

USD 01	GBP 01	EUR 1000	PKR 1000	ILR 01	BRL 1000	AED 01
AFN 78.24	AFN 109.25	AFN 1076	AFN 501	AFN 95.51	AFN 0.37	AFN 21.22

WHO renames COVID-19 variants with Greek letters to avoid stigma

Common variants are known by letters of the Greek alphabet to avoid stigmatizing and stigmatizing nations where they were first detected, the World Health Organization (WHO) has announced.

The new system applies to variants of concern - the most troubling of which four are in circulation - and the second-level variants of interest being tracked.

"While they have their advantages, these scientific names can be difficult to say and recall, and are prone to misreporting," the WHO said in a statement.

"As a result, people often resort to calling variants by the places where they are detected, which is stigmatizing and discriminatory."

The four common variants considered concern by the United Nations agency and known globally by the public are the UK, South Africa, Brazil and India variants, which have been given the letters Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta according to the order of their detection. Other variants of interest continue down the alphabet.

"The labels don't replace existing scientific nomenclature and will continue to be used to research," WHO's assistant director Maria Van Kerkhove reacted. "These labels will help with public discussion about COVID-19 as the monitoring system can be difficult to follow."

WHO also announced a set of encouraging media outlets and national authorities to adopt the new labels.

Earlier this month, US President Joe Biden signed a law



criminal law aimed at protecting Asian Americans who have suffered attacks after months of disinformation in which other possible names such as Greek, Delta and Gamma, were considered by experts, according to biotechnology startup Paloo who was involved in the talks. But many were already bank, companies or alien names.

Another idea to refer to variants of concern is VOCI, VACCI or was accepted after he pointed out it resembled an English swear word. Historically, viruses have often been associated with the letters from which they are thought to have emerged such as Ebola which is named after the epidemic Congolese river.

But this was also damaged for such as with the so-called "Spanish" flu pandemic of 1918 whose origins are unknown.

Before the new WHO scheme, some scientists had adopted their own simplified nomenclature for variants such as a reference paper using bad names. However, it was criticized on the grounds that this could impact trade, and by the author of a paper named Ekin, algarera

NSA spying row: US and Denmark pressed over allegations

European partners have pressed the US and Denmark over reports that the special agents to spy on top European politicians, including Danish broadcaster DR and Denmark's Defense Intelligence Service (DIS) collaborated with the US National Security Agency (NSA) to gather information from 2012 to 2014.

Denmark's Defense Minister, Trine Brundage, did not confirm or deny the report but said AFP news agency that "systemic cross-linking of close allies is unacceptable". She was not in charge of the mission during the alleged spying.

"This is not acceptable between allies, and even less between allies and European partners," said French President Emmanuel Macron after speaking with US President Joe Biden.

Macron said he agreed with US President Joe Biden's comments, but that he was also reassured by the Danish defense minister's condemnation. Intelligence was allegedly collected on other officials from Germany, France, Sweden and Norway. These nations have also called for an investigation from National Intelligence and public broadcaster NRK. "It's unacceptable if countries which have close allied cooperation and that they go on our number."

The NSA is said to have accessed text messages and the phone conversations of a number of government individuals by tapping into Danish internet cables in co-operation with the FBI.

The alleged spying, said in the report to have been conducted "Operation Darkmatter", allowed the NSA to obtain data using the telephone numbers of politicians in search parameters, according to DR. DR interviewed nine sources, all of whom are said to have had to be interviewed in secret.



Sedat Peker: YouTube videos grip Turkey, rattles gov't

accidents who had signed a petition in 2011 calling for an end to fighting between the security forces and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in southeast Turkey.

Yes, he went on to win major victories and philanthropy awards. Peker said he left Turkey in 2020 to avoid prosecution and, after reportedly spending time in Eastern Europe, now claims to be living in the UAE.

The chief public prosecutor's office in Ankara issued a new arrest warrant for Peker on Wednesday. He accused the Turkish police of monitoring his wife and daughters in a bid to do the family honor last month and began posting his videos on YouTube.

Peker has broadcast from what is supposedly a hotel in Dubai. Often wearing an open-collared shirt displaying a medallion, Peker in person, eager to drop references to philosophers and writers, and quick to laughter and meandering.

He has been in one video that his enemies "will be defeated by a report and a phone camera".

While he sometimes exhibits all sorts of wit as he speaks, he has not produced documentary evidence to back up any of his claims so far. Among the most serious allegations in his videos are: a former interior minister, who, in the 1990s, killed a series of political killings - including of two prominent journalists - in what is more recent drug trafficking and the alleged poisoning of a man in an apartment in Ankara street.

Iran enriched uranium stockpile 16 times over deal limit: IAEA

The UN nuclear watchdog Monday voiced concern Iran had not identified sources over sites where enriched uranium activity may have occurred and reported illicit enrichment activities.

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Covid: Peru more than doubles death toll after review

Peru has more than doubled its Covid-19 death toll after a review of the country's health records, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The official death toll now stands at 180,364, a large increase on the previous figure of 69,242, the organization said.

Excess deaths are a measure of how many more people are dying than would be expected based on the previous five years. "We think it is our duty to make public this updated information," WHO director said.

Peru has been hit by a wave of Covid-19 cases since the start of the year, with the toll rising to more than 1.8 million cases and more than 180,000 deaths.

The WHO said the review found that the official death toll was significantly lower than the actual number of deaths.

UN envoy says he is frustrated as Yemen ceasefire talks derailed

The UN special envoy for Yemen Monday expressed frustration that his efforts to achieve a cease-fire in the war-torn country have been derailed by warring parties seeking gains on the battlefield.

Martin Griffiths said ongoing fighting in several parts of Yemen, including a resumption of attacks by the Houthis on the Saudi-led coalition, had undermined the prospects for peace in the country.

Yemen has been embroiled in a civil war since 2014, when the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa, forcing the internationally recognized government to flee to the south.

Griffiths said the war has killed more than 130,000 people and displaced the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

"Nobody can be more frustrated than I am," Griffiths said. "We have spent a year and a half on talks which are effectively empty-handed. The ceasefire is being derailed by the warring parties."

The UN special envoy said the opening of Sanaa Airport, the main lifeline for the country, is a key step towards a political settlement.

Griffiths said he is frustrated that the UN's efforts to achieve a cease-fire in the war-torn country have been derailed by warring parties seeking gains on the battlefield.