

Global Prayer

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Digest

June 2019 • Frontier Ventures • 38:6

Starting our prayer year for the Frontier Peoples in the Ring of Fire

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Dear Praying Friends,

We are starting this month's Frontier People Groups (FPGs) with Southeast Asia and ending with Bangladesh. As we put together this prayer guide, there has been a tsunami in Indonesia, the country that is getting the bulk of our prayer this month. There is a reason why they call this region of the world the "ring of fire." Indonesia is very vulnerable to earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, and other natural disasters.

In 2004 there was a massive earthquake that hit Indonesia's Aceh Province along with other parts of Asia. Aceh is home to the Acehnese, arguably the most resistant Muslims in East Asia to the gospel. Through the hands and feet of believers, some of the Acehnese have been able to experience the love of Christ. Did they respond? Jesus made it clear that we are to present the good news everywhere, and it's up to people to decide whether they want to become objects of mercy or not. This can happen now in the Sulawesi and Lombok islands of Indonesia where people are suffering. Let's pray that their suffering will not be wasted.

In Christ,

Keith Carey

Keith Carey, editor-in-chief, GPD

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June 2019

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WEB SITES
www.globalprayerdigest.org

https://prayerstrategists.net/about/prayer-guides/

ISSN 1045-9731
Contents of the Global Prayer Digest © 2019
Frontier Ventures
1605 East Elizabeth Street
Pasadena, CA 91104

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Cover photo by
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PRAY FOR

*Every Frontier People Group in
Southeast Asia and Bangladesh*



BASIC FACTS ABOUT INDONESIA



- Eighty percent of the population of Indonesia is Muslim. Fifteen percent are Christian.
- There are 780 people groups spread across Indonesia's 6,000 inhabited islands.
- Some of the Muslims are strongly influenced by the pre-Islamic and Hindu religions. There are also Hindu, Buddhist, and tribal religions.

Islam was first adopted by Indonesians in northern Sumatra Island (see days 6-13) in the 13th century, through the influence of traders. It became the country's dominant religion by the 16th century.

Big Need And Big Opportunity

- The rate of growth among evangelicals is twice as fast in the islands as the growth of Islam. Moderate Muslims are increasingly open to Christ due to the harsh extremism of the Islamists.
- There is a tremendous need for the word of God to get out to the islands of people who are separated from God. As the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:9, "For a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."
- The islands of Indonesia were created by volcanic activity (fire from below). The islands of Indonesia will be redeemed by fire from above through disciples responding to the movement of the Spirit by bringing the word to reach the unreached. Think big!

Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world with over 17,000 islands and approximately 264 million people. There are five main islands: Java, Sumatra, Borneo (which is shared with Malaysia), Sulawesi, and Papua (which is shared with Papua New Guinea). The capital, Jakarta, is the nation's largest city and is located on Java. Jakarta is one of the largest cities in the world. Officially, Jakarta's population is a little over 10 million, but when you add in the metro area and consider the many homeless people, the actual population is over 20 million. The country is very spread out. If you were to put a map of Indonesia on top of a map of the U.S., the top of Sumatra would be out beyond Washington State, and Papua would be out in the ocean beyond the North Carolina coast!

Indonesia: Unity in Diversity

Indonesia's motto is "Unity in Diversity." Indonesia is made up of many different people groups, over 770, to be exact! These people groups total 264 million, making Indonesia the fourth most populous country in the world. The Javanese and the Sundanese are the largest ethnic groups that live on Java and comprise much of the government. Although the national language of Indonesia is Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian), most ethnic groups have their own language, many of which are very different from Indonesian. In fact, there are a total of 707 living languages in Indonesia. The only country that has more languages than Indonesia is Papua New Guinea. In school and public life, Indonesian is used; however, at home the



native language of the people group is often spoken. If one is in a village, there is a good chance he will hear a local language instead of Indonesian.

Indonesia: Then and Now

Indonesia has only been an independent country since August 17, 1945. In 1602 Indonesia came under Dutch rule as part of the Dutch East India Company, and then became a nationalized colony of the Netherlands in 1800 as part of the Dutch East Indies. During World War II, Indonesia was taken over by Japan. Four million people died from famine and forced labor during the Japanese occupation. Two days after Japan surrendered, Indonesia declared its independence. The Netherlands tried to reestablish power, but the Indonesians resisted, going so far as to burn part of the city of Bandung to keep the Dutch from taking it. The conflict ended in December 1949, when the Dutch formally recognized Indonesia as an independent country (Wikipedia).

Indonesia is now a democratic republic. Recently, many have been encouraged by the political climate of Indonesia. The mayors of Bandung and Surabaya, two of the major cities in Indonesia, have taken a stance against corruption and are changing laws to make the cities cleaner and force civil servants

to take their jobs more seriously. There have also been major changes in Jakarta. In 2012, Joko Widodo, better known as Jokowi, became the governor of Jakarta, along with Basuki Purnama (Ahok), as his lieutenant governor. They immediately began making changes in Jakarta, cleaning up the city and ridding it of corruption. Jokowi is a former furniture seller, and Ahok is a Chinese-Indonesian Christian, so the two were a unique pair to be in charge of Jakarta. Jokowi was so well-liked that when the presidential election came about, he received much support, so he ran for president, and won. This forced Ahok into the governor role, and he continued the changes that Jokowi began in Jakarta. He was wrongfully jailed at the time of this writing.

Indonesia: Beauty and Difficulty

Today, many Europeans and Australians travel to Indonesia for leisure. Indonesia is a lush, tropical country with palm trees, white sandy beaches, and clear, turquoise water. The country has the most active volcanoes of any in the world. Indonesia has been working hard to improve its tourist industry. Recently, Indonesia has been putting more emphasis on tourism, and they are focusing on making areas other than Bali attractive to foreigners for vacation.

