

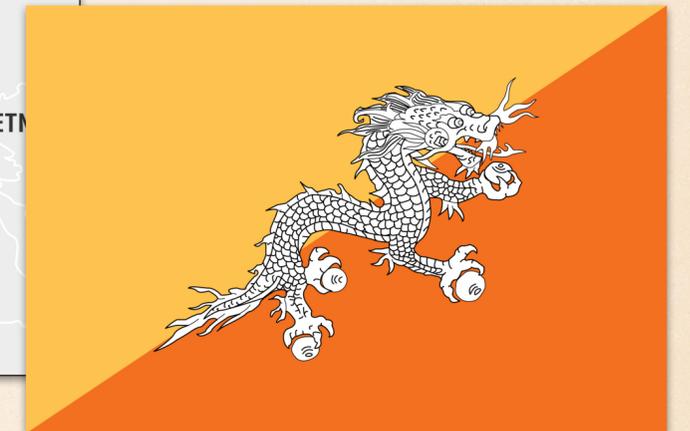
# BHUTAN



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- ❖ Continent: Asia
- ❖ Population: 758,288
- ❖ Religion:
  - ❖ Buddhist 74.56%
  - ❖ Hindu 22.43%
  - ❖ Christian 2.11%

- ❖ Literacy Rate: 64.9%
- ❖ Unreached: 93.3%



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Isolated by the Himalayas, refined by centuries of etiquette, and shaped by both the cultural and spiritual influences of Buddhism, Bhutan remains a mountainous, untouched jewel of southern Asia. Also known as the "Land of the Thunder Dragon," this remote nation was relatively isolated until the 1960's. As trade began to form with neighboring India, Bhutan experienced social and political modernization by developing ties with other nations, constructing paved roads, abolishing slavery, and ending the caste system.

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However, discrimination towards other ethnic groups, especially the Nepalese, has managed to remain. Religions, aside from Buddhism, are not recognized. Those who practice other faiths can lose their citizenship and government benefits, including free education, health care, and even access to electricity and water. In spite of newly built roads, unemployment is still rampant due to lack of economic development, and though more children are attending school, less than fifty percent of Bhutanese attend regularly. Due to the influx of Hindu Nepalese refugees, the Bhutanese government has resorted to restricting immigration laws, deepening feelings of racism and bitterness between the two ethnic groups and resulting in violence and protests.

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Though the population of Bhutan is nearly one million, Christians only number in the hundreds. Churches are forbidden in all but very rare circumstances with most believers meeting in private homes to worship in secret. Bhutan is one of the least evangelized nations, and the Christians within its borders are subject to prejudice, harassment, and even physical violence. Pray that the church will flourish under this persecution, will share with Bhutan the truth of salvation through Jesus Christ, and will be empowered through His strength to forgive and accept the Nepalese people.

# PRAYER POINTS

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“IF YOU ASK ME ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT.” JOHN 14:14

- ❖ Pray for Bhutan to once again open its doors to a vibrant Christian witness.
- ❖ Pray for Christians to stand firm and multiply despite harsh treatment and harassment.
- ❖ Pray for human rights abuses against the Nepali Bhutanese to be replaced by love and compassion in the name of Christ.