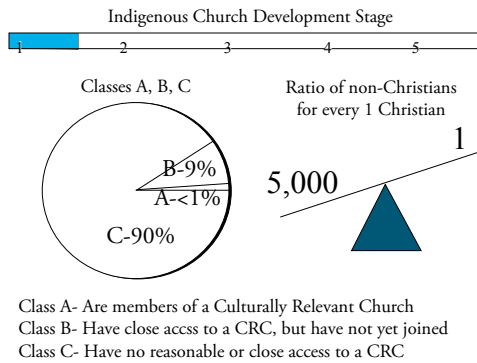


Marathi Muslims



Quick Facts

Population: 5,000,000
Location: Maharashtra
Language: Marathi
Religion: Sunni Islam
Believers: 0.02%
Scriptures: NT, OT
Ministry Tools: JRGT
Church Status: 1
Mission Status: 0
MBB Churches: 100
Organizations: 0
MS Subgroups: 50+



Identity: The Marathi Muslims are a cluster of peoples which speak Marathi as their mother tongue. Their origins are diverse, from the earliest 7th century Egyptian immigrants, to the mass conversions of upper caste Hindus during the 12th century Moghul invasion, to South Indian Muslim professional castes who came to serve during periods of Muslim imperial rule.

Lifestyle: Marathi Muslim society is stratified with over 50 occupational castes. Such communities include groups like the Takaras (stone carvers), the Misgaras (copper and brass smiths), and the Garudi (musicians). A few of the trading communities are well-off, such as the Bohras and Khojas. Most, however, are poor artisan communities, many of which are abandoning their traditional occupations for work in factories.

Customs: Similar to the Hindu caste system, Muslim castes are divided into

two major groups, those who are “forward castes” and those who are “backward castes.” The term backward caste is not meant to be pejorative, but is designed to help poorer communities by reserving seats in government for them, ensuring educational opportunities, and preventing employment discrimination.

Religion: Most Marathi speaking Muslims converted around the 12th century. In some areas, many high caste groups (such as Brahmins and Marathas) converted in order to protect their property and social privileges in the wake of the Moghul invasion. For the most part, however, conversions came from the lower strata of Hindu society. Though tensions between Hindus and Muslims grew tense following Indian independence, in the past, and even still today, the two groups freely honor one another’s saints, deities and holy days.

Christian Outreach: There is very little, if any ongoing, cross-cultural missionary

work among the Marathi Muslims. However, a recent breakthrough led by several indigenous Marathi Muslim background believers has resulted in around 100 house fellowships being established among both high and low castes in Mumbai.

How to Pray:

☞ Pray for the immediate deployment of dozens of missionary teams to fully engage the 50+ Marathi Muslim peoples. Pray for effective partnership between local ministries in Maharashtra, and churches around the world that would ensure the success of these missionary teams.

☞ There are 150 indigenous mission agencies working in Maharashtra, mostly among tribal peoples and dalits who tend to be more responsive. Thus ministry among them is more likely to be funded by donors seeking dramatic results. Pray for vision, grace and sufficient funding to be given to those whom God has called to reach the more difficult, and less responsive Muslim communities.

☞ Pray that whole communities of Marathi Muslim caste groups might become followers of Jesus, and that their leaders might be favorable to the gospel.

Every year 45,000 Marathi Muslims die without Christ.