In the midst of the beautiful beaches and palm trees, there is much poverty. Indonesians are among some of the poorest in the world. Furthermore, Indonesia has the largest number of people living near active volcanoes. As a result, the country has experienced many natural catastrophes, including the tsunami that hit Southeast Asia on December 26, 2004. Being one of the hardest hit areas, Banda Aceh has still not recovered from the tsunami. There have been other major natural disasters since then. One of the most significant is the eruption of Mt. Sinabung in North Sumatra. It erupted multiple times from September 2013 to February 2014. It erupted again in October 2014, and for the past year, it has erupted almost continuously (Wikipedia). As a result, over 10,000 people have been evacuated, and fields, homes, and churches are now covered in ash. Another volcano that has caused major problems in Indonesia is Lusi, a mud volcano in East Java. In 2006, a rice paddy broke open and began spewing mud. Since then, 40,000 people were displaced because the mud destroyed an entire village (*The New York Times*).

BANJAR PEOPLE OF INDONESIA

EX 2:10, NIV

When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Pray that as Pharaoh's daughter saved the baby Moses, the Banjar might be saved from their sinful condition by our gracious God.

Create International



Banjar boys

We are all familiar with the story from Genesis three where Satan in the form of a talking snake deceives

Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. In the creation story of the Banjar people, the snake is the hero, not the villain!

The Banjar live on the southern and eastern coast of the island of Borneo in the nation of Indonesia. They are known as "water people" because they live on the coast of the sea and along rivers. Their houses are often built on stilts along the sides of the rivers. The Banjar make their living by agriculture, fishing, trade, and transportation. They are generally not open to outsiders who come to visit or do business with them.

Islam is a huge part of Banjar identity. They consider themselves among the most devout Muslims in Indonesia. They have been Muslims for 500 years. There are a very small number of believers among the Banjar.

Pray that God leads linguists to translate the New Testament into the Banjar language. Pray that the tiny number of believers would find each other and be kept safe from Muslim persecution. Pray that the Banjar would turn towards the grace and forgiveness of God found in Christ and begin a disciple-making movement that will result in their families and communities being blessed.—DK

BANTEN PEOPLE OF JAVA ISLAND, INDONESIA

Have you ever seen a beautiful fabric called batik? The art of decorating cloth in this way, using wax and dye, has



Indonesian making batik

been practiced for centuries in Java, Indonesia. Batik is part of an ancient tradition, and some of the finest batik cloth in the world is still made there. The word batik originates from the Javanese tik and means to dot. Some of the best batik on Java comes from the western part of the island, the land of the Banten people. They had their own kingdom until the coming of the Dutch in the 17th century.

Today most Banten are involved in agriculture and trade. They grow rice, coffee, cloves, beans, vegetables, and bananas. The Banten have been Muslims since the 15th century. They still practice elements of folk religion including magic and the appeasing of evil spirits. The rich culture and hospitality of the Bantenese bring thousands of tourists a year to their region. The vast majority of the Banten are Muslims, but there is a very small group who believe in Christ.

Pray that each Banten person will have the opportunity to hear about Isa or Jesus in a way he or she can understand. Pray that the believers among the Banten grow spiritually and are trained to share the good news. Pray God opens the spiritual eyes of Banten leaders so they can bring their villages and families to the savior.—DK

PS 27:8, NIV

My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek.

Pray that the Banten will seek the face of the Lord.

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SASAK PEOPLE OF LOMBOK ISLAND, INDONESIA

1 TIM 3:16, NIV

Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He (Jesus) appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Pray that the Sasak would see and come to know the biblical Jesus.

Create International



A Sasak girl

For newcomers and outsiders, the Sasak or Sassak may seem very unrefined, frightening and aggressive. But once you get to know them, the Sasak are actually friendly. The Sasak live on the island of Lombok, which is located west of Java on the island

nation of Indonesia. Originally the only inhabitants of Lombok were the Sasak who were under the political domination of Bali from the 18th century until 1895, when the Dutch conquered the island.

Today most Sasak people are farmers. Others work as fishermen and craftsmen. Even though the Sasak live in a beautiful place, poverty is a major problem for many. Many of them are not able to read.

The Sasak are Muslim, but their Islam is tainted with folk religion. They believe in evil spirits that they must appease. They also worship their ancestors.

Pray that medical workers bring modern health clinics to the Sasak people. Pray that a small number of believers would be established in the faith and share the gospel with entire families. Pray that Sasak leaders become believers and lead their families to the Lord. Pray that the tourist industry in Lombok would grow and help many Sasak with their pressing financial needs.—DK

MBOJO PEOPLE OF SUMBAWA ISLAND, INDONESIA

In the 1930s there was a movement of people who received Jesus as savior on Sumbawa Island. Churches were established.



Scenery from Sumbawa Island

Today, there are four mountain villages that claim to be Christian, but none understand the gospel. These people are unreached despite the fact that the New Testament, Bible portions, gospel recordings, and the JESUS Film exist in their Bima language. They are very poor in every way. Their belief system is a mixture of Islam, animism, and worship of ancestors that is used by the enemy of their souls to control them and keep them from the truth of the gospel. They depend upon numerous healers in their area for treatment of physical ailments, and general advice. These people have much control over the lives of the Mbojo people.

Although many live near the sea, they do not know how to live very far from it. They farm mainly rice and raise horses. Mbojo women weave beautiful cloth for which they are widely known. They also make baskets from bamboo and palm leaves. In the past, Mbojo people viewed education as a threat to their culture. But now they are more open. However, education is not accessible. They also need medical clinics and agricultural training.

Pray for trustworthy, caring disciples to build loving relationships with the Mbojo people through practical knowledge and education. Pray for Mbojo people to give thanks to the Lord of lords. Pray for the gospel to spread through family Bible studies.—KH

MATT 13:8-9, NLT

Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was 30, 60, and even 100 times as much as had been planted! Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.

