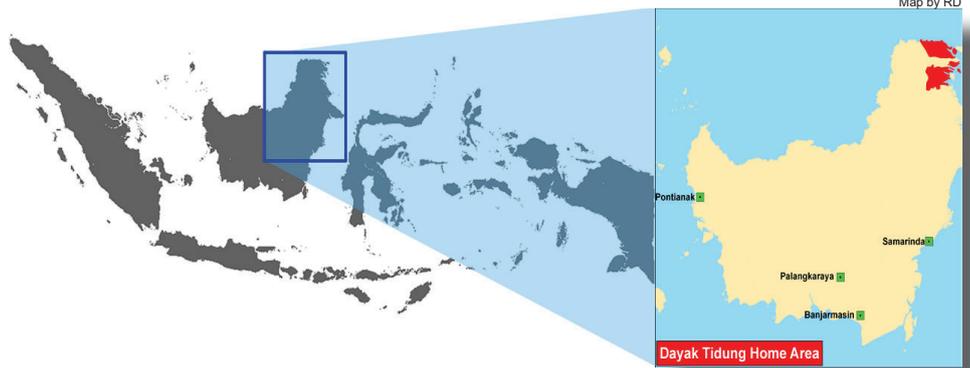


# DAYAK TIDUNG



Photo by RD



Demography	Tidung Language	Status
Location: East Kalimantan Population: 50.000 Major Religion: Islam	Bible: No Jesus Film: No Online Media: No	Believers: <5 <sup>(188)</sup> Engaged: Yes Indigenous Church: 0

## Identity and Location

The Dayak Tidung is a group of Dayak people who identify themselves as Dayak Tidung, speak the Dayak Tidung dialect and follow Islam. In Bulungan Regency, they are often grouped as Bulungan people (the group that is considered the most indigenous); thus they are also called Tidung Bulungan.

The Tidung Bulungan have a slightly different language than the Dayak Tidung people. The Dayak Tidung can also be referred to as Dayak Pantai ((pantai means “beach”). There is also a group of Dayak Tidung people who are native to the Malaysian province of Sabah.

## Society and Culture

The main livelihood of the Dayak Tidung is farming. They grow yams, cassava, peas, fruits and vegetables. They move their cultivation from place to place and thus cannot maintain fertile soil due to the fact that they must continue to cut down trees and burn the underbrush. The opening of these new fields is done together with neighboring tribes. This mode of cultivation is often accused of being the main cause of fires and forest degradation, although the actual damage they inflict is nothing compared to the damage caused by entrepreneurs who obtain the rights from the government to manage large areas of forest.

Some Dayak Tidung people work as fishermen. Among other things, they produce, rice, coconut and wood. Petroleum is produced in the Bunyu and Tarakan Islands.

Generally the Dayak Tidung people choose their own spouse but some marriages are arranged by parents. The birth of a child is greeted happily by holding a special celebration led by a religious leader. The neighbors are invited to attend the naming ceremony (tasmiah). Usually the celebration is held after the child is one or two weeks old. At the event they hold what they call a

‘swing ceremony’ in which the child is laid in a swing by the parents, his or her hair is cut and his/her body is smeared with flour.

The Dayak Tidung people are friendly and not ethnocentric. Because they live on the beach, they are more open to outsiders than most ethnic groups and this openness to the modern world allows outside cultures to influence them.

## Beliefs

Merchants brought Islam to this area from Sulawesi. In the beginning, most of the Dayak Tidung were Christians but later became Islamic because of trade and marriage with Bugis and Arab peoples. They observe Islamic law in the performance of religious ceremonies and in the divisions of inheritance.

However some Dayak Tidung still adhere to animistic beliefs, namely the belief that certain objects or places are inhabited by spirits and can have great influence over humans. Traditional ceremonies are performed to obtain spiritual protection and power so that one can conquer and control the spirits, both evil spirits and good spirits. Shamans play an important role in Dayak Tidung society. They are called to heal the sick through their spells.

## Needs

The Dayak Tidung are open to modernization. This openness, as well as their close proximity to the sea and the Malaysian border, is a great asset for the development of their own resources. However they need to improve their productivity and creativity in order to manage their plantations, agriculture, and fisheries.