

# KOLAI OF PAKISTAN

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## QUICK FACTS

People Name: Kolai

People Cluster: Kashmiri

Language: Shina, Kohistani

Trade Language: Urdu

Primary Religion: Islam

Population: 410,000

## PRAYER POINTS

Pray for open doors among the Kolai people.

Pray for cooperation between agencies wanting to work among these tribes.

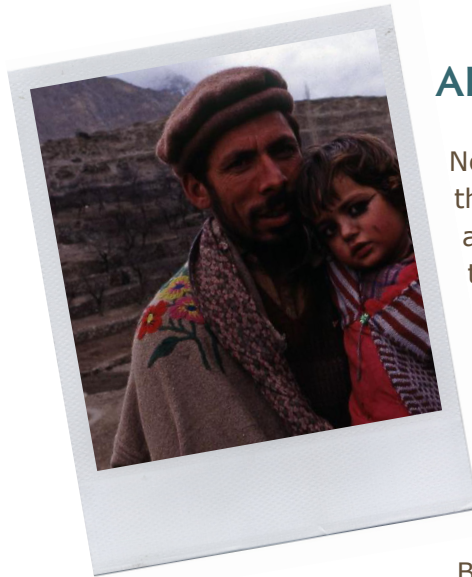
Pray that God will raise up linguists to translate the Word of God into each of the tribal languages.

Take authority over the spiritual principalities and powers that are keeping these tribes bound.

Ask God to send medical and humanitarian aid workers to minister to the northern tribes.

Pray that strong local churches will be planted among the Kolai.

Pray that more specific information might be known about these people so that the church can pray more effectively.



## ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Northern Pakistan, bordered by China to the north, Afghanistan to the northwest, and India to the east, is said to contain the most breathtaking sights in Pakistan. It is there, nestled between five of the world's highest mountain peaks, that the northern tribes can be found. They are the original inhabitants of the area. The Kolai here number over 400,000.

The northern tribes include the Badeshi, Burushas, Kolai, Punjabi Pahari, Shina, Shumashti, and Kho. Before the conquest of the Pushtun, their ancestors occupied Dir, Swat, and other areas of northern Pakistan. The British gained control of the region around 1895 but left in 1947 when Pakistan became an independent nation. The Pushtun have dominated the various ethnic groups of this region for years, either buying their land or forcing them out with violence.

The communities of the northern areas are located in the narrow valleys formed by the tributaries of the Indus, where irrigation is possible. Since the Indus River flows through a steep rocky gorge, it is useless for irrigation. The people here are primarily farmers and shepherds. Grain is planted on terraced fields and bulls are used for plowing.

In the remaining area, which is very dry and irrigated by glacial runoff, they raise barley, wheat, maize, millet, and rice, supplemented by potatoes and a variety of other vegetables. Since they can only grow one annual crop, the people rely on the "transhumant" herding of their dairy goats and cattle.

This means that they transfer their livestock from one grazing ground to another with the changing of seasons. During the summer months, they leave their permanent villages and drive the cattle, goats, and sheep to alpine pastures.



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Mountain ranges and political borders tend to isolate the ethnic groups that live in the northern areas. Most settlements exist as small independent communities, located at altitudes between 2,000 and 14,000 feet. Families usually have houses in four or five different locations at the higher altitudes. Only in the winter do they live together in their compact villages, which lie along the rivers.

Prior to the twentieth century, the northern areas of Pakistan were semi-independent. They were under various local rulers such as the Mehtars of Chitral, the Wali of Swat, and the Mir of Hunza. Today, these communities are under Pakistani administration, governed by a federally appointed district commissioner.

Ever since the abolition of the Mehtars and other local rulers, the northern tribes have undergone many social and cultural changes. Although an extensive road building project is providing them with greater access to the mainstream of Pakistani society, it is also encouraging the influx of Pushtun from farther south. Among the smaller ethnic groups, there is a growing resentment toward the Pushtun, who dominate bureaucracy in the district government.

Centuries ago, the area of northern Pakistan was primarily Buddhist. Later, Buddhism was replaced by Hinduism. However, around 1000 A.D., the Islamic faith penetrated the region. Today, the vast majority of the people are Sunni (orthodox) Muslim.

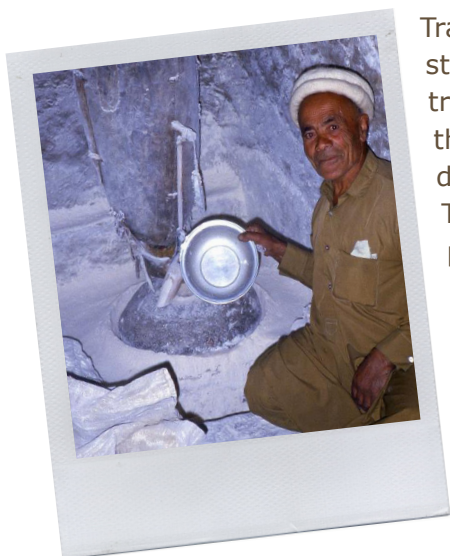


## WAYS TO HELP

The northern tribes have many health problems due to poor water quality and poor nutrition. Drinkable water, sewage disposal, and drainage facilities are available for less than 8% of the population. People with water sanitation abilities or sewage/drainage experience could provide incredible help and relief to the Kolai people.

Dentists and doctors are desperately needed among these groups.

Would you be willing to be among the FIRST to engage these people with the hope of the Gospel? Would you be willing to lead a team? Contact us today to find out more - we need people to visit the Kolai of Pakistan and find other great ways to bring new teams to live among them for the sake of the Kingdom.



Traces of traditional, pre-Islamic beliefs still linger in a few areas. Some of the tribes practice shamanism. They believe that there is an unseen world of gods, demons, fairies, and ancestral spirits. They depend on shamans (priests or priestesses) to cure the sick by magic, communicate with the gods, and control events.

## CONTACT

### FRONTIERS

(800) 462-8436  
[www.frontiers.org](http://www.frontiers.org)