Pray that the seeds once planted among the Mbojo people will spring to life in this generation.

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MANDAR PEOPLE OF SULAWESI ISLAND, INDONESIA

MATT 11:27, NLT

My father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the son and those to whom the son chooses to reveal him.

Pray that the Muslim Mandar people will have a strong desire for truth and righteousness that will lead them to seeking the son.

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Selling dried fish

(This story illustrates aspects of Mandar culture.)

King Rarayusfika opened his door to greet the Mandar leaders, and he was shocked to see above their grave faces their headdresses were angled to the left! This was traditionally an official call for the reigning king to reconsider his leadership and policies. They were also carrying spears and sacred knives. This was their absolute sign for him to step down from his throne voluntarily. He shuddered inside, realizing that he could soon die. Where would his spirit go? In this land, kings are appointed by leaders, and may be deposed if ineffective.

Mandar people live in a varied land of seacoasts, mountains, and farmland. They live south of where the tsunami hit last September. They farm and fish, and export dried, salted or fermented fish.

They are Muslims who in their daily lives practice animism. For example, they believe in powers of unseen spirits that inhabit sacred places. Services of shaman healers are often sought for healing the sick and casting out spirits. Global Recordings Network (GRN) has produced audio resources, and the JESUS Film is available in Mandar.

Pray for Bible believing fellowships to be planted among Mandar families. Pray for a mighty movement in which the Holy Spirit leads and empowers dedicated disciples to make more disciples who will disciple even more Mandar people.—KH

KOMERING PEOPLE OF SUMATRA ISLAND, INDONESIA

Can someone be kindhearted and friendly, yet outspoken and direct? This is the way some would describe the Komerling people. Most Komerling people are Muslims, yet strongly influenced also by folk practices. They call shamans to heal sick people or cast out demons. Only Almighty God's Spirit can break the ties that bind these people who need the liberating power of Jesus Christ.



Komerling boy

Komerling people depend upon cisterns for water. If there is no rain, there is no water. This is an opportunity for shamans to further control the misguided spiritual dedication of the people. However, since the Komerling River is also a potential source of irrigation, opportunity for disciples with hydro-engineering knowledge may also be a positive influence on Komerling people as a gateway for the gospel to enter their culture.

The Komerling need help in the areas of education, medical facilities, and a way to escape poverty. Life is hard on this island known for earthquakes, tsunamis, untamed jungles, swamps, volcanoes, and irresponsible exploitation of natural resources. No churches are known to exist among them.

Pray for the Lord Jesus to bless all families among Komerings with His presence and mercy. Ask Father God to send believers to work through natural lines of family relationships with these kindhearted and outspoken people.—KH

MATT 13:3B, NLT

Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them.

Pray that the seeds of the gospel once planted among the Komerling people will be given new life.

Create International

LAMPUNG PESISIR PEOPLE OF SUMATRA, INDONESIA

LUKE 12:5, NLT

But I'll tell you whom to fear. Fear God, who has the power to kill you and then throw you into hell. Yes, he's the one to fear.

Pray that the Lampung Pesisir people will learn to fear God rather than the spirit world.

Create International



Lampungese woman

How do you fend off evil spirits? Lampung Pesisir families mark their doors and windows. Even though they profess to follow Sunni Islam, they add their own superstitions. For instance, they believe certain

locations hold magical powers.

Very few of these coastal people are fishermen; most are farmers. They live simple lives, and enjoy large, extended families. Yet, they value prestige and status. They are open to interaction with other groups. They all speak the same dialect, but are divided into four subgroups. The industrial age has arrived in Indonesia and Lampung Pesisir farmers need to find a way to diversify their economy.

Since Islam has been the way of this people group for many generations, they reject outside spirituality, including Christianity. Anyone who professes Christ will be treated harshly and constantly badgered to return to the Muslim faith unless families decide to follow Christ as a group. To our knowledge, there are currently no followers of Christ among them. There are many resources available in the Lampung Api language, such as printed and audio Bibles, audio-visual Christian teaching, and videos such as the JESUS Film.

Pray for entire families to study God's word and follow him together. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers, filled with the fruit and power of the Holy Spirit to disciple the Lampung Pesisir people.—AHS

MALAY PEOPLE OF INDONESIA

Imagine yourself surrounded by 3,214 small islands. Many Riau Malays live in such a place—the Riau Islands Province of Indonesia.

Others live on the larger Sumatra Island. They share their space with other peoples and each carefully protects their own culture.

All of the 1,834,000 Malays in Riau claim adherence to Islam, and every aspect of their culture is heavily influenced by Islam. Especially when children are very young, parents favor religious education over formal schooling. In spite of this, they also exhibit many traditional spiritualist beliefs. For instance, when someone becomes ill, they call for a shaman to drive away the spirits who they believe are the cause of illness.

The Riau Malay standard of living is very low. Although many have been farmers for generations, they need improved farming techniques, and their health-care system is below par. Global Recordings Network (GRN) has placed audio-visual Bible stories and teaching online in their local dialect spoken by these people.

Pray for the Riau Malay people to have opportunities to get the education they need. Ask God to open their hearts to Christ through believers who come to help them flourish spiritually and economically. Ask the Lord to break their fear of outside ideas. Pray for more of God's chosen workers to reach out to leaders of this people group who can open the door for others to follow the Savior.—AHS



Bak kut teh, a Riau Malay soup

iStock/Mattanin

LUKE 12:31, NLT

Seek the kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.

Pray that Riau Malay leaders will find this to be true.

