



Indian govt slams ‘audacious’ study that suggested country’s Covid death toll is 10 times higher than officially reported

Description

INDIA: The Indian government has sternly rebuffed a study that claimed the country’s Covid death toll is 10 times higher than officially recorded, arguing the research is an “audacious assumption” and “not based on facts.”

The statement comes after the Center for Global Development (CGD) claimed that India’s pandemic fatalities could be 3 to 4.7 million people – some 10 times higher than the official figure of 400,000. The group’s figure was based on excess death data covering January 2020 to June 2021.

The think tank argued that the true scale of the pandemic is “*catastrophically worse*” than Indian officials acknowledge, as over-stretched hospitals have been under-counting deaths and struggling to provide accurate information.

Responding to the report, the Indian government blasted the researchers for making an “*audacious assumption*” about the excess mortality data and saying they had ignored crucial factors, such as ethnicity, genomic constitution, race, previous exposure to viruses and potential immunity throughout the population.

In a [statement](#) on Thursday, the government said the study was “*not based on facts and totally fallacious*,” as it had assumed that all excess deaths were from coronavirus, rather than other causes.

Citing their “*thorough contact tracing strategy*” and testing capabilities, the Indian government added that “*missing out on deaths is unlikely*,” even if some cases are not detected.

However, the government also added the caveat that the health ministry “*only compiles and publishes data sent by the state governments*,” and has called on regional officials to ensure they properly record

pandemic fatalities.

The Modi administration's confidence in its Covid case numbers and fatalities comes even though heavily impacted states, such as Maharashtra, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, have retrospectively raised their death tolls.

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