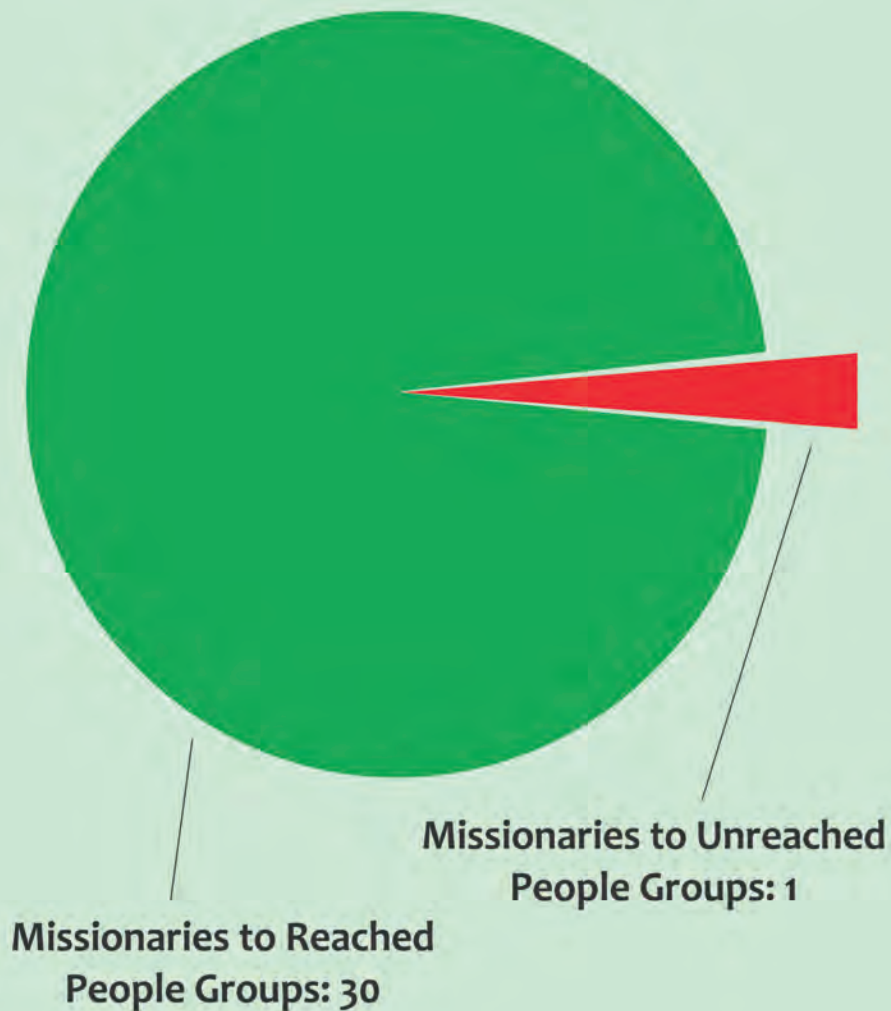


The Great Imbalance

For every 30 missionaries to reached people groups there is only 1 to unreached people groups.



Global Prayer Digest

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May 2020 • Frontier Ventures • 39:5

Finishing the Year of the Frontier

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- 18—Worship a Cow, Have Your Sins forgiven
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Dear Praying Friends,

As we finish the Year of the Frontier prayer effort this month, one thing keeps coming to mind. We might be praying mostly for Hindus again this month, but we need to know what the real barrier is between sinful mankind and the sin-forgiving savior. It all boils down to putting all faith in Jesus Christ. There is no other God who can save Hindus or secularists in the West as well as Christians who go to church but don't believe Jesus is the ONLY way.

Yes, all the Hindu gods are a barrier to faith, but the frailties of these gods might give Hindus the desire to seek true holiness. How will they find this? They have access to the Gospel of John in all major Indian languages, and this is the gospel that spells it out as clearly as it can ever be spelled out. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." Jn 14:6, NLT. Jesus didn't leave room for a plan B. Let's pray that those who rely on anything less will find the Light of the World!

In Christ,

Keith Carey

Keith Carey, editor, GPD

May 2020

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PRAY FOR

A Disciple-Making Movement Among Every Unengaged, Unreached People in India



COMMUNICATING AND RISK TAKING

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At last we are finishing the 13-month Year of the Frontier where we prayed for the largest 400 highly unreached people groups. Many of the Hindu peoples that we have covered in the recent month (and more this month) haven't had a spiritual breakthrough even after hundreds of years of work. Though we don't like to think of it, the people that are being reached in South Asia are almost always from the Dalits and Shudras, the under privileged communities.

Why is this? Yes, there is a lack of workers, and Jesus said to pray for the Lord to thrust them out (Matt 9:37-38). Beyond that, there are cultural issues that we keep ignoring century after century with the same dismal results. It will take risks to get beyond what we are doing now, and missionaries will need to get out of their comfort zones. If you want to be challenged, read on!

Communicating to Be Understood

Take a look at the photo of this Brahman priest. He has a number of coconuts in front of him. During a Hindu *puja*, (worship event) this priest is likely to cut open a coconut and show the inside to those in front of him. Why? If you



have ever seen coconut meat, it is a vibrant white. Hindus use that as a symbol of purity. It shows that purity is one of the things that they value.

What is to stop those who want to share the gospel from using the same symbol of purity? Is it a fear of appearing too "Hindu"? If Hindus value purity, and coconut meat symbolizes it to them, why not use their symbol to enhance understanding? Yes, there is a very good chance that they have a different idea of what purity means, so those who bear the gospel will need to teach what the Bible says about purity. That will take time.

Years ago, I read an article in Wycliffe's publication, *In Other Words*. They described a situation where they could not use the phrase "I stand at the door and knock," when translating Rev 3:20 since in that culture, only a burglar would knock on a door! A friend would "stand on the street and shout." So they used the later, even though the wording was unconventional. What mattered was getting the correct meaning across, not keeping the same wording.

