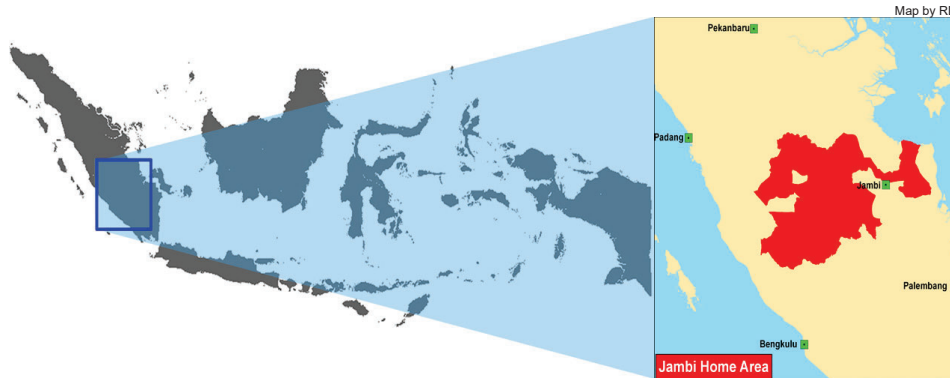


JAMBI



Demography	Jambi Language	Status
Location: Jambi Population: 1.000.000 Major Religion: Islam	Bible: No Jesus Film: No Online Media: No	Believers: < 20 ⁽²⁴⁴⁹⁾ Engaged: yes Indigenous Church: 0

Identity and Location

The Jambi people, also known as the Jambi Malay, live primarily in central Sumatra. They occupy the regencies of Batanghari, Bungo-Tebo, Sarolangun, Muaro Jambi, Merangin and the capital city of Jambi Province. The Jambi language is part of the Malay language cluster. Their culture has been heavily influenced by the Minangkabau culture.

Most of the area inhabited by the Jambi is a lowland basin of dense jungles, peat bogs, swamps, and rivers. This area is drained by the mighty Batang Hari River and its many tributaries. The river system, which is 409 miles/655 km long, is important both as a means of transportation and as a source of fish.

The Jambi are adept swimmers and fishermen. They use eight types of traditional fishing tackle, as well as the modern fishnet. They are great eaters of fish and complain that a meal is incomplete if lacking the distinctive fish flavor.

Society and Culture

Most Jambi people earn their livelihood from fishing. To catch fish they use both modern and traditional methods and equipment. They catch, sell, and eat over eleven types of fish. Other ways of making a living include farming and plantation work.

The Jambi are a very proud people due to their links with the ancient Malay kingdom that flourished beginning in the 7th century AD. Sadly, this pride now threatens their economic development due to their unwillingness to accept modernization and reform. This can be seen when comparing their lives to those of transmigrants to the Jambi area, who now enjoy a higher standard of living than the native Jambi.

Transportation between neighboring communities is done more frequently by water than by land. This is because Jambi communities are located in forest areas with thick undergrowth and extensive swamps which make land travel difficult.

Many traditional ceremonies and special rituals are performed by the Jambi. These are for events such as the birth of a child, giving a name to the child, cutting the child's hair for the first time, piercing a girl's ears at age two, and circumcision for boys between the ages of six and ten years old. Once a child reaches the age of adulthood (15 years old for a female and 17 years old for a male), there is a ritual of filing the teeth to make them even, as a rite of passage into adulthood.

Beliefs

Almost all of the Jambi are Muslim. Every village has a mosque or prayer house and typically also an Islamic religious school (madrasah). For the Jambi, all principles and guidelines governing human life originated with their ancestors, who in turn received them from the Qu'ran and the Hadith (written instructions for faith and practical matters taken from the life of the prophet Mohammed). The Jambi also believe that religious leaders, dwarves, and shamans have supernatural powers.

Needs

Many Jambi feel neglected and exploited by the transmigrants who have come in the area over the past few decades. Greater educational assistance will help them learn skills that will make them more competitive with other ethnic groups who have moved into the area.