

Hindu group touts cow urine elixir for coronavirus

March 14 2020

Dozens of Hindu activists held a cow urine party in the Indian capital Saturday to protect themselves from the new coronavirus, as countries around the world struggle to control the deadly pandemic.

Members and supporters of All India Hindu Mahasabha staged fire rituals and drank from earthen cups to fight COVID-19 at the gathering in New Delhi dubbed a "gaumutra (cow [urine](#)) party".

Many in the Hindu-majority nation of 1.3 billion consider cows sacred and in recent years have made several assertions about the liquid being an elixir, claims that critics have rejected as quackery.

"Whoever drinks cow urine will be cured and protected," Hari Shankar Kumar, one of the volunteers at the event, told AFP as he served the "remedy" in brown clay cups.

Governments and scientists have said no medicine or vaccine is available to protect or cure people of the infection that has killed more than 5,400 people and infected nearly 150,000 across six continents.

Two people have died in India while more than 80 have fallen ill, and the government has ordered the closure of some land routes into the country and cancelled all visas to stop the spread of the virus in the world's second most populous country.

Members draped in saffron clothes chanted Hindu hymns at the fire

ritual as devotees sang paeans for the sacred animal.

"We have gathered here and prayed for world peace and we will make an offering to the corona (virus) to calm it," Chakrapani Maharaj, the group's leader, told reporters before gulping down a cup of urine.

He then offered a glass to a devil-shaped caricature of the virus to "pacify" it.

He urged people to adopt the "tried and tested" practice of drinking cow urine to ward off diseases, and desist from killing animals and eating meat.

"The coronavirus is also a bacteria (virus) and cow urine is effective against all forms of bacteria that harm us," claimed Om Prakash, a participant from the neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh.

Some members of Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party have also claimed cow urine has medicinal qualities and can even cure cancer.

One legislator from the party last week suggested use of the urine as well as cow dung can cure the [coronavirus](#).

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