



## PROJECT PROFILE

# Priau

### THE PEOPLE

The Priau people clear the forest for houses and the cultivation of corn, millet, peanuts and cotton. They supplement this with hunting. Some people engage in woodcutting and others migrate to the towns to get jobs in construction. Their staple food is thick flat bread made of corn flour.

The people live in small houses with space set aside for their cattle. Every house has a place to wash utensils and a place to bathe. The walls are made of split bamboo woven together and roofs are tiled. The people wear traditional clothing. The men wear white caps and the women wear ornaments made of silver.

The Priau people are a homogenous group and do not make alliances with other groups. When they marry, the groom pays a bride price. The local priest conducts the wedding, and the men and women dance all night. Divorce is common and the spouse who asks for the divorce, whether husband or wife, must pay compensation.

### THE BACKGROUND

The Priau people are traditionally animistic spirit worshippers although their religion is heavily influenced by the national religion and they celebrate all the feast days of that religion. The local shaman, an important man, is called upon when someone gets sick. He demands a coconut, chicken or goat as an offering to the spirits of the ancestors of the sick person, since they're thought to be the cause of the sickness. Though some people are losing faith in this system, they still sacrifice to the gods and goddesses out of fear.

Swedish and Norwegian missionaries brought the Gospel to the area around 75 years ago. This has resulted in several churches that struggled without a copy of the Bible they could understand. Since then the country has become hostile to missionary activity. An indigenous mission sent workers to the area in 1998. As they were learning the language they shared the Gospel with people. God has performed miracles and wonders, including healing a dumb and paralyzed girl. Today about 1,500 Priau believers worship in several congregations. They face opposition and other social problems at the hands of neighbors and relatives; nevertheless they remain strong in their faith.



*For security reasons, pseudonyms have been used for the language name and names of individuals.*

- **Location:** South Asia
- **Number of Speakers:** 301,000  
**Project Goal:** New Testament
- **Year Project Began:** 2002
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2013



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### THE NEED

There are small churches in about 10 Priau villages, most of them gathering weekly for meetings. The Word of God is preached in the Priau language, but public Scripture reading is done in the national language. Few people are literate and many women do not even use the national language, so little benefit is gained from the public Scripture readings. When the project is completed, the Priau will be able to read and understand the New Testament in their worship meetings and in private. Then the Word itself will definitely speak to the hearts of Christians and unbelievers alike.

### THE PERSONNEL

Liamu (M.S. in Mathematics) and wife Naj (B.A. in Sociology) come from a different language and culture within South Asia. They are dedicated and well qualified for the task. Nage, a new Priau believer, has joined them as a language helper.

Translators Liamu and Naj Lamin began interacting with the people in 1998. Over time they are learning the language and local culture, a foundational step in any translation project. As part of this, Liamu collected words and stories to study the sound system and grammar of the Priau language.

### THE PLAN

The goal of the project is the publication of the New Testament in the Priau. The team's ultimate desire is that many will become followers of Christ through the project. The translation team worked through phonological and grammatical analysis as they learned the culture in preparation for translation.

The literacy rate remains very low among the Priau people, and outsiders often exploit them because of their inability to read and write. Their poor literacy also leads to poor hygienic habits and resulting illness. Learning to read will help improve both the physical and spiritual life of the Priau people, and is an important part of the translation project.

### JOINING THE TEAM

The Priau translators cannot complete their goals without your financial investment and prayer. Your financial investment makes translation possible, providing training, adequate computer equipment, translation supplies and living expenses for the translators' family. Your prayer helps translators and their families face problems like sickness, conflict and spiritual opposition that can threaten their work.

Call The Seed Company toll-free at 1-877-593-7333 or visit [www.theseedcompany.org/projects](http://www.theseedcompany.org/projects) to commit to invest and pray for the Priau team.