

## The Mpi of Thailand

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The Mpi people live in just two villages in northern Thailand - Ban Dong in Phrae Province, and Ban Sakoen in Nan Province - although they say they originally came from Yunnan Province in China. The Mpi fled China 250-300 years ago and went to Laos. They were captured in a war soon after in Laos and brought to Thailand, and have lived there ever since. There are approximately 1,500 Mpi people, with perhaps only 900 of them still using the Mpi language. Ban Dong is on a plain, just outside a provincial capital while Ban Sakoen is in the mountains. The Mpi people dress and act just like the Northern Thai people who they live among, and they speak Northern Thai fluently. The younger generations also speak Central Thai which they learn in school. In a generation or two, Mpi might no longer be spoken by anyone. There are still quite a few speakers of Mpi in Ban Dong but very few in Ban Sakoen. Even in Ban Dong, many of the children do not speak Mpi, although some still can understand it when they hear it. The Mpi are mainly rice farmers, but many also work in the city and some hold community leadership positions beyond their own village. The Mpi are all Buddhists. There is no church in either Mpi village and there are currently no Christian workers specifically targeting the Mpi people. In effect, this means that they are grouped together with the Northern Thai as far as Christian outreach is concerned. Yet they do have a distinct identity as Mpi people.

**Primary Religion:**

Buddhism

**Disciples (Matt 28.19):**

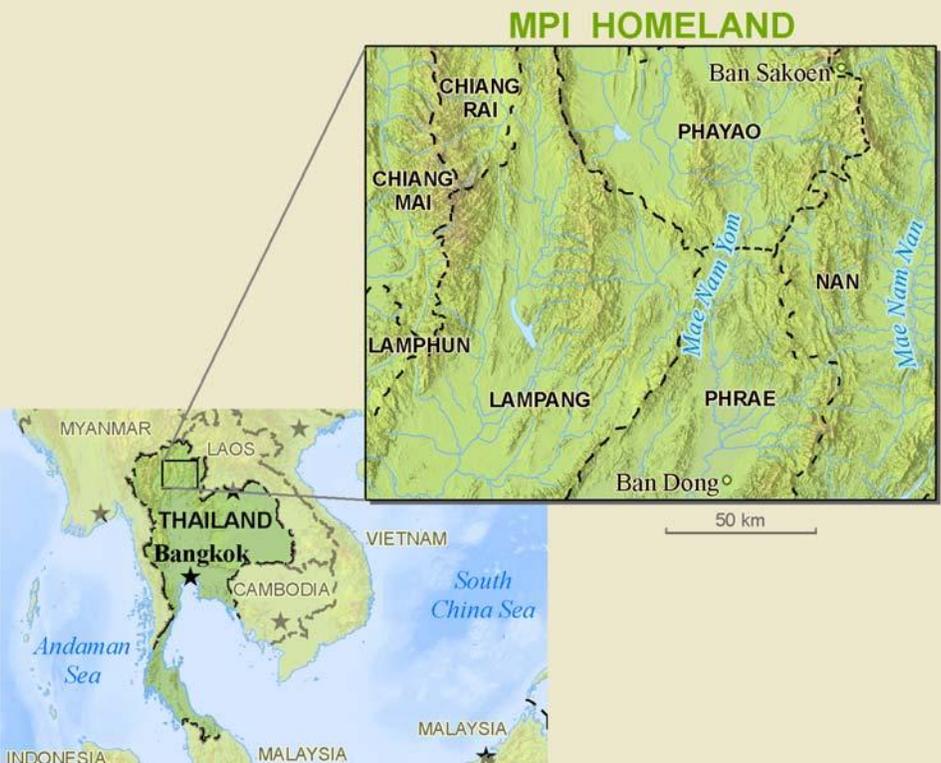
**Churches:**

**Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):**

None

**Population (date):**

900 (2005)



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Item Name	Item Note	
<b>Have They Heard The Gospel?</b>		<b>Profile Summary</b>
Comment (Call Themselves Christian)	There are no known Christians.	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	0%	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	100%	
Number Of Pastors	0	
Number Of Missionaries Working	0	
Number Of Communities	There are two communities.	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No. A language survey was completed in 2005 concluded that there is no need for translation due to language shift to Thai. There could be a need for a more limited kind of project involving recordings or story-telling as there are still many who speak the language. However the younger generation generally does not use Mpi or has only a passive understanding of it.	
<b>Population All Countries</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
World Population For This People	900	
World Population (Date)	2005	
<b>Countries Where People Group Lives</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Country Name	Thailand	
<b>Geography &amp; Environment</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Location	Ban Dong is on a plain, just outside a provincial capital. Ban Sakoen is in the mountains. The Mpi people dress and act just like the Northern Thai people. They are shifting from Mpi to Northern Thai and Central Thai. This is a dying language. There are still quite a few speakers of Mpi in Ban Dong but very few in Ban Sakoen. Even in Ban Dong, many of the children do not speak Mpi. Some still can understand Mpi, however. These are the only two villages in Thailand. There might be a village in China. They are now basically Northern Thai people who have their own language that is being spoken less and less as time goes on. Education in the Thai language is easily available and so the children learn to speak, read and write Thai. Yet the Mpi are proud of their heritage and are sad that their language is dying out.	
Map Features	Ban Dong: A village just east of the provincial capital of Phrae Province, Thailand. -- 18 07' 49" N -- 100 11' 54" E -- Approximate lat and long from eyeballing it on a map on the computer (Map Magic 2005-6 Thailand, by Think Net. -- 2005. Ban Sakoen -- A village on the boundary of Phayao and Nan Provinces, Thailand. It is in Nan Province, just east of the boundary, on highway 1148 -- 19 21' 30" N -- 100 32' 22" E -- Approximate lat and long from eyeballing it on a map on the computer (Map Magic 2005-6 Thailand, by Think Net. -- 2005.	
<b>Society &amp; Culture</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Identification With National Culture	Integrated	
History Of People Group	The Mpi fled China 250-300 years ago and went to Laos. They were captured soon after in Laos and brought to Thailand. They were brought to Ban Sakoen to mine in a cave. The cave is still there and is now the site of a National Park (Tham Sakoen National Park). A few families were also taken to Ban Dong to take care of the King's animals. Later, when the King had to flee to Laos, the Mpi were left behind and became free. They still live in the two villages where they were brought to to this day.	
<b>Education</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Primary Schools	2	
Comment (Primary Schools)	There is a primary school in each of the two villages.	
Language Of Instruction Early Years	Thai	
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	Thai	
Language Of Instruction Later Years	Thai	
Language Of Textbooks Later Years	Thai	
Comment (Language Of Instruction)	In Ban Sakoen, there is a teacher who teaches the children some Mpi language, but it does not seem to be enough to maintain the language since many of these students' parents do not speak Mpi.	

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### Item Name

Comment (Education)

### Item Note

There is a secondary school very close to Ban Dong. Ban Sakoen students must go to other towns to find a secondary school.