

Pray for the *Mahisyadas* of India

The Mahisyadas of India live throughout the state of West Bengal and the surrounding areas. They are ethnic Bengalis. They are a landowning caste and their traditional occupation is agriculture. Their main crops are rice and millet. The vast majority of Mahisyadas are Hindu. Lakshmi, Dharmarah, Manasa, and Shiva are the most popularly worshipped deities of the Mahisyadas. They have a relatively high literacy rate.

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My name is Dinesh. My family lives in West Bengal state in India, just west of Bangladesh. I live with my wife, three sons and one daughter. Our home is in a small village outside of Kolkata, once known as Calcutta.

I work very hard in our family's rice fields. The land has been in my family for many generations. My hope is that someday my oldest son will take over this work from me. He is already a very good worker and knows just how to take care of the rice.

All of my children go to school. It is important that they get an education so they can get good jobs. My youngest son wants to become a businessman and travel to England or America. I tell him that he must study very hard and do well in school.

Though it is my wife's duty to teach our children to be devoted to their worship, I also make sure that every day they pay proper respect to our ancestors who gave us our land and continue to watch over us. Every day, I perform puja (worship) to the goddess Lakshmi asking that they will be prosperous.

(Dinesh is a fictional character whose story is based on research and anthropological profiles of the Mahisyadas.)

*Note: Photos of this people group are intended to be representations and may not necessarily be photos of this specific people group.



Fast Facts

Religion: Hinduism
Language: Bengali
Population: 9.767 million
Division: East

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