

# SARS-CoV-2 Variants BA.2.86 and EG.5.1 Alongside Scrub Typhus and Nipah in India During the Ongoing Cricket World Cup 2023: Threat Perceptions and Countermeasures



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## Abstract

The United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and China witnessed rising cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in 2023. Concerns about severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) novel strains amid the sudden surge of COVID cases are growing. Recently, BA.2.86 (Pirola) poses a much greater risk due to its higher transmission rate and spreading across regions. Pirola variant has mutations that set it apart from all earlier known SARS-CoV-2 variants. This variant was designated a variant of interest by the World Health Organization (WHO). Another SARS-CoV-2 variant named "Eris" (EG.5.1) was detected in India and started picking up in the US and the UK. The WHO listed EG.5.1 (variant) as a variant under monitoring. Therefore, it is important to remain vigilant. Further, multiple Nipah virus infections and scrub typhus cases are spreading among humans in India currently. In this situation, the 13th edition of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's Cricket World Cup is being held in India this year. With global reach, this big sporting carnival attracts millions of cricket fans from several countries. In light of the multiple public health concerns encountered currently, this gala global sports event needs additional preventive measures.