

## **Covid new wave, BA.2 variant; Things WHO said on present pandemic situation**

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- **The WHO said the end of the Covid-19 pandemic was a long way off, citing a rise in cases in its latest weekly data**
- **WHO lamented the global increase, telling that it came 'despite a significant reduction in testing that's occurring worldwide'.**

With another outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in China, South Korea, and Israel, the World Health Organization (WHO) said that misinformation about the coronavirus pandemic is creating confusion among people. The WHO said the end of the Covid-19 pandemic was a long way off, citing a rise in cases in its latest weekly data.

"We have huge amounts of misinformation that's out there. The misinformation that Omicron is mild. Misinformation that the pandemic is over. Misinformation that this is the last variant that we will have to deal with. This is really causing a lot of confusion," Dr Maria Van Kerkhove said.

Kerkhove, the WHO's technical lead on Covid-19, lamented the global increase, telling that it came "despite a significant reduction in testing that's occurring worldwide".

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus agreed, warning that the lack of visibility due to reduced testing meant "the cases we are seeing are just the tip of the iceberg."

On the BA.2 variant, the UN health agency said the expert said they have not seen changes in the severity of BA.2 compared to BA.1 at population levels. However, Dr Maria said BA.2, sub-lineages of the variant are particularly transmissible and are now by far the most prevalent in samples collected and sequenced.

While Dr Mike Ryan, Executive director of WHO's health emergencies programme said that Omicron will pick up pockets for months and months until another pocket of susceptibility opens up.