

WHO chief hopes COVID will no longer be emergency next year

December 15, 2022

The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Wednesday he is “hopeful” that the COVID-19 pandemic will no longer be considered a global emergency sometime next year. His comments at a briefing with media come as China dismantles its rigid “zero-COVID” policy and allows people to live with the virus, stirring concerns the world’s No.2 economy faces a surge in infections. A WHO body meets every few months to decide whether the new coronavirus, which emerged three years ago in China’s Wuhan and has killed more than 6.6 million people, still represents a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC), reports Reuters. The designation is intended to trigger a coordinated international response and could unlock funding to collaborate on sharing vaccines and treatments. Asked about the conditions needed for the end of the PHEIC, WHO’s senior epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove said: “There’s more work to be done.” “If there are huge chunks of population that have not had vaccinations, the world still has a lot of work to do,” said WHO’s emergencies director Mike Ryan about the same issue.