

QUICK FACTS

People Name: Awan

People Cluster: Punjabi

Language: Urdu

Primary Religion: Islam

Population: 618,000

PRAYER POINTS

Ask the Lord for laborers to work among the Awan of India.

Pray that more information would be learned about the Awan.

WAY TO HELP

There is a need for training in basic healthcare among many of the peoples in Northern India. Those who could train others in community health or field dentistry could be very helpful.

CONTACT

FRONTIERS

(800) 462-8436
www.frontiers.org

ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The Awan are a group of people who number around 600,000 in India. The name Awan is of Arabic origin and means "assistant" or "helper;" this somewhat supports the traditional claim of the Awans concerning their origins. The majority of Awans subscribe to the belief that they are the descendants of the fourth Caliph Ali (though the bulk of those belonging to the tribe are not Shias). Because of this, a number adopt the title Alvi. Not much information is known about the Awan.

The majority of Awans maintain (and have always maintained) the claim that they are descended from an individual named Qutb Shah, a general in the army of Mahmud of Ghazni, who himself was a descendant of Mohammad's cousin and son-in-law, Ali (but by a wife other than Mohammed's daughter, Fatima). It is said that Qutb Shah and four of his sons accompanied and assisted Mahmud in his early eleventh century conquests of what today forms parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Northern India. It is claimed that in recognition of their services and valor, Mahmud bestowed upon Qutb Shah and his sons the title of Awan, meaning "helper."



The majority of Awans are found in Pakistan, with large populations in other countries as well. Tracts in regions such as Jhelum and Mianwali are so heavily populated by Awans that they are referred to as "Awankari." Though these areas are their ancestral homelands and many own farms and other property there, many Awans live in the major cities of Pakistan such as Lahore (where a section of the Awan tribe has established a settlement, aptly named Awan Town), Islamabad, and Karachi.