

Weekly Newsletter

The EU has been receiving denigration from member States for the slothful pace of COVID vaccinations. It has been reported that U.S. and UK are far ahead from EU in terms of ratio of population that is being vaccinated. The EU's vaccination scheme includes co-ordination purchase of COVID vaccines for all 27 member States. As per European Commission, buying vaccines for all member States kills the urge of competition between States and they all receive the vaccines irrespective of their power of buying. EC further explains that buying vaccines in large bulks is also cost effective because then one has the power and space to negotiate. After receiving the multiple batches of vaccines, EU distributes them among the member State as per their population. EU approved the purchase of about 300 million doses of Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in December but the company could not deliver 12.5 million doses by the end of December 2020 due to supply chain issues. The head of BioNTech, Uğur Şahin, explained that the cause of delay, despite company's fast manufacturing capacity, in delivering the vaccine is because EU erroneously presumed that many vaccines will be ready at once. This has caused many States to approve Moderna or Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine for their population. EU has also ordered 400 million doses from Moderna or Oxford-AstraZeneca, 300 million doses from Sanofi-GSK, 400 million doses from Johnson & Johnson, 405 million doses from CureVac along with doubling the doses of vaccine from Pfizer/BioNTech to 600 million.

Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides said that Moderna or Oxford-AstraZeneca is also falling behind in producing and delivering the vaccine on time. It is also noteworthy that The AstraZeneca vaccine is not approved by the EU's drug regulator, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) but is

expecting to get approval by the end of January 2021. Moderna or Oxford-AstraZeneca said that due to production problems EU will be receiving initial doses of the vaccine lower than expected, about a cut of 60%. EU is receiving great criticism over the slow rollout of the vaccines because only 0.29% of the population in France has received vaccine jabs, whereas, Israel has successfully vaccinated 22% of its population out of nine million. Amid this, EU has issued a warning that it will constrict the rules on exporting the COVID vaccines. The health commissioner also said that any of the companies preparing vaccines against COVID will have to issue an early warning before exporting it to any third world countries.