

The Bengkulu of Indonesia

The Bengkulu people live in the city of Bengkulu, the capital of the province of Bengkulu in the southwestern portion of the island of Sumatera. More of the Bengkulu people live in the city than in villages.

The Bengkulu people's income is based primarily on fishing. Additionally, they also work as shopkeepers, ship builders, mechanics, building contractors, and government employees as well as nearly every other urban profession.

Society is led by a council which is comprised of one respected leader (ninik mamak) from each extended family. Another influential group is called the menengkalak, which is made up of the clan's intellectuals, wealthy individuals and high-ranking government officials. If there is conflict, they try to resolve it by seeking consensus through discussion.

Typically, they live in painted wooden houses raised on stilts that have distinctive Bengkulu ornamentation. The staircase is in the front, and the vacant space under the house is usually enclosed.

The majority of the Bengkulu people are Muslims. However, they still hold certain traditional ceremonies according to their ancient beliefs. These animistic ceremonies are focused on seeking protection through magic, by either appeasing or controlling good and bad spirits. They have a traditional harvest festival called Tabot, which is held on the 1st through the 10th of Muharam (Islamic month) every year. This festival is held to honor the Sea Dragon so that their fisherman will not be harmed while at sea.

Even though the Bengkulu people's economic situation is better than many in Sumatera, they still need better technology and increased investment to better manage their fishing and boat making. Malaria is still a great problem as well. They also need better knowledge of how to build and maintain their homes so that they can endure the harsh coastal storms.

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Image
 Unavailable

Primary Religion:

Islam

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0.0005%

Churches:

0

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

Population (date):



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Item Name	Item Note
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Have They Heard The Gospel?

Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0.0005%
Number Of Churches	0

Profile Summary

Countries Where People Group Lives

Country Name	Indonesia
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Group Description

Society & Culture

Family Structures

The Bengkulu lineage of descent is bilateral (traced through both parents). The most important family unit is the extended family (rumah tangga sebunggan). This unit consists of the parents and all of their children's families. Brothers are called meghanai and sisters are called kelewai. Members of the extended family are responsible for the activities of the family, which makes them sepangka (bound together). Those bound by marriage relationships are tiang garang.

Art Forms

Their arts also are very similar to those found among other Malays. For instance, they perform various Malay art forms, such as Dendang Malay singing, Randai dance, Tari Payung (Umbrella Dance), Tari Lilin (Candle Dance), Tari Piring (Plate Dance), and Tari Saputangan (Handkerchief Dance).

History Of People Group

The Bengkulu people are descended from the union of multiple peoples who have migrated to the area, including the Malay, Minangkabau, Aceh, Bugis, Banten and Jawa (Java) peoples. The Bengkulu language is a branch of the Melayu (Malay) language cluster. Currently, newcomers from other Indonesian people groups live among them, such as the Minangkabau, Bugis and Jawa.

Group Description