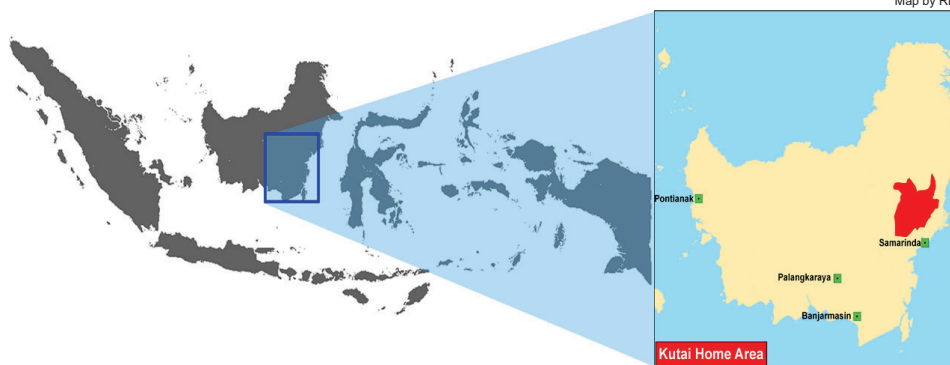


KUTAI



Kai Muller



Map by RD

Demography	Kutai Language	Status
Location: East Kalimantan	Bible: No	Believers: < 100 ⁽¹³⁴⁹⁾
Population: 230.000	Jesus Film: No	Engaged: Yes
Major Religion: Islam	Online Media: No	Indigenous Church: 0

Identity and Location

The main location of the Kutai people is in Tenggarong, the capital of the Kutai Regency, which is located on the banks of the Mahakam River, forty-five kilometers northwest of the city of Samarinda. Tenggarong is an old city with an interesting history. It is the former capital of the famous king, Mulawarman, and his Kutai kingdom, the oldest Hindu kingdom in Indonesia. Thus in this city you can find various historical and cultural sites such as the Tenggarong Palace. This building is now a museum that holds many Mulawarman relics of the Kingdom of Kutai Martadipura and Kutai Kartanegara.

The Kutai people live in several districts, namely Kembang Janggut, Kenohan, Muara Wis, Muara Kaman, Muara Muntai, Kota Bangun, Loa Kulu, Sebulu, and Kutai in the Kutai Kartanegara District as well as in Tenggarong and Tenggarong Seberang in the city of Tenggarong. Other groups of Kutai can be found in Muara Pahu, Jempang and Bongan in the West Kutai District. Throughout these areas, the Kutai live among Dayaks, Bugis and Jawa people.

Society and Culture

Kutai people make a living by farming, fishing and hunting. The Kutai people tend not to leave the region primarily because East Kalimantan is the richest province in Indonesia and their district of Kutai the richest district in Indonesia.

Some Kutai people in the interior still adhere to their traditional system of laws. They have several kinds of leaders: the village head who is responsible for their traditional ceremonies, the heads of security, and those heads who are in charge of preserving heirlooms as well as ancestral heritage. The traditional village heads that have government positions are referred to as high officials. Kutai is rich in traditional ceremonies. The

biggest ceremony is the Erau Party. This party celebrates the establishment of Tenggarong and lasts five days and five nights. Usually Dayak people come flocking from remote villages to perform various traditional dances such as pepati (a war dance), gamelan (a gong dance) as well as many others. The most important part of the celebration is the ceremony when they throw a dragon doll into the Mahakam River to symbolize their request for blessings from their ancestors in the hopes that they will give wealth and prosperity to the Kutai people. In the past, the Kutai recognized the social classes of nobles, commoners and slaves. The nobility was commonly called Kramas, Mas, Aji, Raden or Pangeran (prince) Datu. However, honor is no longer given based on noble titles, but rather based on education or wealth.

Beliefs

The Kutai people are Muslims. However, in everyday life they still worship supernatural spirits. They revere many sacred heirlooms left from the Kutai kingdom. These heirlooms include a gold crown with many jewels, uncal necklaces, statues of Vishnu, and two necklaces with images of the Garuda (a legendary bird-like creature from Buddhist and Hindu mythology). The core of the Kutai's belief is to seek protection from Sanghyang (an evil spirit) by way of mantras that give them power to subdue and control both good and evil spirits.

Needs

Since the roads are still quite poor, the Kutai need better transportation infrastructure so that they can market their commodities more quickly. At present, many still rely on sea and river transportation that is quite slow and inconsistent. Most Kutai people do not have a good livelihood due to income imbalances.

(E-RD)