When Muslims hear that Jesus is the "Son of God" they usually understand this to mean that God the Father had sex with Mary and produced Jesus. Bible translators are still searching for a way to convey the meaning of Son of God accurately without misunderstanding. Pray for them to find ways to convey this without losing the biblical truth or creating misunderstandings.



Finding A Common Starting Point

Muslims value devotion to the God of Creation, and Hindus, as noted earlier, value purity. Sikhs actually worship their scriptures as a living entity, much like believers who worship Jesus who is the Word made flesh. When presenting the gospel, it helps to start with common ground.

This is not a new idea. Notice that when the Apostle Paul was trying to communicate with spirit worshipping Athenians in Acts 17, he started by commending them for being “religious” (vs. 22), then he addressed a felt need to find the “unknown God” (vs 23), then he described this God of creation. Paul did not expect them to see things the same way he did. He knew that their worldview was different from his own, so he had to start at a different point than when he was preaching to a Jewish audience.

If we expect the people who receive the gospel to have the same understanding as those who are bearing it, there will probably be many misunderstandings. Even the nature of God needs to be carefully explained. Most cultures have a concept of an all-powerful God, but they often view this God as angry, vindictive, and above all, distant. It will take much more than telling them that “God loves you” for them to believe it after generations of having a false understanding of God’s nature. There are no shortcuts. This will take years of time from loving missionaries.

There are also redemptive aspects from the host culture that we can’t afford to ignore. Muslims pray five times a day. Yes, it’s a prayer ritual, but it shows devotion and dedication. They obtained this idea from some of the early Church fathers. Is it a good practice for missionaries to also pray five times a day when reaching out to Muslims? These ambassadors for Christ will need to refrain from eating foods forbidden in Islam so they are not dismissed as spiritual reprobates.

Mission history has proven that taking people out of their families and communities to form separate ones will yield dismal results. But what is the option? How do workers make the gospel appealing to family and religious leaders who feel they have a vested interest in the established ways of doing things? Can workers go so far as to take the gospel into the established religious traditions like Islam or Hinduism, keeping what is good, without new believers falling into the old ways? The Apostle Paul struggled with these things as well, and the Book of Acts and the epistles offer answers.

There is no “silver bullet” that will ensure receptivity or a response to the gospel. There is always the risk of syncretism, meaning that those who respond to the gospel might mix scriptural truths with false spirituality. But missionaries must take risks. Will you pray for those who endeavor to take Christ’s name to the unreached nations?

Let’s Pray!

- Pray for discernment for Christ’s ambassadors as they approach people with very different worldviews.
- Pray for hearts to be softened to the transforming power of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for the Lord to raise up Holy Spirit directed workers who will not stop until there is a movement to Christ.

<https://www.wycliffe.org/blog/posts/does-it-matter-which-word-we-use>

KOMTI BANIAS

ROM 11:22A, NIV

Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in His kindness.

Pray for many from the Komti Bania community to have a healthy fear of the Lord that will lead to repentance and spiritual refreshment.

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Due to their specializations many of the castes in India have struggled to keep up with modernization or they begin to find themselves obsolete. Not so, the Banias! These communities have been key leaders in business and trade for centuries and are amongst those

who lend money. Such fields are highly relevant in the fast-modernizing economy of India. In addition to their financial expertise, many Komti Bania keep shops or sell dry goods.

The Komti Bania are highly devoted to their caste, and they settle disputes quickly at meetings rather than allowing problems to fester. While they deal with minor offenses legally, larger ones are handled by Hindu religious leaders who can, if necessary, banish people from the caste.

The Komti Bania are among the least reached people in India, and precious few are known to be followers of Jesus. Surprisingly, they consider themselves to be a “twice born” people, and it is no small thing to go through the Hindu ceremony that solidifies this and brings higher status.

Pray that they would be curious about being born again of the Holy Spirit, and that they would truly encounter Christ. Pray for Komti Banias to lead a disciple-making movement.—BK

MAHUR BANIAS

Bania ties to trade are so strong that the designation

“Bania” is

sometimes used to refer to anyone in business. Their name comes from Vaniji, which means “trader or merchant,” which is a fitting description. They have many subgroups; among them are the Mahur.

Banias can be found in all levels of business, small or large. They also can be found in government, law, education, and engineering. As might be guessed, the Mahur Bania are among the wealthiest people in India, as shrewd business skills are taught to each generation at an early age. Despite this wealth and the fact that the Banias have often been leaders in caste reformation, they are ranked only modestly in the Hindu caste scale.

The Mahur Bania, like most people groups in India, follow Hinduism, and their chosen gods reflect their profession. Most worship Lakshmi and Ganesha, the goddess of wealth and the god of good fortune.

Pray that the Mahur Banias will have a rampant discontent with material wealth, and that spiritual hunger would take hold of their communities, leading them to Christ. Pray that discipleship movements would spring up among them this decade, and that the Bania Mahur would embrace the gospel of Jesus.—BK



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PROV 29:23, NET

Pride brings a person low, but the lowly in spirit gain honor.

Pray for the proud Mahur Bania community to become humble before the God of Creation.

DHINDHOR YADAV PEOPLE

ROM 12:3, NET

For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith.

Pray that the Yadav peoples will understand their humble place before a Holy God.



the god Krishna, who was associated with dairy cows. We are asked to pray especially for families and that God would begin a people movement to Christ among the Hindi-speaking Dhindhor Yadav group who number some 1.5 million. Most of them live in Uttar Pradesh, but they also live in seven other states in northern India. In some of these areas they are among the most powerful people group.

