

# Noorbasha in India



Photo: Masthan Vali



*"Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."*

<b>People Name</b>	Noorbasha
<b>Country</b>	India
<b>Status</b>	Unengaged Unreached
<b>Population</b>	673,000
<b>Language</b>	Telugu
<b>Religion</b>	Islam
<b>Written Scripture</b>	Yes
<b>Oral Scripture</b>	Yes
<b>Jesus Film</b>	Yes
<b>Gospel Recordings</b>	Yes
<b>Christ Followers</b>	No
<b>Churches</b>	No
<b>Workers Needed</b>	13
<b>Workers Reported</b>	0

## INTRODUCTION / HISTORY

The Noorbasha or Dudekula are a numerically a small community. They are known by other names such as "Pinjari", "Bhai", "Panjakuttai", and "Panjari". The other synonyms recorded by Thurston (1909) are "Ladaf" and "Nurbash". All these names are recorded at the time of census taking exercises and are found to be the corrupted forms of "naddaf" (a cotton-dresser) and "nur-baf" (weaver). In Telugu, the state language of Andhra Pradesh, "dude" means cotton and "ekuta" means cleaning. Hence they are locally called the Dudekula, the cotton cleaners and mattress makers.

## WHAT ARE THEIR LIVES LIKE?

Persons belong to a lineage are considered as brothers and sisters ("dayadulu") and marriage alliances among them are not made. They marry cross cousins: father's sister's daughters (FSD) and mother's brother's daughters (MBD). As a result they are looked down upon by other Muslims. To overcome this, now they are adopting the customs and manners of the more Islamized groups.

## WHAT ARE THEIR BELIEFS?

The Dudekulas are Muslims by religion and profess the folk version of Islam. As a rule they do not have family, clan, village deities, the way the Hindus have and pray

in the name of one god Allah. But they are affiliated to the Muslim saints (pirs) of the nearby dargah. To officiate over their marriage and death rituals a clergy (hazarat) from the Syed Muslim sect is engaged. The weekly congregations meet on Fridays and are led by the Hazarat. The sermon (bayan) is conducted in Urdu or Arabic and later it is translated into the local language Telugu, since the Dudekula do not understand the Urdu or Arabic. They regularly visit the Muslim shrines (dargahs) on pilgrimage. They take a pilgrimage to take vows or pay their offerings. When they are there they offer the ritual of reciting the first page of the Quran in the name of the saint and also offer food to the poor.

## WHAT ARE THEIR NEEDS?

Dudekula were originally Hindu who converted to Islam a few generations ago. Till a few years ago they vacillated between the two religious traditions. Of late they have come under total Islamic ritual, tradition, customs and manners. Because of their poverty and also the un-Islamic customs they practiced, they had a low status. By adopting Islamic customs now they are drawing a better status. The urge to claim higher status has turned the younger generation to learn Urdu and Arabic. Their women have begun observing seclusion rules, dress code and have dropped the Hindu custom of wearing

"kumkum" on their forehead. Though quite a few of their rituals were Hindu, they are now renaming them with Urdu terms but still observe them

## PRAYER POINTS

- \* Pray urgently (deomai) for the Lord to thrust out (ekballo) workers to this people group. (Mt 9:37-38, Lk 10:2 and Jn 4:35)
- \* Pray for the Holy Spirit to equip, empower, and guide these laborers to bear fruit through disciple-making and church-planting movements within this people group. (Mt 18:8, Mk 4:8, Jn 15:8)
- \* Ask the Holy Spirit to multiply these movements until there is no place left in this people group where Christ is not preached or known. (Mt 24:14, Mt 28:18-20, Acts 19:10, Rom 15:23)
- \* Ask that these movements transform this people group's culture to fully glorify God and represent His Kingdom on earth. (Mt 6:9-10, Rom 12:2, 2 Cor 3:18)
- \* Pray for every opposing spirit to give way to the liberating, life-giving gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the coming King. (James 4:7, 2 Cor 10:4-5, 1 Cor 15:58, Mt 18:18)

## SOURCES

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