

## LETTER TO EDITORS

# COVID-19: A BALINESE VIEWPOINT

I Gede Juanamasta\*, Ni Made Nopita Wati, Anak Agung Gede Oka Widana

STIKes Wira Medika Bali, Indonesia

### Article Info:

Received: 2 May 2020  
Revised: 4 May 2020  
Accepted: 5 May 2020

### \*Corresponding author:

**I Gede Juanamasta, S.Kep., Ners, M.Kep**  
Nursing Program, STIKes Wira Medika Bali  
Kecak No.9a, East Gatot Subroto, Denpasar, Bali 80239, Indonesia  
Tel. (62361)-427699  
Fax. (62361)-425799  
Email: [juana.masta.90@gmail.com](mailto:juana.masta.90@gmail.com)

### DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.33546/bnj.1133>

© 2020 The Author(s). This is an **Open Access** article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially as long as the original work is properly cited. The new creations are not necessarily licensed under the identical terms.

ISSN: 2477-4073

## KEYWORDS

COVID-19; pandemics; ceremonial behavior; meditation; yoga; diagnostic self-evaluation; public health

Society in the world has been horrified by the presence of a new type of coronavirus outbreak or better known as COVID-19 ([World Health Organization, 2020](#)), which is also considered as a global public health emergency. There are more than 512,000 people with 23,495 deaths were confirmed in 202 countries by March 2020 ([World Health Organization, 2020](#)). The rapid process of transmitting the virus increasingly makes the community anxious. Moreover, some people may not know the procedures for handling the virus which makes them more panic.

In Indonesia, the government has issued a state of disaster emergency from 29 February to 29 May 2020 related to this virus pandemic with a total time of 91 days ([Koesmawardhan, 2020](#)). The coronavirus pandemic in Indonesia began on 2 March 2020 until 1 June 2020, with 25,940 positive cases of COVID-19 were confirmed, 1,642 of them dead and 7,637 recovered. Cases are stated to be spread in all of 34 provinces in Indonesia, where the island of Bali is one of the regions that also has been infected by the virus ([Public Health Emergency Operation Centre, 2020](#)).

In this letter, we would like to address COVID-19 from *Vedic* literary history and Hindu perspective. The existence of the virus actually could be traced to its type or category. According to Ayurveda literature ([Ambara, 2006](#)), the main reference for the health dimension or *Usadha* community in Bali, the existence of epidemic diseases are basically grouped into three types including: 1) *Adhyatmika* is a disease outbreak whose causes originate from itself, such as hereditary disease, congenital disease, and imbalance in the *Tri-Dosha* element. *Tri-Dosha* is a fundamental energy that controls physical and emotional body functions; 2) *Adhidaiwika* is a disease outbreak that causes from the influence of the external environment, such as the influence of germs (bacteria, viruses), noetic or supernatural disorders, and scale effects (environmental or accidents); and 3) *Adhibautika* is a disease outbreak caused by the influence of planets, sharp objects, animal bites, accidents

to cause injury. Based on these types, it can be seen that COVID-19 is in the *Adhidaiwika* type, a disease outbreak that causes from external environmental influences, such as the influence of germs or viruses.

According to a Hindu perspective in Bali, the appearance of COVID-19 is similar to *Grubug*'s disease that has occurred since ancient times. *Grubug* is defined as the events that cause people die. [Widana \(2020\)](#) stated that if we flashback again in the historical space, we found data that in the year 1521 Saka or around 1599 AD, Bali was once plagued by *Grubug* in the form of a horrific outbreak of Leprosy which was also a forerunner to the emergence of the term "Big Pain", or chronic and severe pain, for this heart breaking phenomenon. In 1850, the "invasion" of *Grubug* in the form of smallpox attacked the Badung area which killed approximately 4,000 people. The eastern end of Bali was not immune to the disease outbreak at that time. The number of lives lost was certainly also influenced by the lack of insight or education level of the community regarding clean and healthy life behavior and the limited variety of drugs that could be used as a treatment or as a preventive measure.