Like other Yadav subgroups the Dhindhor claim descent from Krishna and most sell milk or milk products, but some are in business and politics. But just who or what are these people? Are they a caste, clan, community or tribe? The answer depends upon who answers the question. Not all consider themselves descended from Krishna. Indeed, their link to Krishna may have started as recently as the 1930s. However they see themselves, God sees them as needing Christ.

Pray, therefore, that God's Spirit will begin a people movement toward Christ among both the elites and the masses. Pray that entire Dhindhor Yadav families will embrace Christ and embrace His abundant blessings. May there be an unstoppable movement during this decade.—TP

GAOLI YADAV PEOPLE

Did any of you live in a time and place where milk was delivered to your front door? It was convenient to have milk come to you rather than have to go somewhere to buy it. But you had to keep it in a cool place, and not everyone has refrigeration to keep the milk from spoiling. So you had to drink up before it was too late!

Today, if you live in Andhra Pradesh or Maharashtra, India, your milkman might be a Gaoli Yadav carrying a large can of milk and a cup to dispense it into your container. Others sell milk products instead of the milk itself. So it is that the Gaoli Yadav may be agriculturalists or dairy farmers who are sub-divided into even smaller sub-groups. As far as we know they are 100 percent Hindu without any followers of Christ. As such, they need our prayers today.

Pray that the Gaoli Yadav will become interested in gospel radio and television and obtain a New Testament and begin to investigate following Jesus. Pray that Indian evangelists will reach out to this people group. Pray that whole families turn to Christ and spread His name to other families. Pray for a group-wide movement to Christ.—TP



1 JN 4:10, NET

In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Pray that the Gaoli Yadav people will understand this and respond to Christ with joyful obedience.

GOLA YADAV

GAL 6:4, NIV

Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else...

Pray for repentance and the joy that comes from it within the Gola Yadav community.

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to southern India are Dravidian. Dravidian people have beautiful dark skin and look typically South Asian.

Today we pray for a Dravidian group of Yadavs, the Telegu and Malayalam-speaking Gola Yadav, numbering some 4.9 million. If their ancestors migrated from the north, it was probably during the Iron Age, about 300 BC. Most likely the ancestors of today's Gola Yadav came to the south and inter-married with local Dravidians.

Like the other Yadav subgroups we have been praying for these last few days, Golas are 100 percent Hindu, worshipping Krishna. Like other Yadavs, they may access the New Testament, the JESUS Film, and radio in Telugu and Malayalam. There are also vibrant followers of Christ in India.

Pray for workers who are filled with the power and the fruit of the Holy Spirit to go to the Gola Yadavs. Pray that community councils will be open to hearing about Christ and allowing Him to transform their communities. Pray that there will be a community-wide movement to Christ as families embrace Jesus together.—TP

GUALBAN YADAV

What is the difference between the Ahir peoples and the Yadav peoples? The name! They are the same.

Within the Yadav peoples are certain subgroups, all of which might need a different disciple-making movement. One of these are the Gualban Yadavs, who have their own Hindu beliefs. This subgroup takes their roles as cowherders, milkers, and cattle breeders very seriously, and their beliefs are more traditional than other Yadav subgroups.

In the past, because Yadavs had the exclusive rights to the milk cows, they were hired on all occasions by all people and their status was relatively high. Today, only about 30 percent remain in occupations dealing with cattle and its products. Many of the rest have become cultivators.

Some in the Gualban Yadav tradition still spend most of their time grazing their cattle in the forest, and so they have developed close relationships with many of the forest tribes. In some areas, they are so intertwined with animistic tribal peoples that they are not even considered Hindu anymore. However, 100 percent of them are classified as Hindu. They have biblical materials in their local languages.

Pray that those in Gualban Yadav communities will come across these biblical resources and use them as the core of a disciple-making movement.—LR

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IS 63:14, NLT

As with cattle going down into a peaceful valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. You led your people, LORD, and gained a magnificent reputation.

Pray that verses like this will draw Gualban Yadav people to the Lord.

RAWAT YADAV PEOPLE

ROM 10:11, NIV

As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame."

Pray for the Rawat Yadav people to put their trust in the Lord and experience the joy of being exalted by Him.



An idol of Krishna

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

“Hare Krishna, hare Krishna...”
The Rawat Yadav woman began chanting along with the crowded countryside temple goers. She felt lucky to be directly descended from the god Krishna

who was a cow herder himself. She was happy to worship him hoping he would improve her luck. All Yadav subgroups believe this to be true.

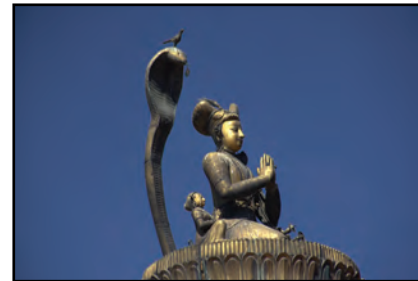
Little is known about the specific Rawat Yadav people besides their belonging to the larger Yadav community. All Yadav subgroups are traditionally linked to cattle raising and related industries.

There are about 1.5 million people from the Rawat Yadav subgroup. Though known as cow herders, today only a minority deals with cattle. Many work in agriculture. Still others have their own businesses or are professionals. Some are even politicians. Currently there are no known believers among the Rawat Yadavs.

Pray that the Rawat Yadav leaders come to Jesus and lead others to Him through a disciple-making movement. Pray for the Lord to bless the Rawat Yadav families with His presence and mercy. Pray for them to find spiritual prosperity as they learn to follow the Lord.—LR

BAIS RAJPUTS OF INDIA

How would you respond if someone called you a snake? If you were part of the Hindu Bais Rajput community, you might be flattered! They believe they are the descendants of a mythical snake god. As a result, many will not harm any snakes even if one bites one of them.



