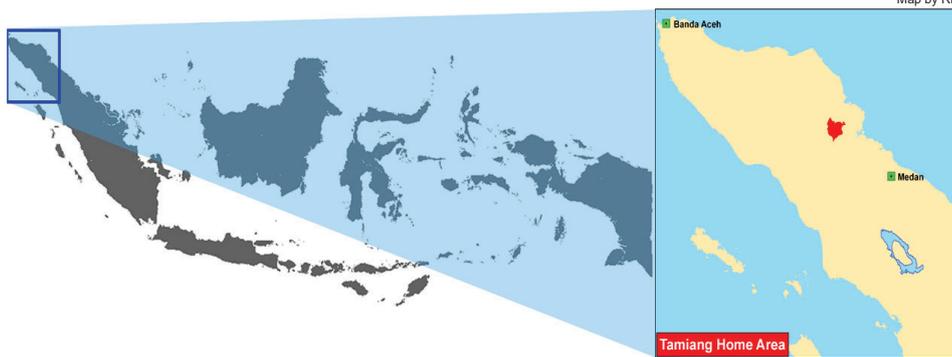


TAMIANG



Demography	Tamiang Language	Status
Location: Aceh Population: 44.000 Major Religion: Islam	Bible: Yes (Malay) Jesus Film: No Online Media: No	Believers: 0 Engaged: Yes Indigenous Church: 0

Identity and Location

The Tamiang live in the southeast part of East Aceh Regency in the province of Aceh. Previously this area was the Tamiang administrative district with a very large area of 7,760 square kilometers. Now that district has been divided into six districts: Kuala Simpang, Bendahara, Karangbaru, Seuruway, Kejuruanmuda, and Tamiang Hulu.

The Tamiang believe that their ancestors were descended from the Riau Malay. The Tamiang dialect is lexically 87% similar to the nearby Riau Malay language.

Society and Culture

The main source of income for the Tamiang people is rice, which they grow in both irrigated and non-irrigated fields. Other crops planted by the Tamiang are corn, cassava, tomatoes, chili peppers, and eggplant. They also grow fruits such as oranges, mangoes, durian, and langsung. Those who live on the coast fish and make charcoal from mangrove trees. Some have become plantation workers and traders.

The Tamiang leaders still hold to the vow "a father's love is faithful to death."

The Tamiang rarely move away from the area because their agricultural land is vast and fertile enough to support them. At the beginning of the twentieth century this area received many migrants from other areas because of the opening of rubber and palm oil plantations, as well as oil wells.

The Tamiang live by The Law of the Four Tribes. Their area was settled by four founding fathers called datuk.

The word datuk comes from the word ndatu which means the first person to open a new area for settlement. Future settlers were then placed under the authority of the existing datuk. Eventually the four datuk united their areas and chose a king as leader. This decision was established and sealed with a covenant called The Message of the Elder. The names of the four datuk were Datuk Imam Balai, Datuk Penghulu, Datuk Hakim, and Datuk Setia Maha Raja.

The king lived by a proverb: "A fair king will be worshipped, but a cruel king will be dethroned." In upholding that role, Tamiang leaders still hold to the vow "a father's love is faithful to death." Traditional law is effectively carried out with the philosophy: "Ancestral customs are followed, but religious law is respected; customs are shaped, but religious norms are regulated."

Beliefs

The Tamiang people are followers of Islam, which has penetrated various aspects of their lives. In spite of this, many still carry out traditional religious rituals. These include ceremonies for the successful planting of rice, harvesting of rice, and protection from natural disasters.

Needs

The primary need of the Tamiang is better farming and plantation methods to increase their income. Educational and public health facilities are also much needed to increase their welfare, because the Tamiang are often unable to compete economically with migrants from other areas.