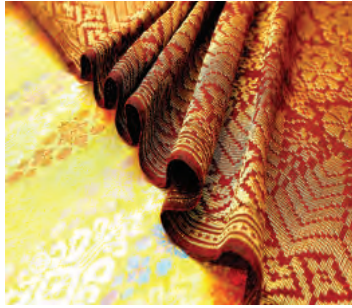
NORTHERN SUMATRAN MALAYS OF SUMATRA ISLAND, INDONESIA

PROV 31:10-12, NLT

Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? She is more precious than rubies. Her husband can trust her, and she will greatly enrich his life. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.

Pray for the Northern Sumatra Malay people, who value women and hard work, will learn from the Proverbs, and from the teachings of Jesus.

iStock/RAVINDRAN JOHN SMITH



Songket cloth

The Northern Sumatran Malays are Muslim, but their actual worship includes many animistic beliefs. They believe that there are spirits everywhere that influence

people's lives. They believe that they get supernatural powers by using incantations and other occult practices to control good and evil spirits.

The coastal Northern Sumatra Malays are mostly fishermen because the waters are filled with abundant fish and oysters. Others work in farming, and still others are famous for weaving a cloth called songket which is woven with gold or silver threads. Both men and women share equal status and inheritance rights. The women are well-respected, and families trace their ancestry through the mother's side of the family. This respect for women might serve as an entry point for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with them. The Bible gives ample examples of Jesus' respect and consideration for women in the patriarchal society of his day.

Pray for efforts by those attempting to evangelize the Northern Sumatran Malays to have the opportunity to tell them of Jesus, the Son of God who loves them, forgives them, and wants to free them from occult beliefs and practices that hold them back. Pray that soon there will be many families from this people group studying the Bible together, and following his ways.—JS

JAMBI MALAY PEOPLE OF SUMATRA ISLAND, INDONESIA

Water is everything to the Jambi Malay people of Sumatra! In fact, they believe that a meal without fish

is incomplete. The Jambi do their fishing in the vast river system in central Sumatra, the Batang Hari River and its many tributaries. They live in a low land of dense jungles, peat bogs, and swamps; thus their main mode of transportation is by boat. They are very adept swimmers and fishermen, but they stick with traditional fishing methods because of their pride. Transmigrants from the island of Java have a big advantage over them because they use modern fishing methods, and because of their advanced education. The Jambi Malay resent them. The Jambi are Muslim, and every village has a mosque or prayer house and typically a religious school. However, they are in great need of improved education. They are used to viewing outsiders as competitors rather than helpers.

Pray better educational opportunities may not only improve their economic options, but also serve as a means for sharing Jesus Christ with them. Pray for Christian educators to seize this opportunity. Pray for the Jambi Malay to be able to trust those who come to help them. Pray that these people who have such a strong need for water to learn of Jesus Christ who offers living water to all free of charge.—JS



A Jambi Malay ceremony

iStock/Abraham Adeodatus

LUKE 5:2, NLT

He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets.

Pray that the Jambi Malay people will understand that other fishermen were part of Jesus' inner circle, and that they can also be close to Jesus!

MANDAILING BATAK PEOPLE

PS 127:3-4, NLT

Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands.

Pray that verses like this one will help the Mandailing Bataks to see that the Bible is for people like them!

iStock/Pramote2015



How many children do you have, and do you have a house and land? If the answer to these questions is

favorable, the man is viewed as a success.

Who are these people? They are the Mandailing people of northern Sumatra. They are mainly wet rice farmers and the number of children and the amount of land one owns, gives him status and respect. Mandailing villages are called huta, and the huta leader holds control of the land and only gives permission to members of the village to work the land. An individual cannot sell his land without permission from the leader and a discussion with other community residents.

The Mandailing people are part of the Batak cluster of North Sumatra Province. However, their language is different than languages spoken by the surrounding people clusters.

Unlike other Batak people who are mainly Christian, the Mandailings strongly identify with Islam. They resent having to explain to others that they are Muslim, since most Indonesians believe that all Batak peoples are Christians.

Pray for Batak churches to be called by God to begin a church planting movement among Mandailing families. Pray for Mandailing families to be blessed by the work of Christ and his children.—JS

MUSI PEOPLE

“My home is my heaven.” When a Musi man can say this, he is thought to have a successful life and family. It is the responsibility of his wife to



Heaven is home for the Musi!

iStock/sergeyvsp

make this statement come true! The Musi culture is patriarchal and male children are valued more than females. This small ethnic cluster takes their name from the Musi River. Traditionally, their homes have been raised platform houses, both above land and water, but modernization is giving them opportunity for more modern style homes. The Musi follow the Islamic religion because it has been passed down to them and it is part of their culture, not because they understand it or have genuine faith in Allah.

The Musi are mainly laborers or farmers. Rice is a staple for them, but they usually only have one crop a year. They need irrigation development to take advantage of the Musi River that could allow them to produce three crops a year. The Musi could be reached by agricultural missionaries who could share with them better farm management and irrigation techniques.

Pray for agricultural missionaries to focus on the Musi and be welcomed into their communities. Pray for the Musi people to learn in practical ways that Jesus wants them to have an abundant life. Pray for Musi family leaders to put their faith in Jesus Christ.—JS

REV 21:3-4, NLT

I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

Pray that the Musi people will understand the great reward they will have if they allow the Lord to make his home among them!

PALEMBANG PEOPLE OF SUMATRA, INDONESIA

NEH 9:16, NLT

But our ancestors were proud and stubborn, and they paid no attention to your commands.

Pray that the Palembang people will pay attention to the commands of the Lord of lords so they can enter into his blessings.

iStock/Novian Fazli



Palembang men on a pilgrimage

Today we pray for a city and a people, both having the same name Palembang. They are a Malay people, some 3.3

million in number, who are 90 percent Sunni Muslim and only three out of 1,000 are believers according to the Joshua Project. Theirs is the capital city of Sumatra, so these are a strategic people. They live in a very wealthy city; yet the city is also known for much poverty, despite its petroleum-based economy.