The Bais Rajputs are best known for their history of being warriors in the armies of north and west India. At one time, all Bais were Hindus, but with the coming of the Muslim armies to north India some converted to Islam. After the Muslim conquest, the Bais often served with distinction in the armies of the Moghul Empire. The Bais Rajputs take pride in their status as Kshatriya, the second highest caste in Hinduism, the caste charged with military roles.

In the early 1970s, the Indian government took away much of their land so that the Bais had to find other ways to make a living. Many Bais still enter the Indian military or they choose to work in business.

Pray the Lord will give Bais families understanding and responsive hearts as they hear about the love of Christ. Pray for the Bais people to be delivered from their fear of "Christianity" and to begin their own disciple-making movement based on the person of Christ.—DK

DAN 4:34A, NLT

After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever.

Pray that like the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, the Bais Rajputs would acknowledge and come to know the one, true God of heaven.

BHATTI RAJPUTS IN INDIA

JN 5:39, NLT

You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me (Jesus)!

Pray that the Holy Spirit moves the Bhatti to search the Scriptures and find their Savior.

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Have you ever met a physician named Dr. Bhatti? If you do a search for the word “Bhatti” dozens of the names

of physicians will appear on your computer screen. Many members of the Bhatti Rajput people have left India to practice medicine in places like the USA and Germany, though most still live in India.

For the last thousand years they were famous for being officers and soldiers in Indian armies. They were given large tracts of land as a reward for their military service. After 1947 and independence, the Indian federal government took much of their land for redistribution to lower castes, so the Bhatti had to find other occupations. Besides medicine many Bhatti have entered occupations like engineering, law, science, education, politics, and business. The Bhatti are proud of their military and Hindu traditions. They are some of the most devout Hindus in India. They are known for building and maintaining Hindu temples.

Pray that God would open the hearts of entire Bhatti families to receive the gospel and have a rich experience of God's blessings. Pray that many of the Bhatti people will come to love God with their whole being and will walk in His ways and disciple others to do the same.—DK

GAHLOT RAJPUTS

How would you feel the government took land away from you that had been in your family for generations? That is what

happened to the Gahlot Rajput people of India in the early 1970s. As a result, the Gahlot had to find other ways to support themselves.



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The Gahlot Rajputs are best known for their military service in various Indian armies during the past 500 years. They initially fought against Moghul Muslim invaders. Later they joined Moghul and colonial armies where they served with distinction. Today many Gahlot young people still join the Indian military while others have entered professions like medicine, law, politics, engineering, and science.

The main language of the Gahlot is Hindi. As educated Indians they also speak English as well as local Indian languages. The Gahlot are proud of their military and Hindu traditions. As Rajputs they are part of the Kshatriya, the second highest caste in the Hindu system.

Pray the Lord will start a movement of Gahlot families experiencing God's blessings. Pray the Lord will give Gahlot families understanding and responsive hearts as they hear about the love of Christ. Pray that God will overthrow spiritual forces of darkness opposing the spread of His gospel among the Gahlot Rajput community.—DK

1 COR 2:9, NLT

That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Pray that the Gahlot Rajput would trust in Christ and experience the unimaginable blessings of God in this life and the next.

GARWALI RAJPUTS

2 CHRON 32:26, NIV

Then Hezekiah repented of the pride of his heart, as did the people of Jerusalem; therefore the Lord's wrath did not come on them during the days of Hezekiah.

Pray for the Rajputs, who were once local kings, to learn humility from repentant kings like Hezekiah and David.

iStockMuralinath



(This fictional account is intended to describe the spiritual situation of the Garwali Rajput people.)

When his son returned home from school crying, the father asked, "Are they teasing you again?" The boy nodded. "Did you tell them who you are?" The boy shook his head. "What difference would that make?" the boy whimpered. "What have your mother and I taught you?" The father sighed deeply, then leaned down to the boy's eye level. "Garwali Rajputs are warriors. Garwali Rajputs are rulers. And you, my son, are a Garwali Rajput. Tell them you are a Garwali Rajput."

The Garwali Rajput are very proud people who are descended from kings. They have also been great warriors historically and appreciate their high standing in the caste system.

Central to being Garwali Rajput is the practice of Hinduism. All of the more than half a million who live in Uttarakhand diligently follow this religious system, instead of enjoying being part of God's holy family.

Pray for the Lord to break through the pride of the Garwali Rajputs and reveal their need for the only savior. Ask the Lord to move powerfully among them, establishing His Church and drawing them into a relationship through His only Son.—CL

GAUR RAJPUTS

(This fictional account is intended to describe the spiritual situation of the Gaur Rajput people.)

"We don't own land, and I can't get into the military. What am I to do?" The mother smiled sadly at her son. "We'll find something for you." "But mother, there is nothing." "Nothing? There must be some sort of career for you." "Nothing worthwhile. The government is holding the best jobs for backward castes. The Gaur Rajputs stand no chance. Many of my friends are leaving India. I may need to leave too." She took her son's hand. "Let's go to the guru. He will tell us what you are to do."

The Gaur Rajputs are experiencing an identity crisis as their traditional place in society is changing. They are no longer land owners or soldiers. Instead, they are scrambling to find their role. One of the only constants in the lives of this people group is their Hindu religion. They have practiced Hinduism for centuries, and they continue to do so today.

Pray for the Lord to show the Gaur Rajputs their true identity as His children. Pray for Him to set their minds and hearts free to enjoy fellowship with the Creator. Ask God to send His Spirit among the Gaur Rajputs, igniting a movement and establishing His Kingdom in their midst.—CL



2 CHRON 33:12, NET

In his pain Manasseh asked the Lord his God for mercy and truly humbled himself before the God of his ancestors.

Pray that the Gaur Rajputs will seek God for mercy and forgiveness instead of suffering from pain and humiliation like King Manasseh once did.

