

India may hold the key for manufacturing COVID-19 vaccines for the developing world

Ask [billionaire Adar Poonawalla] about the race for a coronavirus vaccine and he will offer some unvarnished opinions.

One prominent vaccine candidate requiring ultra-cold storage is “a joke” that will not work for the developing world. Anyone who declares how long a vaccine will confer immunity is talking “nonsense.” The world’s entire population will not be immunized until 2024, he says, contrary to rosier predictions.

Poonawalla is equally frank about the gamble his company, Serum Institute of India, is making in the pandemic. He is putting \$250 million of his family’s fortune into a bid to ramp up manufacturing capacity to 1 billion doses through 2021.

“I decided to go all out,” said Poonawalla, 39.

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It is a bet with global repercussions. In the quest for effective [coronavirus](#) vaccines, India is poised to play a critical role in supplying the developing world, which is starting the race with a distinct disadvantage. Wealthy countries have already grabbed a [major chunk of the available supply](#).

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Anthony S. Fauci, the top infectious-disease specialist in the United States, shared that sentiment during a panel earlier this year. India’s manufacturing capability is “going to be very, very important” as effective vaccines emerge, he said.

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