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While much of the world is desperate for coronavirus vaccines, Hong Kong may soon have to throw away millions of doses because they are approaching their expiry date & not enough people have signed up, an official warned Tuesday -- @AFP

<https://t.co/fMklgvCr1n>

Thomas Tsang, a former controller of the Centre for Health Protection said it was "just not right" that Hong Kong was sitting on an unused pile of doses while the rest of the world "is scrambling for vaccines".

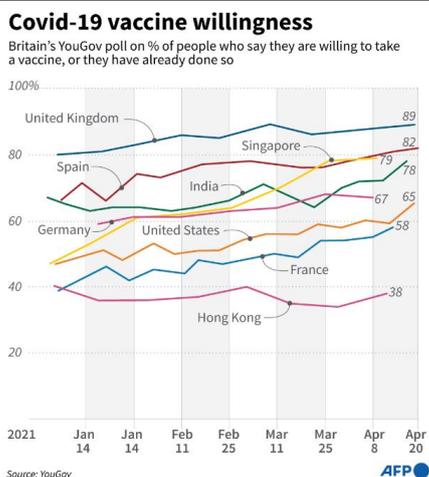
"What we have is probably all we have for the rest of the year."

Hong Kong is one of the few places in the world fortunate enough to have secured more than enough doses to inoculate its entire population of 7.5 million people.

But swirling distrust of the government as it stamps out dissent -- combined with online misinformation and a lack of urgency in the comparatively virus-free city -- has led to entrenched vaccine hesitancy and a dismal inoculation drive.

As this @AFP graphic shows, Hong Kong has the lowest vaccine acceptance rate of these places ■■

<https://t.co/WD2788kZVi>



Hesitancy is common even among the city's medical workers.

Earlier this month, the city's Hospital Authority revealed only a third of its staff had taken the opportunity to be vaccinated.

<https://t.co/SBSKGscmY3>

Officials have struggled to come up with incentives to encourage vaccination in a city where long quarantine measures and economically painful social distancing rules have kept infections low.

Instead officials have largely put the onus on businesses to push employees into vaccinating.

And getting vaccinated doesn't currently change day to day life much.

Earlier this year the govt announced HK\$5,000 (\$640) spending vouchers for all residents as a way to boost the economy.

Some critics suggested the govt should either link those vouchers to vaccination certificates -- or provide further cash handouts for the inoculated.

However on Tuesday city leader Carrie Lam rejected that suggestion.

"To offer cash or something physical to encourage vaccination shouldn't be done by the government and may even cause the opposite effect," she said.

Hong Kongers might want to read some of the comments under this tweet -- plenty of folks around the world writing "Please send your unused vaccines to us"

<https://t.co/1KbYV0boUZ>

Good news, Hong Kong authorities have just announced that some 40,000 Chinese mainland EEP holders, and some 13,000 refugee claimants will now be eligible for the city's vaccine programme.

<https://t.co/l62niM2ica>

Have taken out "millions" from the headline and lede in our update to this piece, as the batch expiry dates are staggered. Tnx to [@nathanhammond](#) for spotting.

The warning from officials that Hong Kong could end up throwing out unused doses still stands & is newsworthy.