BADHAI BRAHMANS

DEUT 27:15A, NLT

Cursed is anyone who carves or casts an idol and secretly sets it up. These idols, the work of craftsmen, are detestable to the Lord.

Pray for the Badhai community to repent of their past and enjoy the spiritual refreshment that comes from being forgiven and embraced by the loving, Almighty Creator.



carves or casts an idol and secretly sets it up. These idols, the work of craftsmen, are detestable to the Lord.” (Deut 27:15, NLT). These false gods had never created the Earth, the moon or the stars. These carvings have robbed the God of the universe His rightful honor and glory.

For nearly the same amount of time, the Badhai Brahmans of north central India were the caste that was responsible for the carvings of Hindu gods. Numbering more than six and a half million people, their skills have become less in demand among their fellow Hindus as modern technology has rendered their talents out of date.

The Badhai generally shun the kind of manual labor performed by the lower castes, and many are just now beginning to earn degrees in engineering to continue their creative endeavors. They are usually employed in engineering, education, and small-scale industrial manufacturing. Some choose the areas of carpentry, stone work or the timber trade.

Pray for the Badhai to be introduced to the gospel through presentations of the JESUS Film and through believers. Pray for their community leaders to begin the process of discipling Hindus in the ways of Jesus Christ.—JY

BAIRAGI BRAHMANS

The priestly Bairagi people live humble, ascetic lives and devote themselves as slaves to their Hindu god, Rama. Their name comes from the Sanskrit word “vairagya,” meaning “one who is free from worldly affairs.” Yet the Bairagi are also elevated like kings among their followers, as seen during the festival of Kumbha Mela, celebrated every three years at the Ganges River.



A Hindu ascetic

Numbering over 3.5 million people, the Bairagi Brahman caste is spread throughout India, especially in the north. Some engage in agriculture as landlords, with most Bairagi performing duties in Hindu temples. They live lives of self-denial and meditation, seeking to emulate Rama or Krishna. They also worship family or village deities.

These dedicated Bairagis wear a mark known as a “tilak” on their foreheads; they also don’t cut their hair but wear it in dreadlocks. Considered 100 percent Hindu, there are few followers of Christ among the Bairagi.

Ask God to stir long term prayer among Christ followers for India’s Bairagi community. Pray the Holy Spirit brings spiritual breakthroughs, softening Bairagi hearts in families and communities, and using anointed witnesses and Christian materials. Ask that Bairagi believers disciple others to lead to Christ-centered movements that powerfully bless all Hindu communities.—CR

GAL 2:20A, NLT

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

Pray that the religious Bairagi people come to know Jesus as the only true God, worthy of their complete devotion. Ask that they become dependent not on their own self-denial but on the grace of God in Christ.

BEDIA PEOPLE

ROM 13:13-14, NIV

Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

Pray that this verse will convict the Bedia people of sin and turn their hearts to the only one who can save them from sin.

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Among some people groups, girl babies are aborted because they are considered to be a financial drain; but in a twisted way, the Bedia people welcome baby girls. They celebrate the births of girls because their income will increase when she enters puberty and becomes a prostitute. Each daughter is given the choice to enter marriage or become a prostitute. Serving a family as a wife and mother is also hard and unappreciated by Bedia families, so they have two bad options. The men sit at home managing their family “business.” These people are uneducated and know no other way to survive. They have lived in this darkness for generations. Old traditions are not easily broken, especially when fearsome gods intimidate them and drive them further into destructive ways. The Bedia people are mostly Hindus, and they believe the gods are smiling upon their families if they produce many girls.

Pray for a Holy Spirit-led transformation among Bedia men that will make them cherish and protect their wives and daughters. Pray Bedia people will choose to learn and practice productive ways to provide for their family needs. Pray the Bedia will welcome truth bearers with trust and begin their own movement to Christ in the 2020s.—KH

BHARBHUNJA PEOPLE

The BhARBhunja name means “roasting grain,” reflecting their traditional occupation. They buy grain from other agricultural castes, then roast or parch it to sell. The difficult life of BhARBhunja women involves much hard work at home and in the family roadside restaurants. Children often work with their parents and receive only a minimal education. Most live in rural areas where electricity, indoor plumbing, and access to clean water are exceptions, not the rule.



A grain market

iStockfightbegin

BhARBhunja lives depend upon their level of education, resulting in a wide range of economic possibilities. They marry within their caste but not within their family or clan. A man can marry one wife unless she is barren, in which case he can marry a second wife. Sons inherit property from their parents, and daughters inherit nothing.

BhARBhunja are Hindu, and there are no known believers among them. Many Bible resources are in their Hindi language, but who will tell them about the blessings of Jesus?

Pray for workers to enter the field of harvest among BhARBhunja people. Pray that BhARBhunja leaders would not only hear, but embrace the love of Father God, and tell their families of His goodness. Pray that Bible resources will flow freely among BhARBhunja people, and that spiritual hunger will grow and spread among their families, resulting in a church planting movement.—KH

ZEPH 3:12, NET

I will leave in your midst a humble and meek group of people, and they will find safety in the Lord's presence.

Pray for a humble repentance among BhARBhunja leaders that will result in their families' finding safety, peace, and joy in the Lord's presence.

BHOI (AKA KEWAT) PEOPLE

EPH 2:14, NLT

For Christ Himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in His own body on the cross, He broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.

Pray that the Kewat people will accept the peace that comes from putting their faith in Jesus Christ alone.

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A fruit stall

Today the Bhoi people, aka, Kewats, work in temples and are given good status in Indian society. Kewat people also work as farmers, small business owners of restaurants, fabric shops, and fruit and egg stalls. They also work for Indian railways, state transport corporations, and state-run primary schools, and as carpenters, basket weavers, boatmen, and fishermen. There are some professionals and politicians among them. Kewat women are employed as domestic helpers, agricultural laborers, and basket makers while children work as cowherds and servants on annual contract. Some send their sons to work at tea stalls, garages or factories.

