

# Indian women worship coronavirus, leave offerings to virus goddess, say reports

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## FULL TEXT

Healthcare workers enter a Mumbai residential area to check residents for coronavirus. (File photo: Reuters)The coronavirus is being worshipped as a goddess in parts of India, as Indian media reports that believers are leaving offerings to the new deity, "Corona Mai."

Women in some villages in India's Uttar Pradesh have started worshipping "Corona Mai," Indian news agency IANS reported Monday. The women dug a pit in a field and filled it with water then offered nine cloves and nine laddoos, an Indian sweet, to their deity, IANS said.

The villages include Tumkuhiraj, Kasia, Hata, Captanganj and Khadda tehsil in Kushinagar district, according to the agency.

Other women have since joined the activity and begun to pray to Corona Mai to spare lives, the news agency added.

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Indian news channel CNN-News18 noted that large numbers of women at other locations had also gathered last Friday to worship the coronavirus deity.

The women similarly left offerings and sang a song to appease the goddess.

"We have taken shelter under goddess coronavirus. She will be pacified with worship. The doctors have failed to treat patients and scientists have also failed to develop a vaccine to cure coronavirus. We have worshipped coronavirus goddess so that our family members will remain safe from it," Naina Devi, a worshipper who joined one of the groups, told News18.

Not all are happy with the worship of the new goddess, however.

"The authorities must stop such activities which promote superstition. Everyone knows that there is no cure for corona and this kind of activities must be stopped," Radhey Lal, a school teacher in Kasia, told IANS.

The worshipping follows the months-long spread of coronavirus around the world, with infections of the coronavirus exceeding 7.23 million.

In India, authorities have moved to ease lockdown measures aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus, with shopping malls, places of worship, restaurants and state borders reopening on Monday.

The country, however, reported its highest single-day death toll on the same day, with cases in India's capital, New Delhi, expected to surge to half a million soon.

Countrywide there have been 275,413 cases of coronavirus infection, with 7,719 deaths. Nearly 135,000 have recovered so far, according to a Johns Hopkins tally.

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