

Muslim Nat

Introduction / History:

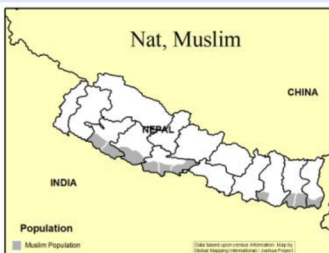
The Nat or Nut peoples name is derived from the Sanskrit word *nata* which means "dancer". They are a traditional occupational caste known for dancing and singing. The Nat have a generally lower caste status or in some states of India they are a Scheduled Caste. The Nat Muslim can be found in north India by the names Nar, Naitak or Natak, though a large majority of over 500,000 Nat are Hindus. About 25% of Nat are Muslims.

What is their life like?

As traditional dancers and acrobats that are often semi-nomadic, the Nat Muslims can still be found in acrobatic events and as singers, dancers or unskilled labourers. Men and women are known to sing and play the flute or *dholak*. Tattooing is common for women especially on the forehead. The Nat Muslims of Nepal speak Bhojpuri and Nepali. The Nat follow Sunni Muslim traditions and are non-vegetarian. They can be given in child marriages and nuclear families can be more common than extended families among them. The Nat Muslims tend to have a very low literacy rate.

Ministry Needs:

It is possible that the Nat Muslim in the lower castes would be open to the Gospel but very few have ever tried and even fewer have worked with the Nat Muslim of Nepal! Small business development and micro loans could likely be a big encouragement to this entrepreneurial people group.



Population:

Nepal : 800

Total : 152,000

Language: Bhojpuri,

Nepali, Urdu & Maithili

Believers: 0