These Hindus seek the services of Brahman priests for their birth, marriage, and death rituals. They cremate their dead and immerse their ashes in a river, preferably the Ganges, which is believed to be holy by Hindus. They also practice ancestor worship. They are deeply religious Hindus, who worship at shrines and temples and go on pilgrimages. Their lives are devoted to finding spiritual peace and freedom from fear. There are no known Jesus followers among them.

Pray that extended Kewat families will accept Jesus Christ as their sin-bearer. Pray for them to find spiritual peace in Him.—KH

DHODIA PEOPLE

The Hindu Dhodia people celebrate many festivals, but we will highlight only one of them today —Vagh Baras.

Worshippers pay homage to a divine cow, in the belief that their sins will be washed away. They also bathe cows and adorn them with bright clothing and flower garlands. If they do not have a cow, they can shape one out of mud and decorate it. Devotees offer prayers to Lord Krishna and Lord Vishnu, Hindu gods who loved cows.

In Dhodia villages, the Vagh Baras festival takes on a unique turn. One man colors himself in stripes representing a tiger, while others dress in plain white, representing cattle. The tiger pursues the cattle, and at the end of the sport, the villagers celebrate with a feast.

In the book of Exodus, we read about the children of Israel worshipping a golden calf. They soon learned from God Himself that they were, instead, to worship Him rather than a calf-shaped idol.

Pray for Dhodia families to know that only the creator of cows can wash away their sin. Pray for God to thrust out His chosen servants to reach them. Pray that a strong movement to Jesus will lead families and communities to experience God.—CMW

EX 32:30, NLT

The next day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a terrible sin, but I will go back up to the LORD on the mountain. Perhaps I will be able to obtain forgiveness for your sin."

Pray that the Dhodia people will understand God's concept of sin and will be willing to seek Him for forgiveness.

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DUBLA PEOPLE

EX 32:31-32, NLT

So Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, what a terrible sin these people have committed. They have made gods of gold for themselves. But now, if you will only forgive their sin—but if not, erase my name from the record you have written!"

Pray for the Lord to thrust forth workers for the Dubla people with the dedication to righteousness that Moses had.

iStock/ajijchan



of three identical cups, the cups are shuffled, and you have to guess which cup hides the object? Dubla women play a similar game on the wedding day! Following a temple visit and the wedding ceremony, the bride goes to the groom's house. There, the female relatives gather to play "guess-which-cooking-pot." Several containers are collected, and some are filled with food. The bride has to identify whether a particular pot is full or empty. If she answers incorrectly, she is teased and mocked, but it is all in good fun.

The Dubla, who were considered inferior servants, are sharecroppers, servants, and casual laborers; they do not own their land. While younger children get to attend primary school, many children aged 12-14 also toil in the fields, growing rice and cotton. The Dubla people are Hindus and look to their *bhagat* (priest and medicine man) for spiritual guidance. He is thought to be the ultimate "good man."

Pray that they will learn of and follow Jesus Christ, the one who is far more than just a "good man." Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth faithful laborers to live and work among the Dubla people until they have their own disciple-making movement.—CMW

JAT SIKHS

The turban is a distinguishing item of headwear on a Sikh, but it is not a fashion statement. Rather, it represents his faith. It relates to a core teaching of Sikhism that all people are equal, and to demonstrate their equality, all Sikhs should cover their heads in a similar manner. Another practice of faith is maintaining uncut hair, which they keep in a bun at the top of their head. Their long hair is an expression of their acceptance of God's will.

The Jat people live in the northern part of India, and some are Sikhs. They speak Punjabi. Sikh religious practices include a fire sacrifice at weddings. The couple walks seven times around an enclosure. Later on, when the husband dies, the widow walks around his body seven times in the reverse direction of the one during the wedding ceremony, thus indicating the undoing of the marriage. Whether Hindu or Sikh, Jats have traditionally been either soldiers or farmers.

Pray for Sikh Jats to come to know the Son who accepted His Father's will and became the payment for sin. May they become part of the bride of Christ. Ask God to spur the few Jat believers to share the gospel until there is a family based movement to Christ.—CMW

iStock/hammam



EX 33:7, NLT

It was Moses' practice to take the Tent of Meeting and set it up some distance from the camp. Everyone who wanted to make a request of the LORD would go to the Tent of Meeting outside the camp.

Pray for the Lord to raise up Sikh-background believing fellowships with the intimacy with God that Moses enjoyed.

MAHTAM SIKHS

ROM 10:14-15, NLT

But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"

Pray for God to send out ambassadors with beautiful feet to Punjab's Sikh communities!

iStock/Kailash Kumar



that the latter occupation could easily lead to the abuse of alcohol, and that has often been the case. Many of the Mahtam Sikhs have been following the religious teachings of Radha Soami. One good result of this is that alcoholism is now less of a problem since he taught them to turn from alcohol abuse. In fact, Sikhism itself teaches their people to be sober and honest.

There is gospel radio in Punjabi, the main language of most of the Mahtam Sikhs. This is an avenue for them to hear the good news about Jesus Christ. Punjab desperately needs Holy Spirit-directed workers to reach out to this people group. At the present time, there are no known believers in Jesus Christ among this group of people.

Pray for spiritual discernment and hunger among these Sikhs. Pray for a family-based movement to Christ among the Mahtam community to spread far and wide in the 2020s.—JS

RAJPUT SIKHS

Hindu Rajputs might worship any number of gods, but Sikh Rajputs follow the "True Name," of the true God. They believe that by meditating on the name of God that they will pass through reincarnations and eventually merge with this force. They are unaware that their sins can never be forgiven apart from the blood of Christ, yet there are redemptive things about Sikhism that can lead them to Him.

