



Identity: This fascinating tribe is also known to other ethnicities as the Yinchia—a name given to them by the Burmese, which means “Striped Karen.” The Riang Lai are related by ancestry and culture to the Riang Lang, but their languages are different. Both groups are historically related to the Palaung, but over the centuries their languages and customs diverged, making them separate ethnicities today. Traditionally, the two Riang

History: The region inhabited by the Riang Lai has a very long history, dating back to the founding of the Dutthavati State in 58 BC. During the Sino-Burmese War (1765-1769), Chinese imperial troops invaded the area, overrunning town after town. By the 1880s, the various Shan princes had submitted to the British colonial rulers. Namsan served

Christianity: The Gospel arrived among the Riang Lai people about a century ago, with 11 Riang Lai people saying they were Christians at the time of the 1931 census. A remnant of Riang Lai believers remains today, but a lack of Christian resources in their language has hampered their growth. Any prospective Bible translators will first need to teach the people how to read Roman characters, as the Riang Lai language has never had an orthography. Audio recordings in Riang Lai were created by the mission Global Recordings decades ago, but they do not appear to have been widely used.

Population by State in Myanmar: 2024

State	Population (2024)
Shan State	13,000
Other States	10,000

Location: Shan State

CHRISTIAN	0.1%
HINDU	0.0%
MUSLIM	0.0%
BUDDHIST	19.9%
ANIMIST	80.0%