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PRESS RELEASE

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Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

SVG GETS ALLOCATION OF COVID VACCINE

St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados and several Eastern Caribbean Countries who signed agreements with the COVAX Facility have been informed of the indicative allocation of COVID-19 vaccines. St. Vincent and The Grenadines' allocation is for 45,600 indicative doses of AstraZeneca.

This means that St. Vincent and the Grenadines can expect to receive the COVID-19 vaccine(s) over the coming few weeks. The vaccines are the first of the assigned doses to satisfy COVAX's agreement with this country.

The COVAX facility has advised that vaccines will be delivered effective mid to late February with 357, 600 doses of the AstraZeneca AZD1222 vaccine, to Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The allocation was determined by the World Health Organization (WHO) panel of experts and GAVI taking a big step towards equal access to COVID-19 vaccines.

The main objective of this allocation is for countries to begin vaccinating their priority populations as quickly as possible.

Minister of Health St Clair Prince says this development is: “a significant boost in our fight against the disease and the safety of the population, a transformative complement to the measures already in place in our COVID-19 response.”

Chief Medical Officer Dr Simone Keizer-Beache notes that: “The allocation of 45,600 AstraZeneca COVID vaccines to SVG with 25% being available in the first quarter, is an extremely important development in our battle to control the spread of COVID-19 in SVG and to return to some level of normalcy.

“Our strategy was always aimed at keeping the virus out of SVG for as long possible until a vaccine became available. We will now move to rapidly but safely vaccinate sufficient of our population to allow for the protection of all of the population,” Keizer Beache adds.

The CMO explains that: “Even as we await the actual receipt of these vaccines from Covax, we are cognizant of the need to procure additional vaccines to adequately implement phase I of our national vaccination introduction and deployment plan.”

A release from PAHO states that the COVAX Facility has managed to secure significant doses of vaccines from various manufacturers. In addition, these are authorized or very close to being authorized by WHO Emergency Use Listing (EUL). Because EUL has yet to be granted by WHO in respect of this vaccine, the Facility has for now only provided an indicative number of doses, covering the next two quarters.

The next steps to access the allocation include countries having the necessary indemnity and liability frameworks, including the required legislative framework in place where necessary, in order to complete an agreement directly with AstraZeneca.

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