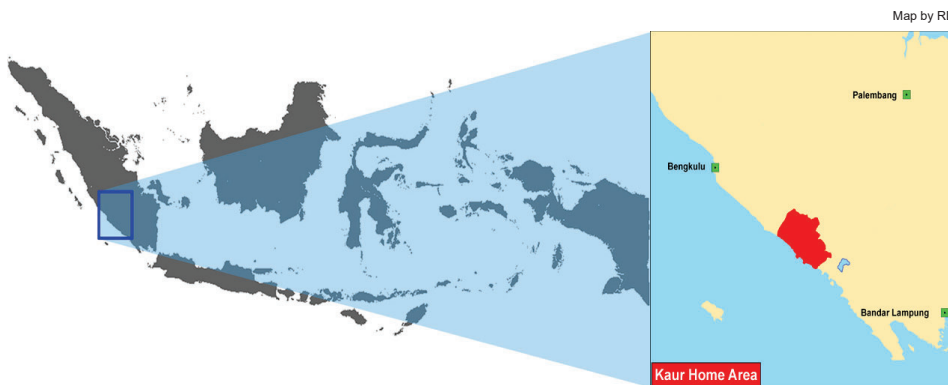


KAUR



Photo by RD



Map by RD

Demography	Kaur Language	Status
Location: Bengkulu Population: 44.000 Major Religion: Islam	Bible: No Jesus Film: No Online Media: No	Believers: 0 (281) Engaged: No Indigenous Church: 0

Identity and Location

The Kaur are one of the original peoples of Bengkulu Province. They were originally from Bintuhan in the South Kaur district of South Bengkulu, but nowadays many live in the North Kaur district. The Trans-Sumatra highway passes through Bintuhan, the district capital of South Kaur. The Kaur speak their own language, which is part of the Malay language cluster.

Most Kaur villages are located in groups along the banks of small rivers in this area. The Kaur area lies adjacent to that of the Serawai and Besemah peoples. Geographically, the Kaur may be divided into two subgroups. Those who live in the South Kaur district are normally called Bintuhan.

Their dialect is greatly influenced by the Lampung dialect. Those who live in the North Kaur district have been influenced by the Besemah people.

Society and Culture

The Kaur depend primarily on rice cultivation for their livelihood. The area is also known for clove and pepper production. Other major crops include peanuts, coffee, coconut, resin, rubber, rattan, sweet potatoes, and fruit—especially banana, mango, pineapple, and many people’s favorite, durian (a large fruit with a spiky shell and a strong smell). Other means of livelihood include raising livestock, fishing and trading. Men work in the field while women take care of the household.

The Kaur live in zinc-roofed houses with access to electricity. One unique feature of Kaur houses is that they are all painted blue and white. Traditional woodburning stoves are commonly used for cooking, and each house typically has a well in the backyard. Chickens, ducks, and cows roam freely around the settlements.

Gotong royong (mutual co-operation), a traditional system of working together, is still a strong custom practiced by most Kaur. This custom is evident in the assistance they offer each other during harvesting time.

The Kaur are not allowed to marry someone from the same clan but may marry a Kaur person from another village. Weddings normally take place after the Rice Harvest Celebration. Generally, marriageable age is twenty for men and fifteen or sixteen for women. If the groom wants his bride to live with his family, he must pay a dowry to the bride’s family. If the groom goes to live with the bride’s family, her family is only obligated to give a token gift to the groom’s family.

The older generation had families with an average of thirteen children, but since the government sponsored family planning program began, families currently have only three children on average.

Beliefs

The Kaur people have been Sunni Syafi’i Muslims since the 17th century. Like other Malays they observe religious ceremonies with a communal meal (sedekah) to celebrate a birth, give thanks for a harvest, ask for rain, commemorate a death, and ward off evil spirits. Every village has one or more mosques. Children are usually educated in Islamic schools (madrasah).

Needs

Currently, the Kaur need better technology in order to increase agricultural production so they can produce enough food for their own consumption as well as for trade. Planting of mangos and durian needs to be increased to supplement income.