

LUNGRI

လုန်ရီး



Population
in Myanmar:
4,300 (2025)

Location:
Sagaing Region

Language Family:
Tibeto-Burman

Main Religion:
Christianity (93.0%)

Christians:
4,000 (93.0%)

OVERVIEW

Population:
4,300 in Myanmar
(2025 Asia Harvest)

Other Countries:
600 in India

Other Names:
Longri, Longri Tangsa,
Lungri Tangshang

Location:
Sagaing Region: Nanyun and
Lahe townships in the Naga Self-
Administered Zone

Language:
Naga Tangsa, Lungri [unclassified]

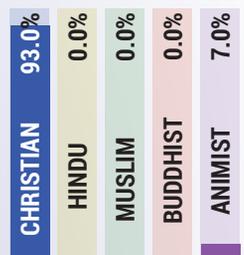
Dialects: 1

Scripture:
None

Jesus film:
None

Global Recordings:
None

People ID: 21375



Religious adherence



Y&S Creators

Location: Approximately 4,300 Lungri people live in ethnically mixed villages with many other tribes in the mountainous Lahe and Nanyun townships within the newly-formed Naga Self-Administered Zone, adjacent to the border between western Myanmar and the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. The climate there is described as “cool and humid in the hills, but warm and moist in the plains. The area has evergreen rain forests and plenty of animal life.”¹ The Lungri are a tribe in transition, with all members of the group who were interviewed in Lahe in 2013 saying they were born elsewhere (especially in Lungri village in Nanyun Township) before beginning to migrate to Lahe in 1990.²

Identity: The Lungri are one of more than 50 tribes listed under the label of “Tangshang” in Myanmar, but most groups speak their own language or dialect and possess their own sense of ethnic identity and customs. The name Lungri is derived from two words. *Lung* meaning “stone” or “hill” and *ri* meaning “water.” Thus, it is thought their original homeland was at a place where a

stream flowed out of a rocky hill. In recent decades the Lungri have intermarried with other tribes, blurring their distinctiveness as a people. The 600 Lungri people living across the border have been granted status as one of India’s Scheduled Tribes under the name Longri Tangsa.

Language: A team of linguists visited the Lungri area in 2012 and interviewed 125 people from 19 households. They concluded the Lungri dialect is related to, yet distinct from, eight other Tangshang varieties: Cyamcyang, Cyolim, Dunghi, Lochang, Maitai, Moshang, Mungre, and Shecyu.³ Each of these dialect groups also represents a tribe that has been profiled separately in this book.

History: The Lungri were renowned as great warriors who grew wealthy by collecting tribute and taxes from the communities they defeated. Lungri society is divided into clans, which are responsible for different occupations. For example, the Kimkhak and Riawang clans are in charge of performing rituals, while the Lisai and Sisiya were the tribe’s blacksmiths, who manufactured items of silver and

gold. Wedding ceremonies among the Lungri formerly included some unique customs. To honor newlyweds, “bracelets were woven from hairs from the tails of slaughtered pigs. The couple would wear them on their left wrists as a token of their marriage.”⁴

Customs: During festivals, Lungri men proudly wear “red bamboo hats decorated in the front with two tusks of a boar. Necklaces, bangles, waistbands, hairpins, silver earrings, beads, coins, and semi-precious stones are also part of their attire.”⁵ The Lungri were traditionally skilled hunters who loved to consume meat, although they were prohibited from eating the flesh of dogs, tigers, langurs, foxes, rats, cats, and tortoises.

Religion: Animism dominated the religious beliefs of the Lungri people for countless generations, influencing many of their customs. In the past they believed in “supernatural powers, spirits, and deities. They had a strong faith in malevolent and benevolent spirits, and each village had a *thandang* (priest) or *samma* (diviner).”⁶ It was believed the ghost of a deceased person would go hungry unless their relatives provided food and drink for it in the afterlife. Prior to their conversion to Christianity starting in the 1970s, the Lungri held a two-day sacrifice called *ya bin* to pray for good crops. Chickens were sacrificed to the spirits and the people consumed copious amounts of liquor.⁷

Christianity: Today, the overwhelming majority of Lungri people in Myanmar confess Jesus as Lord, with most being members of Baptist churches, while a few are Catholics. One source states that “the spread of Christianity triggered a cultural revivalism in the community.”⁸ According to the 2011 Indian census, 91% of Lungri people in that country were Christians, with a smattering of Hindus, Buddhists, and animists. With no Scripture or other Gospel resources available in their heart language, most Lungri believers use Burmese Bibles, which gives them limited understanding.