

NATIONAL

Coronavirus | World's largest vaccination programme begins in India on January 16

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi to launch drive; more than 3 lakh to get jab on first day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will flag-off the first phase of the pan-India roll out of the **COVID-19 vaccination drive on January 16** at 10:30 a.m. via video conferencing.

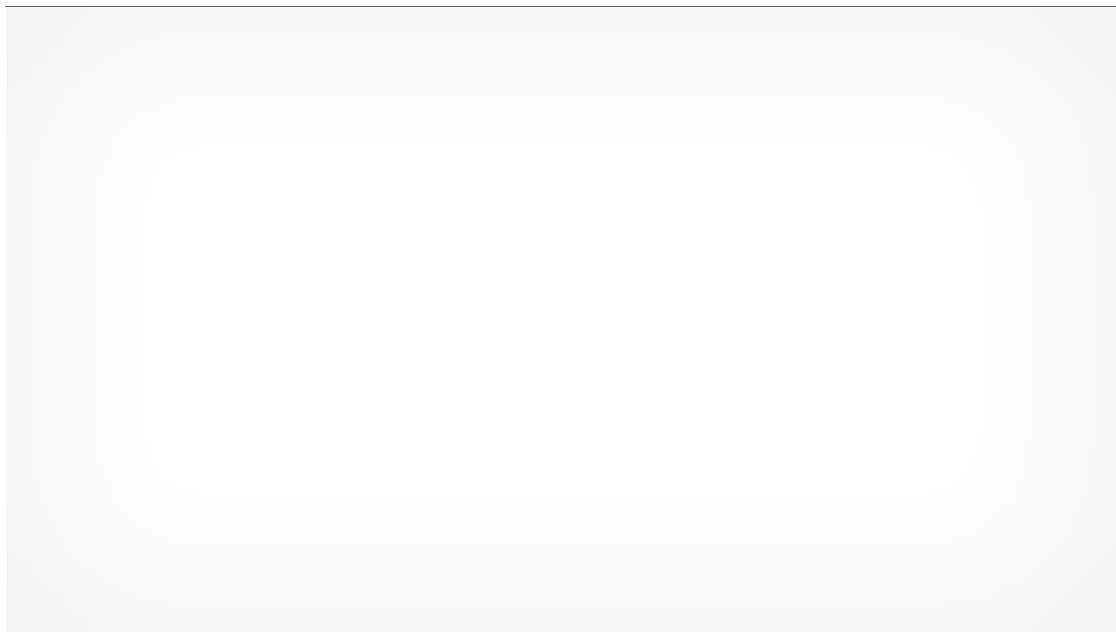
The **world's largest vaccination programme will begin at a total of 3006 session sites across all States/UTs**, which will be connected virtually throughout the exercise. Around 100 beneficiaries will be vaccinated at each of the session sites. A dedicated 24x7 call centre – 1075 – has also been established for addressing the queries related to the pandemic, vaccine rollout and the CoWIN software, information released by the Prime Minister's Office said.

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The vaccination drive, where the beneficiaries currently will not have a choice between the two vaccines – Covishield and Covaxin – available in India, has been planned in a phased manner, identifying priority groups, the Health Ministry said.

[Healthcare workers, both in the government and private sectors including Integrated Child Development Services \(ICDS\) workers](#), will receive the vaccine during this first phase.

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Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan stating that adequate doses of both the vaccines have already been delivered across the country to all States/UTs, on Friday, re-viewed the working of CoWIN, the online digital platform developed by the Ministry to be used to drive the vaccination programme.

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The platform will facilitate real time information of vaccine stocks, storage temperature and individualized tracking of beneficiaries for [COVID-19 vaccine](#).

“This digital platform will assist programme managers across National, State, and District levels

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It added that the platform enables national and state administrators to view and sort data of beneficiaries as per their gender, age and co-morbidity.

“They can also view the metadata of vaccinations and Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI) reported from constituent districts across States and UTs. District administrators can additionally create session sites at any location by entering the pin-code, followed by specifying the locality or villages and subsequently assigning a vaccinator,” said Dr. Vardhan. He also suggested that the

groups on COWIN and suggested pre-populating the software with beneficiaries by seeding it with an electoral database, in addition to other documents that are authorized for registration.

“India’s exercise to vaccinate its population against COVID19 shall be the largest immunization drive of the world. Both the indigenously manufactured vaccines have proven safety and immunogenicity records and are the most important tools to contain the pandemic,” said the Minister.

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