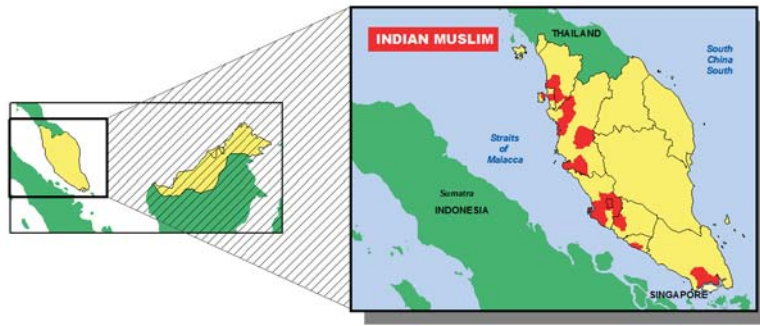


INDIAN MUSLIM



Population	Major Religion	Language
100,000	Islam	Bahasa Malaysia

Who are the Indian Muslim?

Indian Muslim traders frequently visited Malaysia as early as the 15th century and began migrating to Malaysia in the late 19th century. Though a small number came as indentured laborers, the majority came to start businesses taking advantage of the large migration of Indian laborers who presented a ready market for goods from India. The growth of Penang and Singapore attracted many Indian Muslims from South India (southern Tamil Nadu and central Kerala) and North India (Parsees, Sindhi, Marwaris, and Gujeratis). Their religion enabled them to gain easier access into the Malay settlements to establish their business. It was the beginning of a long alliance between the Indian Muslims and the Malay community, which has consequently influenced their way of life. They came to be known as “Mamak” among the local people and the term is frequently used to refer to them today. Although the term has no derogatory meaning, many of the Indian Muslims prefer to be called “Indian Muslim” rather than “Mamak.”

What are their lives like?

Today, there are roughly a hundred thousand Indian Muslims, the majority of which are Tamil. Among the Urdu people group, Muslims are the majority but among the other Indian people groups in Malaysia they are only a small minority. For the Indian Muslims, Islamic faith rather than ethnic heritage is the most important factor in their identity. However, there are distinctions between the various people groups. For example, the Muslims of Tamil origin have not integrated completely with the Malay community and have a distinct culture.

On the other hand, the Malayali Muslims have integrated substantially with the Malay community and adapted much more to Malay culture. Indian

Muslims observe both Malay and Indian Muslim traditions. They have maintained their unique type of food which is called “mamak”. Many still speak their mother tongue, though they are well versed in Malay. Some mosques even share their message in Tamil. Indian Muslim families are generally very close knit, and remain Community driven.

What do they believe?

Islam means submission. Those who submit are called Muslim. There are five pillars for all Muslims adhere worldwide: 1) There is no God but *Allah*, and Mohammad is his prophet. 2) Praying five times daily, kneeling in the direction of Mecca (the holy city). 3) Giving of alms (a share of each Muslim’s income is given to support the mosque and the poor). 4) Fasting throughout Ramadan (the ninth month of the Muslim calendar). 5) Haj (every believer who is able to do so must go on a pilgrimage to Mecca). Islam teaches absolute monotheism and Mohammed’s primacy as *Allah*’s last Prophet on earth. Islam stresses the brotherhood of believers, non-difference of religion and secular life, obedience to God’s Law, abstinence from alcohol, and of good works.

What are their needs?

The Indian Muslims of Malaysia are entitled to many of the benefits that are given to the majority of the Malay Muslims. However, the Malay Muslim, though affiliated by religion, do not view them as equals because they are of different race while the Hindu Indian majorities do not view them as true Indians due to their difference in religion. Pray that local believers will become a blessing to these people by being a friend to them despite religious and racial barriers. Pray that believers will relate and respond to all the needs of Indian Muslims.