

GEJIU 个旧

Gejiu City, located in the southern part of Yunnan Province in southwest China, is home to approximately half-a-million people. Although Gejiu is one of the smaller cities profiled in this book, it nevertheless contains 100,000 precious households and is one of the largest cities in predominantly rural Yunnan Province.

Population:
384,569 (1990)
516,800 (2000)
694,500 (2010)

Province:
Yunnan

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 67.9%
Yi 19.9%
Hui 3.8%
Zhuang 3.5%

Christians:
1,000 (0.2%)

Gejiu is a highly strategic city, and the gateway to dozens of unreached ethnic minorities in Gejiu County and the surrounding areas. Even in the ethnically-diverse Gejiu City itself there are more than 77,000 Yi people, 15,000 Hui, 13,500 Zhuang, 9,500 Miao, 5,000 Dai, 2,000 Hani and 1,200 Bai.

The above minorities are all official nationalities as recognized by the Chinese authorities. The true ethnolinguistic situation in provinces like Yunnan is much more complicated, however. Among the 77,000 "Yi" people in Gejiu, for example, are people belonging to at least four different tribal groups, each speaking a distinct language and practicing various customs and traditions. The Yi in Gejiu include the Muji, Pula, Southern Gaisu and the Jianshui Nisu, who have a radio program broadcast in their language three times daily by the authorities. Many of the official 'nationalities' in China are artificially-constructed classifications that clump

together numerous ethnicities and language groups. While the Beijing government recognizes only 56 nationalities in China, our new book due to be released soon profiles 491.

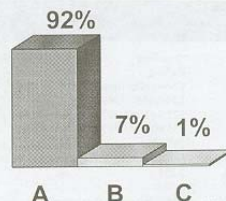
Gejiu is located on the northern bank of the Honghe (Red) River, near the Chinese border with Vietnam. One tourist book has made these complimentary remarks about Gejiu: "Here's one of the loveliest towns in southern Yunnan. It's like an alpine town against a backdrop of craggy cliffs, the heights providing a clarity to the air, and on the right day and from the right angle, the views over the unruffled steely-blue



The Honghe River flows past Gejiu City and into Vietnam.



Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity

lake approach picture-postcard realms." (Mayhew, *South-West China*, p.452).

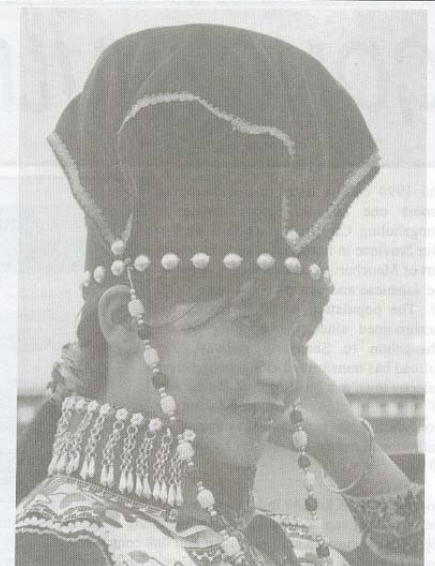
Gejiu is nicknamed the 'Capital of Tin' by people in Yunnan due to the city's rich tin reserves. Many mining operations extract the tin from quarries on both sides of the river. Local officials claim the extraction of tin in Gejiu started during the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD) but the first mining license wasn't approved until 1883. Tin extraction and smelting accounts for about 95% of Gejiu's economy.

Mining in the city area has surpassed its limits, however. In 1954, torrential rains caused a massive sinkhole to suddenly swallow up half of the city. The city and surrounding hills had been dug into so much that the earth collapsed. Today, Gejiu is a long, narrow city separated into two by the large Jin Golden Lake in the middle of town. The lake was formed by the 1954 disaster, and lies where half of the old town one stood.

Baohua Park on the outskirts of Gejiu contains the Baohua Monastery, built by a Daoist monk between 1670 to 1675. Many temples and pavilions attract both sightseers and people who come to pray and burn incense to their gods. A giant 400 year-old bronze bell is also housed in the city.

Christianity has made little impact on Gejiu. A small amount of missions activity took place here and in nearby Jianshui, Kaiyuan and Mengzi, but few converts eventuated. The missionaries struggled with the myriad of tribal languages and customs that created barriers to the advance of the Gospel. Even today many Yi people in Gejiu understand little Chinese, certainly not enough for them to comprehend the Gospel in that language. They will need to hear it in their own heart-language.

There is just one visible, "official" church in Gejiu, mostly attended by elderly women.



More than 70,000 members of the Yi nationality live in Gejiu City. The Yi are a collection of tribes and languages rather than one cohesive group—somewhat similar to calling all 'Native Americans' one people.

Pray for Gejiu

- 1 Gejiu's 500,000 souls are served by just one visible church. Pray workers would soon be sent to Gejiu who would labor with God's love and energy to rectify this situation.
- 2 Pray the Gospel would be able to overcome linguistic, cultural and social barriers in Gejiu. Pray all minority groups would receive a clear witness in their own language.
- 3 Pray the Life of Jesus Christ would impact every town and city along the Honghe River in both China and Vietnam.

Overview of Gejiu

Pronunciation : "Geh-jeen"
Old Spelling : Kch-chew
Location : Yunnan Province, southwest China
Population : 384,569 (1990 census)
Males : 200,622 (52.17%)
Females : 183,947 (47.82%)
Households : 98,272
Average household : 3.91 people
Divorced people : 3,247
% of population : 0.84%
Centurions (1990) : 8 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City : 6,352 per year
From same province : 5,118 (80.5%)
From other provinces : 1,237 (19.5%)

Employed people : 224,873 (58.5% of total population)
Main Industries : Industrial 40.3%; Agriculture 35.2%; Professional 9.1%
Educational : University: 0.8%
Attainment : High School: 44.2%
(highest level: Primary School: 38.9%
attended) Never attended any level of school: 16.1%
Population under 15 : 25.1%
Adult Literacy : 83% (men 90%; women 76%)
Major Nationalities : Han 261,436
Yi 76,649
Hui 14,708
Zhuang 13,462
Miao 9,467
Others (27 groups): 8,847
Christians : 1,000 (0.2%)