

WHO Representative and Head of Mission Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain looks on as Mr Mostafa Salehi Vaziri, Supervisor at the Reference Laboratory of Tehran's Pasteur Institute, unpacks a component of the advanced genomic sequencing machines. Credit: WHO/Islamic Republic of Iran

Tuesday, 18 January 2022 – The World Health Organization has delivered 6 sets of advanced genomic sequencing equipment with next-generation sequencing technology procured through financial support from the Federal Republic of Germany to 3 diagnostic and reference centres in Islamic Republic of Iran, namely the National Influenza Reference Laboratory, the Pasteur

Institute of Tehran, and the Virology Research Center of Masih Daneshvari Hospital in Tehran.

The devices were officially handed over by WHO Representative and Head of Mission Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain on 12 and 13 January to the directors of the centres in an effort of solidarity to help strengthen the screening capacity of genetic variants causing COVID-19 in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The delivered items also include 3 high-tech laptops for analysis of the data generated by the sequencing devices.

"These institutes play a very critical role not only in the Islamic Republic of Iran but also in the Region and globally, because the evidence generated is looked into by the scientific community and public health community as they advise accordingly on how the virus is behaving and the cross-border movement of people, and it is our privilege to be part of their efforts. We will continue to work with them so they can support the people of Islamic Republic of Iran even better," said Dr Hussain during a visit to the centres.

Advanced genomic sequencing machines equipped with next-generation sequencing technology are used to identify different variants and strains of different microbes, including the SARS-COV-2 virus causing COVID-19, and offer ultra-high throughput, scalability, and speed. That importance is further intensified as Iranian health authorities plan ahead for a potential peak caused by Omicron across the country.







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