Rajputs were South Asia's toughest warriors, and Sikhs are among the toughest Rajputs! Rajput Sikhs helped to defend the Mehrangarh Fort that stands 400 feet above Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Still today Rajput Sikhs proudly stand at its gates. The fort was never penetrated by Moghul forces.

There is another fort that the Rajput Sikhs need to hear about. "A Mighty Fortress is our God. A bulwark never failing ... Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing. Were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He!"

Pray for Rajput Sikhs to enter the "fort" of God's domain and surrender to the King of kings who offers eternal life to all who will call on His name. Pray for hundreds of Sikh Rajput families to put their faith in Jesus.—JS



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ROM 10:20, NIV

And Isaiah boldly says, "I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me."

Pray that the Rajput Sikhs will soon seek and find the One True Savior!

SIKH SANI PEOPLE

JER 32:17, NLT

O Lord God! Behold, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm; there is nothing too hard for you.

Pray that the Sikh Sani community will experience God's power in a way that will bless them, generation after generation.

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The glory days!

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The old Sikh Sani man sat on the porch of his home and thought of his glory days. He'd been a soldier, and he had helped defend India's borders against Pakistan during the 1965 and 1971 wars. He came from a family with a distinguished history of military service; his father had fought for India in 1947 during the war for independence. Now he was old and had only death to look forward to. He often thought about the past because the present offered him no sense of meaning.

The Sikh Sani live in the mountains of India. They are descended from some of the early kings of India. King Porus, who defeated Alexander the Great, was a Sikh Sani. Today this caste does much more than fight for India. The Sikh Sani are also farmers, businessmen, and scientists. Most members of the Sani people group are Hindus or Sikhs. There are very few, if any, followers of Christ among them.

Ask God to lead a mission agency to reach out to the Sikh Sani, leading to their families and children being spiritually blessed and giving thanks to the Living God. Pray for them to make disciples who will make more disciples.—WK

SIKH TARKHAN

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Diawak, a Sikh Tarkhan man, had once been a carpenter. Later he owned a construction company and lived in a big house. He had more money than he knew what to do with, but money hadn't led to happiness. There was an empty spot in his heart, and no religious system could fill it.



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The Sikh Tarkhan are one of the richest people groups in India. Thousands of years ago, they were a caste of carpenters. Today some members of this people group dominate India's construction industry. Other members of this people group have gone into India's military. In 1971, Sikh Tarkhan soldiers and officers won a key battle in the war against Pakistan. Most members of this people group are Hindus, though there is also a sizable Sikh minority among them. Sikhs have a good foundation in that they worship one God of creation, and their holy book includes a beautiful collection of worship songs to the creator.

Pray that many Sikh Tarkhan elders will understand that Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh. Ask God to raise up faithful workers who will reach out to the Sikh Tarkhans with the message of salvation that will lead to their entire community to be blessed by Christ.—WK

JN 1:1, NET

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God.

Pray that the spiritual weight of this verse will steer all Sikh people to the Savior of all nations.

IRAQI TURKMEN

ROM 11:35, NIV

Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?

Pray that the Iraqi Turkmen will understand that they cannot make demands on God, but He has all sovereign power.

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Kirkuk, Iraq

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Rahim, an Iraqi Turkmen, spent most of his life

fighting. He'd fought pitched battles in the streets of Kirkuk, his hometown, when ISIS tried to take over the city. ISIS has been driven out of Kirkuk, but peace hasn't been restored. During the war against ISIS, the Turkmen allied with the Kurds and the Arabs to fight that terrorist group. After the defeat of ISIS, these people groups began fighting one another for control of the city of Kirkuk. Ali was tired of fighting but didn't know where to find peace.

Some of the Turkmen people immigrated to what is now Iraq around 600 A.D. from Central Asia. They have been moderate Sunni Muslims for hundreds of years. They need to find their way to the Prince of Peace!

Pray that the name of Jesus will restore peace in Iraq. Pray that the Turkmen and other Sunni Muslim peoples in Iraq will come together to be disciplined in the teachings of Jesus Christ and teach them to others. Pray for them to set an example to other Muslim peoples that Jesus can bring peace to anyone, anywhere.—WK

SUNRI PEOPLE IN BANGLADESH

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

“Moham! Where are you going with your cow?”

Samarth, a Sunri farmer like Moham, was amazed to see his friend leading his cow on an old road towards Dhaka. Moham replied, “I’m going to join some others who are taking their cows to the cattle market. The Muslims pay well for cows just before their Eid celebration. I will get more money for my cow than for all the rice I could sell from my land in one year and still have enough to buy two little calves plus the feed they need.” Samarth responded, “I hope the bank will give me a loan to buy a calf. I can hardly take care of my family as the prices are so low for rice now. You are very smart, Moham. May our Hindu gods go with you and give you good money for your cow!”

The 632,000 Hindu Sunri in Bangladesh are devoted to their gods and ethnic religious beliefs. As far as we know, there are no Christ followers among the Hindu Sunris.

Pray they will come to know the Living LORD through radio broadcasts, tapes, films and personal contacts with believers who will work with them to establish a disciple-making movement.—PD



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ROM 11:5-6, NIV

So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Pray that the Sunri people will accept the grace of God by faith and serve no other God but Him.

KAYASTHA PEOPLE

ROM 12:3, NIV

For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will give the gift of humility, repentance, and faith to the highly regarded Kayastha community.

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(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

“Sanjay, I need you to check this!”

Rana, a Kayastha office manager for the Sanjay Law Office in Ludhiana, Punjab was checking to see if the greeting and invitation card for the celebration of the Hindu god Chitragupta meets the expectations for office lawyers from the Kayastha community. It would be sent out to clients, friends, and families. Sanjay quickly read, “Lord Brahma made the god Chitragupta, and he created the Kayastha people so that they could help keep records of actions of human beings on Earth. You are invited to join us in this holiest of festivals to honor our god and the honor of serving him that we have been given.” Sanjay smiled and nodded his head in approval.

