

The Para Naga of Myanmar

The Para Naga are also known as Jejara Naga. Jejara means “the people who love and live a life of peace and tranquility”. The term “Para” is derived from the word “Parasar” which means “new village founders”, and was used to refer to anyone who wandered around and then came and settled down in Myanmar.

Historically, the Naga are the peoples who live in the Brahmaputra and Chindwin valleys. Until recent times, all of the groups in this large geographical region called themselves Naga and often claimed that they were one group. Although they occupy a continuous stretch of hill country between the Brahmaputra and Chindwin valleys, these groups are not homogeneous ethnically, culturally, or linguistically.

The Naga are one of many Tibeto-Burman groups. They are said to have migrated from Tibet and entered Myanmar through what is now Kachin State. They moved along the Chindwin valleys and scattered throughout Manipur, Assam and even into eastern Bangladesh. From these locations, some Naga later returned to Myanmar. Many Naga also live in Nagaland in Northeast India.

Many Naga people are agriculturalists. They produce their own food and clothing, and sell and trade fruit (oranges) and vegetables. Sometimes, when they can’t get to the market, they trade oranges for rice from Chinese merchants.

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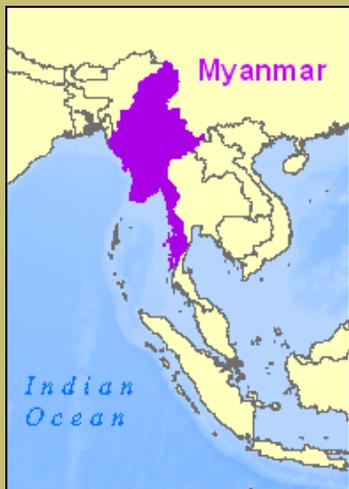
Primary Religion:
Christian

Disciples (Matt 28:19):
60%

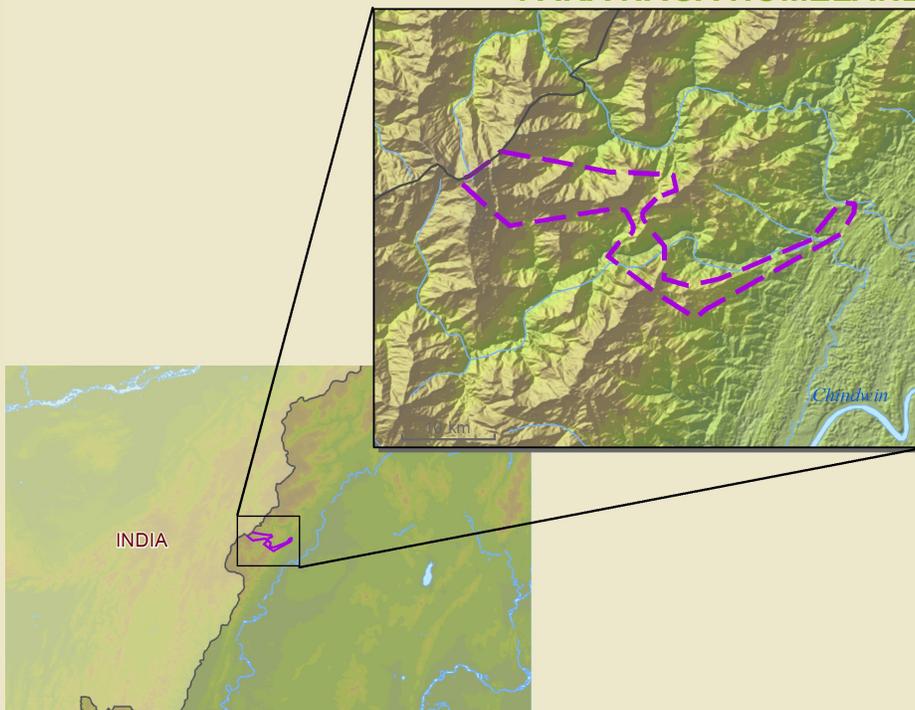
Churches:
A few

Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):
No Scripture

Population (date):
1,500 (2006)



PARA NAGA HOMELAND



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Have They Heard The Gospel?

Call Themselves Christian Comment	60% The majority are Christians.
Attitude to Christianity	Very receptive
How Have They Responded to the Gospel?	Majority are Christians
Number of Churches Comment	All churches among the Para are Baptist.
Number Of Communities Comment	15 There are at least 7 Para villages in Layshi township, and more elsewhere.
History of When Christianity Began	1950
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No
Other Forms of Gospel Presentations Available	The above responses were regarding mother tongue materials. However, much is available in Burmese for those that can access it.
Hindrances to Scripture Distribution	None known

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Group Description

Environment

Comment

The land is rugged and rocky with deep valleys and swift streams. Due to the mountainous terrain, transportation and communication are a challenge in the Naga Hills. Roads are only good during the dry season. Layshi Township is located at the base of Mount Sarameti, the highest mountain in the Naga Hills, with an elevation of 12,553 feet. Layshi Township is 5,000 feet above sea level, with an area of 1,057 square miles.

Literacy

Literacy Attitude

Somewhat receptive

Economics

Occupation

Agriculturalists

Community Development

Health Care

Comment

Poor

Most health workers are in the hospital in Layshi, but each village has someone (unpaid) who can give injections. Major health problems are diarrhea, tuberculosis, and chicken pox. There generally isn't enough medicine available and/or it doesn't arrive on time. People also lack general health knowledge. People die earlier than they should. Children usually miss about 50 days out of about 250 school days per year. There are latrines built about 3 feet off the ground, with a pipe that extends into the ground. People have to bring their own water. Most people don't (can't?) use these latrines, but only use the common ones. Those are only a hole and some have covers, and they have a screen for privacy.

Water Quality

Comment

Poor

There is one well per village but this is not sufficient. Water is scarce during summer time (dry season). There is much water during the rainy season, but it is not clean.

Clothing

They wear the same kind of clothes as the other people in Myanmar (longyi).

Society/Culture

Celebrations

New years festivals, First fruit (harvest) festivals, erecting of stone pillar festivals, weddings.

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Education

Language of Instruction Early Years Burmese

Language of Textbooks Early Years Burmese

Language of Instruction Later Years Burmese

Language of Textbooks Later Years Burmese

Comment

Number unknown, but primary education is available.
Secondary education only available in towns.

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Status of Christianity

Religion Population Percent

Religion #1	Buddhism
Percent Adherent	40%
Religion #2	Animistic

Scripture

Scripture Use	Majority of the churches
Comment	The Burmese Bible is used in all the churches. However, there are many that express difficulty understanding it.
Urgent Need for Translation	For use in evangelism, discipleship, teaching, and church planting work.