

Deep in the jungle of the Karawari region of Papua New Guinea, high in the hills above the Arafundi and Karawari rivers, live an amazing people called the Meakambut.

The Meakambut are nomadic. This means they do not live in one place all the time. Instead, they move from place to place, carrying everything they own with them. They live the way that their people have lived for thousands of years—far from the modern world, and with very little help from outsiders.

There are barely 50 Meakambut men, women, and children. They live in an area of jungle in the mountains that is about 10 miles wide and 10 miles long. They live in this area, moving between different caves, rock shelters, and simple man-made shelters.

Many years ago, there were other groups who also lived in caves in the Karawari. But they all left the caves in the mountains and went to live in villages. The Meakambut are the only people still living in these caves.



Facts About Traditional Headdresses

People in many cultures around the world wear headdresses. Headdresses are coverings that hide and decorate the head. In the past, some groups wore headdresses every day. Today, many groups wear them only for special celebrations.

A Headdress from Australia

In Australia's aboriginal communities, men wear tall headdresses for important celebrations. These tall headdresses are made with twigs and hair, then decorated using emu feathers and a wild plant called wamurlu.

A Headdress from India

During festivals, married women in parts of India wear a colorful headdress called a perak. Rows of turquoise and coral beads are attached to wool on this heavy, hand-crafted headdress, which is often passed from mother to daughter. According to tradition, the more beads on a perak, the more money a woman has.

A Headdress from Nigeria

A headdress called a gele is part of the traditional dress of Yoruba women in Nigeria. A gele is made by winding one large piece of stiff cloth around a woman's head. In the Yoruba culture, the direction a gele leans tells whether or not the wearer is married. Today, many other African women wear geles as part of their everyday dress, but the direction they lean is not always a sign of whether they are married.



◀ Australian aboriginal headdress



▲ Nigerian gele



◀ Indian perak