As a people, the Palembang believe that marriage and family is for the promotion of unity, togetherness, and mutual assistance. Thus, they seek to avoid anything that might be divisive, including anything that takes them away from Sunni Islam. Because the local river floods periodically, they need unity and mutual assistance on a regular basis. Yet that water provides for only one crop of rice a year. Their shamans cannot prevent flooding, though the people depend on them for this and other needs.

Pray for churches to adopt this people, and to pray for their spiritual blessing in Christ. Pray that Palembang leaders will understand that believers are not divisive. Pray for Christian hydrologists to go to this people to help with flood control and drainage. Pray that whole families and communities would believe in Jesus together.—TP

MALAY PEOPLE OF INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA

Malay people are the majority in Malaysia, but they are also an important ethnic minority in Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, and Thailand, all in Southeast Asia. Many of the languages in Indonesia are based on Malay.



Malay woman

iStockskaylim

As a rule, Malays prefer rural life—rice farming or working on rubber plantations or large agricultural estates. However, many live in cities where they work for the government, teach, or labor in factories. Some work in sales, have small businesses, or practice the traditional trades of making batik cloth or metal wares. As a people, they are courteous, polite, and stress cleanliness. Still, being 99.9 percent folk Muslim, they need to know Jesus as more than just a prophet. Only one in 1,000 follows Christ. The Bible, JESUS Film, and Christian literature is available to help evangelize them.

Pray for changes among this important people that will lead to spiritual and physical blessings among Malays everywhere. Pray for Malay disciples who will disciple others. Pray that Christian oil men and businessmen will build ties among this people and tell them stories about Jesus that will help them see what Christ offers their families. Pray they have dreams and visions of Jesus.—TP

REV 22:3 NLT

No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him.

Pray that the Malay people will seek and find the Lord who wants to bless, and not curse. Pray that they will worship him at his throne!

MINANGKABAU (AKA, MINANG) IN MALAYSIA

LUKE 10:41-42, NLT

But the Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Pray that many Minangkabau women will be given God’s wisdom to listen to the words of Jesus just as Mary once did.

iStock/Herianus



Minang people

Who should rule the home, the husband or the wife? According to the Minangkabau people of Indonesia and

Malaysia, it is the wife. Theirs is a matrilineal society where all property is in the hands of women and is passed down to daughters, not sons. Surprisingly, they also practice “female circumcision,” which brings much pain and distress to their women. Despite being a matrilineal society, they are 100 percent Sunni Muslim, and most would agree that Sharia (Muslim) law is best for their people. However, their culture has within it a number of pre-Muslim traits. Among those traits is the Minangkabau wedding dress that incorporates the styles of South Asian people.

The Minangkabau are natural political leaders. Many Indonesian patriot leaders who opposed the Dutch colonists came from among this people. Because the Dutch are Protestants, the Minangkabau have a very negative impression of how Christianity affects a culture.

Pray for Christ’s ambassadors to go to Minangkabau leaders and help them to see what Jesus has for all nations and families. Pray that these natural leaders will lead many Muslims to put their faith in Jesus. Pray that God sends dreams and visions of Jesus to open this people to Jesus, especially the women.—TP

MAGUINDANAO PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES

In John 21 Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him. And three times Peter responded that he did love the Lord. Jesus followed up each time by telling Peter to feed his sheep.



A Maguindanao grandmother and child

In the southern Philippine island of Mindanao there are over 1.2 million souls called the Maguindanao, meaning “people of the flood plain”—who need volunteers to personally teach them the love of Christ. Living within Islam since the 16th century, they take great pride in remaining unconquered by outside powers throughout their history. Efforts to reach these people through radio broadcasts and Bible translations have produced little progress since the end of the Second World War. To make things worse, many of them associate Christianity with the dominant Catholic peoples from other Filipino islands. Instead of allowing Jesus to speak into their lives, families, and communities, many believe that Christianity is the reason for the weakening of families in the west. Thus, they want nothing to do with it.

Pray that more believers from surrounding cultures and countries would reach out in love to the Maguindanao bringing them the message that Jesus Christ came to save sinners and to give everyone life to the full. Pray that they will open their hearts to resources like the JESUS Film, Bible translations, and Christian radio broadcasts, and study them together as families, reaping the blessings that only Christ can offer.—JY

JOHN 21:16, NLT

Jesus repeated the question: “Simon son of John, do you love me?” “Yes, Lord,” Peter said, “you know I love you.” “Then take care of my sheep,” Jesus said.

Pray that the Lord will raise up many from the Maguindanao people who will love Jesus as deeply as Peter did, even if they have to lose their lives for his kingdom. Pray that soon there will be Maguindanao believers to disciple his sheep.

JOHN 16:8-11, NASB

And [the Holy Spirit] will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement; concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; and concerning righteousness because I go to the Father . . . and concerning judgement, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to move mightily upon Malay people worldwide, including the Melaju Malay of Thailand. Pray that they put their faith in Christ alone, restoring them to God and bringing God's rich blessings upon their families and communities.

MELAJU MALAY OF THAILAND



You might be surprised to know that the third largest Malay population after Malaysia and Indonesia is Buddhist Thailand!

The Melaju Malay of Thailand number about 713,000, forming the majority population of the four southernmost Thai provinces.

In urban areas, such as Bangkok, Melaju Malay find employment as government clerks, factory workers, technicians, small businessmen, or sales people. Courtesy is very important in Melaju Malay society; they also value kindness to women, children, and animals. The family unit consists of a husband, wife, and children, and they expect every person in their community to get married.

The hallmark of Malay identity is their Islamic faith along with speaking a Malay language. However, their ancestors once followed Hinduism, Buddhism, and animism, and each of these affect their spirituality today. There's little openness to Christianity, though the Bible, the JESUS Film, and Christian audio-visual resources exist in their primary Malay language.

