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New Delhi, May 20 (RHC)-- India's Health Ministry has recorded 4,529 deaths, the highest single-day tally of any country in the world, as the infectious Indian strain surges through the nation and continues to

overwhelm its medical system.

Surpassing the previous one-day record of 4,475 COVID-related fatalities set by the US on January 12, the nation's grim death toll reflects the devastating impact of the surge in case numbers in recent weeks, which has been propelled by the new strain.

The rising number of deaths in India has left morgues and crematoriums struggling to cope, as COVID patients fill up hospital beds, die as the result of oxygen shortages, or are denied treatment altogether at already-full medical facilities.

While COVID deaths in India have increased exponentially over the past month, experts have offered some hope, suggesting that the surge could be close to plateauing, as Mumbai and Delhi have started to see a decrease in new infections. However, health officials have warned that the situation could be worse than is currently being reported, as the outbreak in rural areas is largely hidden.

Murad Banaji, a mathematician modelling India's COVID-19 outlook, was cited by AP warning that the true caseload in rural India "continues to be fairly invisible," with officials unable to fully assess the extent of the virus there. In recent days, health experts have been sent to around 90,000 villages, so far detecting it in 21,000 of them.

Since the start of the pandemic, India has recorded 25,213,082 cases of COVID-19 and 283,248 deaths from the virus. The country's vaccine rollout is now underway, with 185.8 million doses having been administered as of Wednesday, according to the Ministry of Health.

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