

# Just one devotee for 'Corona Devi' in Kerala 'temple'

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## FULL TEXT

**KOLLAM,NATIONAL Anilan has installed the idol at a shrine, says worshipping a virus is not alien custom**

While the controversy over the reopening of temples continues to rage, Anilan, a Kadakkal resident, has installed the idol of 'goddess COVID-19' at a shrine attached to his home. Christened Corona Devi, the deity is a replica of SARS-CoV-2 with its red spiky tentacles and he calls her 'a new addition to the pantheon of 33 crore Hindu gods.' "I will conduct pujas in front of the goddess for the safety and well-being of all engaged in the battle against the pandemic. There will be no darshan as it is also a protest against the political propaganda behind the reopening of temples. People are now using gods for political gains, but now is no time for temple visits. Survival is all that matters now," he says.

Made of thermocol and sitting on a 'pallival,' Corona Devi is a goddess without any 'moolamantra.' "In Kerala you have a deity of smallpox, another contagious disease, who finds a place in some famous temples. It is no attempt to mock anyone and all pujas will be done with utmost dedication. According to Hindu mythology God is omnipresent, and even exists in the virus. Worshipping a virus as devi is not an alien custom for us," he says.

### **Prasadam by post**

Though there is no darshan, Corona Devi's prasadam will be available to all devotees via mail. Anilan says the shrine is dedicated to all corona warriors, including health workers, scientists, and Fire and Rescue Services personnel. "Pujas will be held in the name of all those people who are helping others. Those who want the prasadam can get in touch with me. I will not charge any money for the pujas and offerings," he says.

## DETAILS

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