However, what is unique is that the Balinese people become stronger and more determined learning from the required trail experiences. The next *Grubug* phenomena will be no longer be such a frightening but become a space for self-evaluation to further strengthen in anticipatory or preventive steps. People begin to change their life patterns to be more organized, as well as to change the health dimension through various healthy activities or routines such as regular exercise, routine yoga activities (meditation, *suryanamaskara* – one type of yoga, and fasting) ([Juanamasta & Priastana, 2017](#)), various *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi* - spiritual healing therapy, such as the implementation of *Yajna* (traditional rituals) supported by Balinese cultural values. In addition, people in Bali also believe in herbal therapy which consists of cultural-based treatment that uses products from plants to improve health ([Widana, 2020](#)). This is certainly a concrete evidence that Balinese

have a fundamental ability to combat COVID-19, both from a cultural and religious standpoint. In fact, Bali is an area with the recovery of COVID-19 patients reached 65% in early May 2020 (Yurianto, 2020).

In conclusion, through your reputable Journal, we invite the society in Bali and other areas in Indonesia as well as people around the world to learn from our own histories and beliefs in a better way. This letter is expected to increase awareness in responding the COVID-19 pandemic and thereby could enhance quality of life beyond Bali Indonesia.

#### Declaration of Conflicting Interest

There is no conflict of interest to be declared.

#### Funding

There is no funding to be declared.

#### Authorship Contribution

All of the authors equally made the substantial contribution, involved in drafting and revising manuscript, and given final approval.

#### Author Biographies

**I Gede Juanamasta, S.Kep, Ners., M.Kep** is A Nursing Lecturer at STIKes Wira Medika Bali, Indonesia. Areas of interest: management and leadership. ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5445-7861>

**Ni Made Nopita Wati, S.Kep, Ners., M.Kep** is A Nursing Lecturer at STIKes Wira Medika Bali, Indonesia. Areas of interest: management and leadership. ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3305-8837>

**Anak Agung Gede Oka Widana, S.Pd.H., M.Pd.H** is A Lecturer on Medical Records and Health Information at STIKes Wira Medika Bali, Indonesia. ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5956-7480>

#### References

- Ambara, G. N. (2006). *Ayurveda traditional Indian sciences*. Surabaya: Paramita.
- Juanamasta, I. G., & Priastana, I. K. A. (2017). *Yoga affect to system immune: A systematic review*. In Proceeding ICON 3, International Conference on Nursing (pp 206-217). Malang: Universitas Brawijaya.
- Koesmawardhan, N. W. (2020). Pemerintah tetapkan masa darurat bencana corona hingga 29 Mei 2020 [The government sets a corona disaster emergency period until May 29, 2020]. Retrieved on 29 May 2020, from <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4942327/pemerintah-tetapkan-masa-darurat-bencana-corona-hingga-29-mei-2020>
- Public Health Emergency Operation Centre. (2020). *Indonesia Covid-19 report*. Retrieved on 1 June 2020, from <https://infeksiemerging.kemkes.go.id/>
- Widana, A. A. G. O. (2020). *Ngebug grubug (Learning to build solutions without isolation)* (Vol. 273). Bali, Indonesia: Hindu Raditya Magazines.
- World Health Organization. (2020). General's remarks at the media briefing on 2019-nCoV on 11 February 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-2019-ncov-on-11-february-2020>
- Yurianto, A. (2020). Persentase pasien covid-19 sembuh di Bali lampau 65 persen, kasus baru masih bertambah [Percentage of COVID-19 patients recovered in Bali exceeds 65 percent, new cases are still increasing]. Retrieved on 1 June 2020, from <http://www.balipost.com/news/2020/05/10/121104/Persentase-Pasien-COVID-19-Sembuh-di...html>

**Cite this article as:** Juanamasta, I. G., Wati, N.M.N., & Widana, A.A.G.O. (2020). Covid-19: A Balinese viewpoint. *Belitung Nursing Journal*, 6(4), 143-144. <https://doi.org/10.33546/bnj.1133>