Pray that anointed witnesses, including teachers and business people, go to Thailand's Malay, especially to their family leaders. Ask for effective planting of gospel seeds in softened hearts to bring forth a harvest, leading to disciple-making movements. Ask that mission leaders be stirred to regularly pray for the Melaju Malay and send workers to them.—CR

PATTANI MALAY

(This story illustrates cultural issues.)

Off the coast of Thailand, a Pattani Malay fisherman casts his net into the sea. He waited a long time before he began pulling the net back into his boat. He groans because the net was empty. That told him the large fishing companies had already been here. The middle-aged Muslim prayed to Allah for a good catch and silently waited for an answer. Minutes passed, and he heard nothing from Allah in his heart. So the fisherman rowed his boat to a different location. He had never heard that Jesus had filled fishing nets with fish for His disciples.

Hundreds of years ago the Pattani Malays migrated north into Thailand from Malaysia. They were Muslims and settled among the Buddhist Thai who already lived in this region. The Pattani were farmers and fisherman. The recent rise of large commercial fishing companies has put many family fishing businesses out of business.

Almost all Pattani are Muslims. There are no known followers of Jesus Christ among them.

Ask God to lead an agency to reach out to the Pattani Malay with Christ's blessings. Pray that this people group will come to see Jesus Christ as the only one who can meet all of their spiritual and physical needs. Pray that soon Pattani families will worship the Lord together.—WK



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LUKE 5:4, NLT

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

Pray that the Pattani Malays will be inspired by the words and the deeds of Jesus Christ, friend of despised fishermen.

CENTRAL THAI MUSLIMS

REV 22:4, NLT

And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads.

Pray that the Central Thai Muslims will soon seek his face, and figuratively write his name on their foreheads.



Walking in Bangkok

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The middle-aged man walked down the busy street in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, as cars drove past him on the four-lane road. He spoke Thai and had the Asian facial features of the Thai people group. So, people were surprised when he walked past the Buddhist temple and entered the small mosque down the street. Once inside he spread out a prayer rug and bowed in prayer to Allah.

Not all Thai are Buddhists. Some are Muslims. Not all Thai Muslims live in Southern Thailand, where Muslim minorities are common. There are small groups of Muslim Thai living in central Thailand, often next to Thai Buddhist neighbors. Some of these people have been Muslims for many generations. Others are recent converts to Islam. There are few, if any, believers reaching out to this people with the blessings of Christ.

Ask God to raise up faithful workers to reach out to the Central Thai Muslims with the way to follow the Lord, and teach them how to teach others. Pray that God would prepare the hearts of this people group to receive the true message of salvation.—WK

SOUTHERN THAI MUSLIMS

This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The young man walked between rows of rubber



Rubber from a tree

trees at a plantation in southern Thailand. He used a machete to cut a slit in one of the trees and watched the rubber sap flow from the tree into his bucket. That's when he remembered last night's dream. He had seen Jesus dying on the cross. In the dream a Roman soldier had thrust a spear into the side of Jesus, causing blood and water to flow from the wound. The man, a Muslim from the Southern Thai people group, wondered what the dream meant. Was Jesus trying to tell him He was more than a prophet? The young man continued to think about the dream as he watched rubber sap flow into his bucket.

Muslim missionaries reached southern Thailand hundreds of years ago, and they won many converts. More recently Christian missionaries have reached out to the Thai with the message of salvation. Most of them have only reached out to the Thai Buddhists, because Thai Muslims are a small minority and keep a low profile. But all over the world Jesus is revealing himself to Muslims through dreams and visions.

Pray that soon this will happen among the Southern Thai Muslims! Pray for the Holy Spirit to give the Southern Thai family leaders teachable and understanding hearts.—WK

REV 22:7, NLT

Look, I am coming soon! Blessed are those who obey the words of prophecy written in this book.

Pray that the Southern Thai people will be blessed by obeying the prophets who foretold the coming of the Lord!

BUDDHIST KHORAT THAI PEOPLE IN THAILAND

EX 20:3, NLT

You must not have any other
god but me.

*Pray that the Buddhist Khorat
Thai people will take this to
heart and obey it.*

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*(This story
illustrates truths
about this
people group.)*

“Khur (teacher),
we will not be
coming to class
for two weeks.
We will be
celebrating our
12-day festival
which gives

tribute to our Ya Mo (Grandma) Suranee.” Jean,
an English as a second language (ESL) teacher,
was teaching on a short-term basis in Thailand.
She replied, “Silpa, you already lost almost a week
of lessons when you recently celebrated Kathina”
(eg, a time of showing honor to Buddhist monks
and nuns). The student replied, “we Khorats are
good Buddhists and we owe our lives to Ya Mo.
She saved us from the Laotians who tried to take
our land and kill our people. Each day during the
festival we will go to temples, pray, and bring gifts
to her statue. You should come with us because if
you honor her you will have good luck all year.”

Over 10,000 Thai Khorat people live in the north-
eastern province of Thailand. Their small, beautiful
towns and friendly culture has started to draw
tourists and teachers from outside. They are strong
Buddhists and maintain their own traditions which
are similar to other Thai-speaking people.

*Pray for the Holy Spirit to give the Khorat Thai
people teachable and understanding hearts. Pray
for Jesus movements to bless extended Khorat
Thai families.—PD*

RAKHINE ARAKANESE PEOPLE IN MYANMAR

*(This story
illustrates truths
about this
people group.)*

“We hate the
Burmese
police even
more than the
Muslim Bengalis
and their ARSA! (Arakan Rohingya Salvation
Army)”, said the Buddhist Rakhine Arakanese
woman living in a village just outside of the city
of Mrauk U in northern Myanmar. “My sons have
left me to work in Yangon. They needed to find
work and did not want to join the AS (Arakan
Army) which is fighting both the Muslims and
the Burmese police. So many of our young people
are addicted to drugs and alcohol. Our villages
and culture are being destroyed. Many of the
temples where we used to go to offer prayers
and tributes to our Buddhas are ruined. All the
government wants to do is to get rid of anyone
who isn’t Burmese and steal their land.”

