

CHINA

WHO bows to China, skips 'xi' COVID variant name to 'not offend' China

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Secretary-General António Guterres with Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director-General of World Health Organization (WHO) at WHO headquarters in Geneva.
Feb. 24, 2020. (Jean Marc Ferré/United Nations)

NOVEMBER 29, 2021 | ELIZABETH LAWRENCE

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Over the weekend, the World Health Organization (WHO) was accused of protecting the Chinese Communist Party after naming the latest COVID-19 variant “omicron,” skipping over the next letters in the Greek alphabet: “nu” and “xi.” The president of China is Xi Jinping and WHO said “xi” was passed over to avoid “causing offense to any cultural, social, national, regional, professional or ethnic groups.”

While the Greek letter “xi” and China’s president’s name are pronounced differently, WHO’s decision to avoid the name prompted criticism that the organization is shielding China from any links to the virus that was first identified in Wuhan.

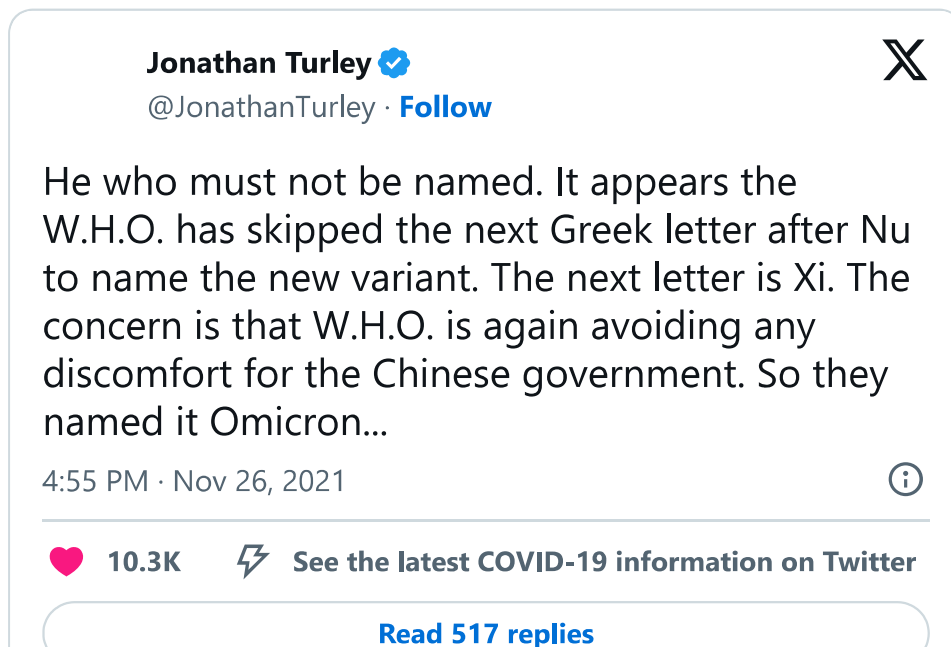
Addressing the controversy, WHO told The Washington Times that “nu” was skipped because it looks like “new,” and “xi” was avoided because it could “cause offense.”

“Nu’ is too easily confounded with ‘new,’ and ‘Xi’ was not used because it is a common last name, and WHO best practices for naming disease suggest avoiding ‘causing offense to any cultural, social, national, regional, professional or ethnic groups,’” the organization said in a statement.

Jonathan Turley, George Washington University Law School professor, tweeted that the decision shows

WHO is doing whatever it can to avoid “any discomfort for the Chinese government.”

“He who must not be named. It appears the W.H.O. has skipped the next Greek letter after Nu to name the new variant. The next letter is Xi. The concern is that W.H.O. is again avoiding any discomfort for the Chinese government. So they named it Omicron...,” the professor tweeted.



“...The new variant was expected to be Nu but any additional variant would then be Xi, which happens to be the name of the Chinese leader...,” Turley continued in a separate tweet. “...It is not clear if there is another reason for the decision to skip over Nu and Xi, but W.H.O.’s history with the investigation into the origins of the pandemic has fueled speculation as to a political motive.”

Jonathan Turley  · Nov 26, 2021



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Replying to @JonathanTurley

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Jonathan Turley 

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5:11 PM · Nov 26, 2021



1.4K



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Texas Sen. Ted Cruz blasted the World Health Organization, accusing the group of being “scared” of the CCP.

“If the WHO is this scared of the Chinese Communist Party, how can they be trusted to call them out the next time they’re trying to cover up a catastrophic global pandemic?” Cruz tweeted.

Ted Cruz 

@tedcruz · [Follow](#)



If the WHO is this scared of the Chinese Communist Party, how can they be trusted to call them out the next time they're trying to cover up a catastrophic global pandemic?

Paul Nuki @PaulNuki

A WHO source confirmed the letters Nu and Xi of the Greek alphabet had been deliberately avoided. Nu had been skipped to avoid confusion with the word "new" and Xi had been skipped to "avoid stigmatising a region", they said.

All pandemics inherently political!

4:10 PM · Nov 26, 2021



4.3K



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Former President Donald Trump's son Donald Trump Jr. also chimed in on the provocative decision, tweeting, "As far as I'm concerned the original will always be the Xi variant."

Donald Trump Jr. 

@DonaldJTrumpJr · [Follow](#)



As far as I'm concerned the original will always be the Xi variant.

Stephen L. Miller  @redsteeze

The experts™ skipping Xi variant name in the Greek alphabet so not to offend the country that started this sums this entire thing up perfectly. It can't be topped.

10:16 PM · Nov 26, 2021



21K



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Dr. Angelique Coetzee, the South African doctor who first detected the new variant, said the symptoms are “unusual but mild” in healthy patients.

“Their symptoms were so different and so mild from those I had treated before,” Coetzee told The Telegraph.

“It presents mild disease with symptoms being sore muscles and tiredness for a day or two not feeling well,” Coetzee said. “So far, we have detected that those infected do not suffer the loss of taste or smell. They might have a slight cough. There are no prominent symptoms. Of those infected some are currently being treated at home.”

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