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Beijing, January 22 (RHC)-- Chinese officials are rushing construction of a massive quarantine facility outside Beijing that can temporarily house more than 4,000 people in isolation. Cities in northern China that are home to millions of people entered lockdown earlier this month as authorities try to stamp out several small coronavirus outbreaks.

The lockdowns come ahead of the Chinese Lunar New Year, an annual holiday that normally sees hundreds of millions of people travel within China to visit family.

In other news, Portugal has the world's highest seven-day average rate of new COVID-19 cases and the second highest per capita death rate. The surge is wreaking havoc with Portugal's presidential election on Sunday.

In India, a massive fire at the Serum Institute of India killed five people Thursday. The institute is the world's largest producer of vaccines, though officials said the blaze did not affect production of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine.

Meanwhile, Hungary has become the first European Union member nation to give emergency use authorization to Russia's Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine.

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