The 2.7 million Rakhine people of Myanmar
have found themselves caught in the middle of a
war that has been going on for over seven years
where attacks come from the Buddhist Myanmar
government, the AS and the ARSA. The
suffering has caused many of them to leave their
historic homes in fear of their lives and to search
for work. Most Rakhines are Buddhists, although
about 10 percent have accepted the Lord.

*Pray for the Lord to give Rakhine families spiritual
and physical relief. Pray for them to look to Christ as
their deliverer.—PD*



Yangon, Myanmar

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MARK 10:15, NLT

I tell you the truth, anyone
who doesn’t receive the
Kingdom of God like a child
will never enter it.

*Pray that the Rakhine
people will enter the
Kingdom of God like humble
and teachable children.*

LUKE 18:6-7 NLT

Then the Lord said, “Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don’t you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

Pray that those who intercede for the Ansari people will not give up until there is a disciple-making movement among them.

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was starching her different colored cotton yarns with a rice paste mixed with onion juice for the next sari fabrics she would be weaving. She loved the new designs that she was able to develop since attending a small school in her village where she learned about using better dyes and weaves. Her increased income from her new designs had allowed her to send two of her children to school and provide better food for her family.

She had a small solar charged radio to listen to while she worked. This allowed her several hours a day to hear music, news, and sometimes a man’s voice would recite verses from the Qur’an. Since she could not read, this meant a lot to her, and she had memorized some of these verses by listening to them. She still did not understand what they really meant, so she often prayed to her “weaver god” to help her each day. The Ansari Muslims in Bangladesh are known to be a friendly and industrious people. Few know the grace of Jesus.

Pray they will be reached through God’s word on fixed tuned solar radios and through believers who are willing to be salt and light to their families and communities.—PD

MUSLIM ANSARIS IN BANGLADESH

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

It’s about six a.m. and Noora, an Ansari Muslim in Bangladesh,

BIHARI MUSLIMS IN BANGLADESH

In Luke 9:58, Jesus said, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head” (ESV). Likewise, a group of Muslims in Bangladesh have nowhere to call home. Known as the Bihari, they were actively anti-independence when in the 1970s East Pakistan sought separation from Pakistan. When Pakistan allowed East Pakistan to become Bangladesh, the Biharis were viewed as traitors and relegated to live in refugee camps. Any property they owned was confiscated. Neither Pakistan nor Bangladesh wanted them.

Ten years ago, the Biharis were finally granted status not as refugees or “stranded Pakistanis,” but as Bangladeshi citizens. Still, an estimated 300,000 continue to live in 100 camps. In these camps, families live in overcrowded rooms that lack sanitation and potable water. According to The Daily Star, this minority group has been “facing social exclusion and severe discrimination in every aspect of life—education, employment, health services, business and access to justice.”

Pray that mission agencies will be able to make headway into Bihari camps where health problems, poverty, and hopelessness have been the norm for too long. May God shine his light through his word and through compassionate, loving missionaries. May He give the Bihari people a comfortable place to lay their heads here on earth while they hear that he has also prepared a far superior home in heaven.—CMW



EPH 4:31-32, NLT

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Pray that the abused Biharis in Bangladesh will be freed by the Holy Spirit to obey this verse rather than live in bitterness.

SAYYIDS IN BANGLADESH

ACTS 17:4, NLT

Some of the Jews who listened were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with many God-fearing Greek men and quite a few prominent women.

Pray that the prominent Sayyid people will join others in God's eternal family.



Bangladesh

Their name means “Lord” or “sir,” and they are believed to be descended from the daughter of Islam’s Prophet Mohammed. They came by sea to South Asia over six centuries ago, and over time, became political and religious leaders. The Sayyid (or Syed) people in Bangladesh currently number over one million. They speak Bengali and are among the largest Muslim communities in Bangladesh. They embrace both Shi’ite and Sunni Islam. Highly regarded, they have expanded their influence from being priests and religious teachers to government servants, teachers, and businessmen.

In the 1980s, a television character caused an uproar among Islamic preachers; the character was supposedly descended from the “Syed family” but was an idiotic house servant. This irreverent bit of artistic license brought down disapproval on the head of its well-known writer, Humayun Ahmed. Apparently the Bangladeshi community will not accept criticism of this people group.

May the Sayyids know the one whose name is “lord” like theirs, but whose lordship reaches far above theirs. May God specially appear to these Muslims and show them a light they would not know otherwise. Pray that many Sayyid families would study the scriptures and understand that there is a blessing they need to accept—salvation by grace alone. Pray that God would use them to take his lordship to many Muslim communities in Bangladesh.—CMW

HINDU BRAHMINS IN BANGLADESH

What would it be like to exist as a Hindu in an Islamic-controlled country? For the Brahmins in Bangladesh, this is their reality.

The Brahmins are a caste of Hindu society, tied to the Vedic religion of early Hinduism. Through this connection, the Brahmins eventually rose to become powerful and influential – the highest caste people who today excel as educators, politicians, academics, doctors, poets, and land owners. In India, these people have historically oppressed the lower castes. In Bangladesh, they are a religious minority, and face persecution by the direction of Islamic mullahs and by Muslims who view the Hindu culture as somehow trashy. Vandalism and assault happen, and cause concern among the Bangladesh Hindus – when it gets reported, that is. Muslims who are in positions to aid the Hindus fear for their own safety, and it is only the courageous who speak out. Hindus are not allowed to participate in the government of Bangladesh, though new political opportunities are beginning to open up for them.

