

## The Phu Tai of Thailand

The harrowing hysterical screams and wails of a girl came out from the house amidst the sounds of a woman chanting loudly mixed with sporadic male voices shouting. Both anxious and curious neighbours gathered outside the house under the moonlit night, talking in hushed voices. “Oh Mother, what’s wrong with Phim?” asked Kaew, shivering with fear. “Seems she saw an evil spirit fly in through the window,” answered her mother. “The village *moi yau* sorceress is now trying to heal her of her hysteria and shock. Phim’s father and brothers are helping to pin her down.” She turned and gave an exclamation. “Good heavens, your younger siblings have woken up and come outside as well! Kaew, get them inside our house now! It is not good for children to hang around when such things happen.”

The 476,000 **Phu Tai** are an ethnic minority living in villages concentrated in Renu Nakhon District in northeast Thailand’s Nakhon Phanom Province. Originally from neighbouring Laos, they are mostly farmers with some engaged in trading or working as civil servants. Their traditional costumes reflect their women’s skills in weaving and embroidery.

They are predominantly Theravada Buddhists. Much of their religious practices is animistic in nature. Villages normally have female sorceresses called *moi yau* who possess magical powers to cure the sick. Few have heard the Gospel. Only a few (0.6%) are Christian.

- Pray for the **Phu Tai** to be delivered from their spiritual darkness.
- Pray that God’s power may be revealed to the **Phu Tai**’s village heads, Buddhist monks and *moi yau* sorceresses.
- Pray for more workers to be raised to reach and disciple the **Phu Tai**.
- Pray for the **Phu Tai** believers to grow in spiritual maturity and also in their numbers.

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This is a series of useful prayer profile compilations to pray for people groups collated from various online sources. Please click on the links below for more info:  
<https://joshuaproject.net/>, <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>,  
<http://asiaharvest.org/people-group-profiles/>