The approximate 10 million Kayastha are considered to be one of the most intelligent and influential people groups in India. They hold prominent positions in the areas of law, politics, medicine, teaching, accounting, and business. They are devoted to Chitragupta and other Hindu gods. Proud of their identity, they are very resistant to Christians, whom they feel are inferior to them.

Pray that there will be a disciple-making movement that blesses all Kayastha families.—PD

MAHADEV KOLI PEOPLE

The Mahadev Koli people are so dedicated to fishing that even their folk

dances have to do with that trade! There is the Koli dance, where women wear beautiful dresses that make them look like mermaids. At the beginning of the dance, the men move as if they were rowing boats, then the women advance towards the men, and together they dance with movements symbolic of ocean waves, rowing, and casting off their nets.

With a population of about 1.7 million, most Mahadev Koli live in the Mahadev Hills of Maharashtra. They derive their name from their god Mahadeva and are devoted to Hindu gods, village gods, gods of the sea, and their ancestral gods. They keep a small place in their houses to worship their gods. Although most Koli want to be classified as farmers so they can receive benefits from the Indian government, many continue to fish for a living.

There are few believers among the Koli, but the few Christians in their area mix Christianity with the worship of other gods, leaving a poor testimony.

Pray the Lord will send His faithful servants to the Koli. May their families be blessed by disciple-making efforts that show them the way to their savior.—PD



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2 CHRON 7:14, NET

If my people, who belong to me, humble themselves, pray, seek to please me, and repudiate their sinful practices, then I will respond from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.

Pray that the Mahadev Koli people will do just this and enjoy the abundant blessings of God as a result.

EX 6:3, NET

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name 'the LORD' I was not known to them.

Pray that the Mahratta Shinde people, who value names as part of identity, will value the name above all names!

MAHRATTA SHINDE PEOPLE IN INDIA

iStockDinesh Hukmani.



What's in a name? Plenty, in the case of the Mahratta Shinde people! We have prayed for the

Mahratta people, who have a tradition of power and influence. They once challenged the might of the Moghul Empire and lasted long enough to have their own dynasties. That is where the Shinde name comes in; Shinde was one of these dynasties. Today the Shinde are a subgroup of the Mahrattas.

Mahratta peoples, especially the Shindes, live mainly in India's western state of Maharashtra, though smaller numbers migrate elsewhere. Today they have far less power, but they still remember their ancestors who were part of a mighty dynasty, which many look to for their identity.

In addition to their ancestors, they also look to the Hindu religious system for their identity. Hinduism is a very flexible religion, which can accommodate just about anything. Though it would be difficult for Hindus to have exclusive devotion to Jesus Christ, they understand the concept of being a "devotee" to a particular God.

Pray for many Shinde Mahratta families to become devotees of Jesus Christ and allow Him to transform their communities. Pray for a powerful disciple-making movement among them this decade.—KC

HINDU GUJARS IN INDIA

Do you want to be liked? If so, be glad you are not a Hindu Gujar in northern India! No one seems to like them whether

they are Hindu or Muslim. Farmers and sheep shepherds do not like them because the Gujars are buffalo herders, and each buffalo takes up as much pasture as four sheep. There are frequent rivalries for land in India's congested northern states. Gujars are noted for being rough and ready to use violence to get their way, which is one more reason why they are not popular with other communities.

Hindu Gujars never slaughter their buffalo, but they sell milk and other dairy products. Middlemen often exploit them, so they are usually in debt. To add to their woes, these buffalo herders have low status in India. The Muslims among them are even worse off; Hindu police sometimes punish them for slaughtering cattle even though they herd buffalo, not cattle.

Pray that the Hindu Gujars will find acceptance in Jesus Christ and learn to cling to Him alone. Pray that there will soon come a time when Gujar families come together to study the Bible and share its spiritual treasures with others until there is an unstoppable movement to Christ. May Christ bring peace between Hindu and Muslim Gujar communities.—KC



iStockDavidCallan

GAL 1:10, NET

Am I now trying to gain the approval of people, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ!

Pray that the Lord will raise up believers among the Gujar people, who will boldly take Christ to others just as the Apostle Paul once did.

PROV 18:12, NET

Before destruction the heart of a person is proud, but humility comes before honor.

Pray that the Lord will bring honor to the Rohingya people as they find their way to the Savior. Pray for them to soon experience joy and peace in the arms of the Lord.

ROHINGYAS IN BANGLADESH

iStock/Suvra Kanti Das



Rohingya mother and child

The Sunni Muslim Rohingyas are refugees from Buddhist Myanmar, and they hoped to find safety in Bangladesh, another

Muslim country. They were wrong. Bangladesh has such a big problem with overpopulation, exacerbated by frequent flooding of inhabited land, that they cannot afford to take in their co-religionists.

The Rohingyas have claimed part of Myanmar's Rakhine State as their homeland, a claim that stems from the ancient Arakhan Kingdom, which straddled what is now Myanmar and Bangladesh from the early 1400s to the late 1800s. Tensions between the Rohingyas and the Myanmar government came to a head in August of 2017, when a paramilitary group known as the Arakhan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) attacked some police stations. Myanmar's government retaliated by destroying hundreds of their villages and killing 6,700 of them in one month, and the exodus to Bangladesh and other nations has been non-stop ever since.

Today the Rohingyas are without a nation and living as refugees, with the largest population in Bangladesh. Few would dare to return to the country that brutalized them.

Pray for the Lord to raise up hundreds of believers with the love of the Lord to help these refugees with clean water and ways to earn a productive living. Pray that this time of tragedy will become a time when the Rohingyas take Jesus as their best friend and Lord.—KC