



VACCINE'S EFFICACY VS NEWER DELTA VARIANT QUESTIONED

350 INDONESIAN DOCTORS WITH SINOVAC JAB GET COVID, DOZENS HOSPITALIZED



JAKARTA—More than 350 Indonesian doctors have contracted COVID-19 despite being vaccinated with Sinovac and dozens have been hospitalized, officials said, as concerns rise about the efficacy of some vaccines against more virulent virus strains.

Most of the doctors were asymptomatic and self-isolating at home, said Badai Ismoyo, head of the Kudus district health office in Central Java, but dozens were in hospital with high fevers and declining oxygen saturation levels.

Kudus is battling an outbreak believed to be driven by the more transmissible Delta variant which has pushed bed occupancy rates

above 90 percent in the district.

Almost all the doctors have received the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Chinese biopharmaceutical company Sinovac, according to the Indonesian Medical Association.

Cases dropping

While the number of Indonesian health-care workers dying from COVID-19 has decreased significantly—dropping from 158 deaths this January to 13 this May, according to data initiative group LaporCOVID-19—public health experts say the Java hospitalizations are cause for concern.

"The data shows they have the Delta variant [in Kudus] so it is no surprise that the break-

through infection is higher than before because as we know the majority of health-care workers in Indonesia got Sinovac, and we still don't know yet how effective it is in the real world against the Delta variant," said Dicky Budiman, an epidemiologist from Australia's Griffith University.

Pandemic fatigue

Grappling with one of the worst outbreaks in Asia, with more than 1.9 million cases and 53,000 deaths, there has been a heavy toll on Indonesia's doctors and nurses with 946 deaths.

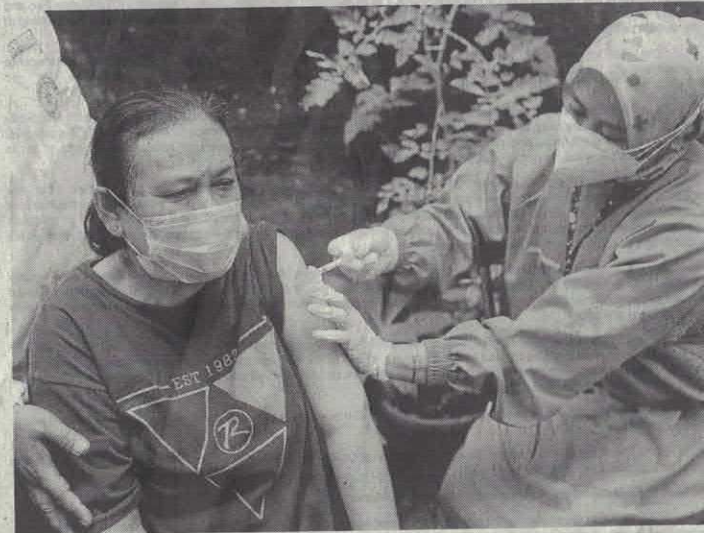
Many are now experiencing pandemic fatigue and taking an increasingly laissez-faire approach to health protocols after being vaccinated, said Lenny

Ekawati, from LaporCOVID-19.

But as more cases of the highly transmissible Delta variant are identified in the world's fourth most populous nation, the data is starting to tell a different story.

Across Indonesia, at least five doctors and one nurse have died from COVID-19 despite being vaccinated, according to the data initiative group, although one had only received their first shot.

In the Indonesian capital Jakarta, radiologist Dr. Prijo Sidipratomo said he knew of at least half a dozen doctors in the city who had been hospitalized with COVID-19 in the past month despite being vaccinated, with one currently being treated in ICU. —REUTERS



INHALE Neneng, 62-year-old local of Sindanglaya village, receives her first Sinovac dose outside her house, during a door-to-door vaccination in West Java province, Indonesia, June 15. —REUTERS