Pray that the Brahmins of Bangladesh would find relief from persecution. Pray for the light of the gospel to illuminate their families and dispel all fear, and that these influential Hindus would encounter Christ, proclaiming his good news to all who will listen, be they Hindu or Muslim. Pray for entire Brahmin families to learn the ways of Jesus, and disciple others.—BK



A Brahmin holy man

ROM 12:19, NLT

Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the Lord.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will draw many Brahmins in Bangladesh to himself and demonstrate his forgiving power through them.

HINDU KAYASTHA IN BANGLADESH

LUKE 19:9-10, NLT

Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."

Pray that the Kayastha Hindus in both India and Bangladesh will turn their lives to Jesus, just as Zacchaeus once did.

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A place for every person, and a person in every place! The caste system of the Hindus of South Asia is a very old tradition, tending to foster discrimina-

tion. However, it has the unique and interesting feature of ensuring that every need of society has a people group to fill it.

One of these ancient castes, the Kayastha (scribes) began as writers and historians, created, according to Hindu tradition, to aid the gods in recording the doings of mankind. No longer bound to writing, however, the Kayastha Indian are one of the castes that has excelled beyond their original purpose, producing highly successful politicians, doctors, scientists, warriors, and philosophers.

The Kayastha people in neighboring Bangladesh are well respected among their fellow Hindus, but in Muslim Bangladesh, they face discrimination. For many years, these talented people have had their opportunities limited in this Muslim-dominated government, though this is beginning to change. Some low-level positions have opened up to Hindus.

Pray for safety and opportunity for Kayastha people living in Bangladesh, and for peace between Muslims and Hindus. Pray for the Kayasthas in Bangladesh to have life-changing encounters with Christ that will lead to disciple-making movements. Pray that Kayastha families would discover their identity in him rather than their caste.—BK

HINDU JOGIS (YOGIS) IN BANGLADESH

They have been stereotyped, simplified, and even made fun of in countless movies, books, and television shows. In the 1960s, with the rise in popularity of eastern religions, they became a household word. But despite being quite familiar to many, few people really know what a Jogi (often pronounced Yogi) is.



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More than just yoga instructors, the Jogis of Bangladesh are believed to possess special powers. Many have large followings, monasteries, and shrines. Some are sorcerers. Others are yoga mystics. All of them are seekers—looking for God in the wrong places. The Jogis serve false gods relentlessly. They spend their lives practicing rituals to encounter and channel supernatural power. Sadly, the power they are trying to tap into is demonic.

Pray for the Jogis to be set free spiritually to seek the Lord. Pray for the Lord to speak his truth into their lives, sharing his word and displaying his love. Pray for many to be saved and to take the gospel to the Jogis all over South Asia, including Muslim Bangladesh. Ask God to send workers to the Jogis to demonstrate the good news in a way they can hear, understand, and receive. Ask the Lord to pour out his Spirit on the Jogis in such a way that many will soon be discipling others in the ways of Jesus Christ.—CL

PS 19:1, NLT

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship.

Pray that when the Jogi people in Bangladesh look to the heavens, they will see the craftsmanship of the Lord, and worship him.

LUKE 10:16, NLT

Then he said to the disciples, "Anyone who accepts your message is also accepting me. And anyone who rejects you is rejecting me. And anyone who rejects me is rejecting God, who sent me."

Pray that the Jogi people in India will take this key verse to heart.

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Shiva, the Hindu God known as "the destroyer"

Your life revolves around yoga. You are part of a community dedicated to yoga, you practice daily yoga rituals, you worship the Hindu god Shiva, and

you are seeking to attain complete union with the supreme being. Perhaps you even believe that you have already achieved this "enlightenment." To earn a living, you turn to begging – taking up position on a straw mat in the busy, overcrowded streets of Mumbai or Kolkata. You might also offer to tell people's fortunes, perform acts of divination, and even exorcise demons. You live in dire poverty, and dedicate your life to your dark spiritual practices.

All of that probably sounds very foreign and depressing, but it is a daily reality for the Jogis of India. According to the Joshua Project, none from this people group has turned to Christ.

Pray for a move of God's Spirit among the Jogis of India that will result in thousands giving their lives to Christ and discipling others to do the same. Pray for the Lord to establish his Kingdom among the Jogis so that they can enjoy the blessings of the Lord. Ask God to open their eyes and hearts to the reality of Jesus and his invitation to forgiveness and eternal life. Pray for mission organizations to be given insight and wisdom in reaching them in ways that will capture their attention and elicit a response.—CL

HINDU JOGIS (YOGIS) OF INDIA

PONWAR RAJPUTS IN INDIA

In the gospels, Jesus tells a parable of a landowner who sends servants to collect his share of the crops. When the tenants beat and drive the servants away, the landowner sends his only beloved son. The Rajputs take their name from the Sanskrit phrase "son of a ruler." Ponwar denotes that they are descendants of the Paramara Dynasty. Like the landowner in Jesus' parable, many Rajput Ponwar are wealthy holders of large estates. They belong to the second highest caste in Hinduism, the Kshatriyas. In order to maintain their elevated status in society, they make higher education a priority for their children, and they arrange marriages within their caste. As Hindus, the Rajput Ponwar believe in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, but perform rituals and good works in the hope of breaking this endless cycle.

Pray that Ponwar Rajputs will consider their name, "son of a ruler," and hear that they can become sons of the highest ruler! May they hear about the one who sent his only beloved son to free them from sins and to free them from their belief in the tedious repetition of birth, death, and rebirth. Please ask God to bring Ponwar families into his royal family.—CMW

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MATT 10:11-12, NET

Whenever you enter a city or village, search for a worthy person and stay in his home until you leave town. When you enter the home, give it your blessing.

Pray that the Lord will raise up many such "persons of peace" among Ponwar Rajput households to welcome and listen to God's messengers.