

## *The Daga New Testament Dedication*

In June, Helen, Hannah and I had the wonderful opportunity to fly to Milne Bay Province (Southeast of Ukarumpa) and witness a part of the Daga people's week-long celebration upon receiving the Word of God in their language. Nestled in a gorgeous valley, surrounded by tall mountains to the North and South, we landed at the Agaun airstrip and stayed over a long weekend. Since the Singapore Church was very involved in this project, many friends and relatives of Daniel and Wei Lei Jesudason also came for a visit. Here are a few of the exciting things that happened:

- The Dedication was organized by a Daga committee of 62 people! It was a 10 day affair!
- About 5,000 people from 37 communities representing three provinces attended.
- They walked for days (including the Anglican Bishop from the coast and his wife). Some were robbed, some drowned.... awesome testimonies of the seriousness of some arrivals. A truly historic event.
- We had glorious weather for the full number of days and beyond as the feasting lasted for two weeks.
- Each community presented traditional dances with newly-composed Christian lyrics, skits, tambourine dances etc....all based on thanking God for His written Word in their language....the 10 days was not sufficient for all the presentations.
- We had delegates from SIL PNG (the SIL director and us), Wycliffe Singapore, St. Paul's Church in Singapore (Wei Lei's father was one of them).
- John and Elizabeth Murane who had completed a previous version of the Daga NT in 1974 also came....after nearly 30 years....the people honored them with great dancing and even a monument!
- There were many PNG provincial Government delegates, but the greatest surprise was the Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare and some of his ministers who chartered a flight from the capital to be with us for about 6 hours!
- There was spontaneous cheering by the people during the dedication of the Daga Bible.
- Many Baha'i followers came. Daga New Testaments were given to their key leaders.
- The people want to start on the Old Testament after seeking more training for the key Daga translation team members. Daniel Jesudason will help, as needed.
- Key men were appointed to travel to neighboring groups to present the Gospel.

Daniel reports: "Literacy is the key!... to winning future generations – We had worked on setting up child literacy classes in the Daga language over most areas of the Daga language group. Presently these schools have been taken over by the Government and it is part of a three-year formal school program. The children have to read and write in the Daga language for the first three years of primary school before learning English.

"Now it is evident that all these children since 1998 are very fluent in reading in Daga and have started reading the Daga New Testaments with great fluency...inspiring their relatives and parents! God is building his Kingdom in the hearts of the children to win the generations to come among the Daga people....this is God's purpose to ensure sustaining revival among the Daga people."

***"How sweet are Thy words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" – Psalm 119:103***

***"Your words were found and I ate them..." – Jeremiah 15:16***

So it now is for the Daga people..... and a joy for us to have our very small part in making this possible.

Joyfully in His Service,





Daga men and women dance and sing with great zeal before the **B**Lord.

Great multi-colored crowds witness the New Testament arrivals and dedication of the people. **à**



Daga helpers and friends, Daniel and Wei Lei Jesudason. Her father from Singapore.

**B**

**à**  
Distinctive clan headdresses. Here a young Daga dancer watches the festivities.



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