given a first jab of a vaccine against COVID-19 to 10 million people, Prime Minister Jean Castex announced on Thursday amid an acceleration in the rollout after a sluggish start.

"It's a very good performance. France is vaccinating a lot," Castex said after visiting an inoculation centre east of Paris, hailing the figure of 10 million first jabs one week ahead of a government target.

France fell behind its European neighbours after the start of vaccinations in January, but is now jabbing on average around 200,000-300,000 people per day.

EU members have faced a shortage of doses which has been blamed on a centralised purchasing and distribution system.

French President Emmanuel Macron has compared European efforts to a "diesel engine".

"It starts slowly but it goes far," he told Greece's ERT channel last month.

The government has forecast 20 million first time jabs by mid-May and 30 million by mid-June.

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