

U.S. embassy derided for donating only 80 vials of COVID vaccine to Trinidad and Tobago

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File photo of the United States Embassy in Trinidad and Tobago.

Port of Spain, June 16 (RHC)-- The U.S. embassy in Trinidad and Tobago has been strongly criticized after saying it has donated 80 vials of COVID-19 vaccine to the island nation of 1.4 million people. The U.S. embassy announced the donation in a tweet, saying that "every vaccine counts."

"The government of the United States of America has made a donation of COVID-19 vaccines to the government of Trinidad and Tobago. The donation includes 80 vials of Pfizer vaccines. The United States is committed to assisting the Government of Trinidad and Tobago with its vaccination efforts. We believe that every vaccine counts," the tweet read.

The embassy's announcement has prompted online mockery, with many comments expressing surprise at the size of "the gift" compared to Trinidad and Tobago's population of 1.4 million. The vials could vaccinate 200 people as a single vial of Pfizer vaccine can produce five doses, and is administered in two shots 21 days apart.

The Caribbean nation had a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases and deaths in May this year, having seen 670 deaths and nearly 29,000 cases of the deadly virus.

Trinidad and Tobago's National Security Minister Fitzgerald Hinds said: "This (the 80 American vials) has nothing to do with any large donation that we expect is being considered by the United States Government. This is just a small number for the Ministry of National Security as a gift which we are happy to accept."

The 80 vials of COVID-19 vaccine were donated to Trinidad and Tobago's 1.4 million people as the United States has claimed President Joe Biden plans to send 500 million doses of Pfizer vaccine to 100 countries over a year.

The U.S. embassy in Port of Spain announced Trinidad and Tobago does not qualify under that scheme. Washington's claims of donation comes as the U.S. hoarded tens of millions of COVID vaccine doses that it may never use, with reports saying the country stockpiled unused vaccine.

Brown University School of Public Health said in April that the United States is "sitting on 35-40 million doses of vaccines that Americans will never use."

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