



Zo Traditional Attire

Location: Approximately 3,500 Sim people are distributed in 17 villages in western Myanmar’s Chin State near the border with India. Their communities are concentrated north of Falam Township. The Sim inhabit an ethnically-diverse area bordered by many other Chin tribes, including the Ngawn to the north; Phadei, Taisun, and Tapong to the east; Laizo to the south; Zahau to the west; and others further afield. Each of these tribes has been profiled separately in *Operation Myanmar*. An additional 8,800 Sim people live in northeast India, where they are officially known as the Simte tribe. They are concentrated in the Churachandpur District of Manipur State, which lies 170 miles (275km) directly north of Falam Township in Myanmar, although the two locations are separated by several mountain ranges and rivers.

Identity: The Sim are one of many related tribes along the Myanmar-India border that have been labeled “Chin” in Myanmar and “Kuki” in India, although neither name is used by the people themselves. Although they acknowledge historic relationships with other tribes in

the region, the Sim retain their own cultural identity and speak a dialect different from other varieties.

Language: The Sim language belongs to a branch of Tibeto-Burman that linguists call Northern Peripheral Chin. Other Myanmar languages in this group include Siyin, Gangte, and Zokam. Sim is a written language that uses the Roman orthography, although literature use has developed separately on each side of the border. Many Sim people are also fluent in English.

History: The Sim believe they originated somewhere within today’s China or Tibet before migrating south into Myanmar. Simte, their name in India, “means ‘southern people,’ as they are suspected to have migrated or originated in central China, where they were probably war captives.”¹ The Sim were historically called “Ngaihte” by other groups in honor of their founder.

Customs: Although much of Sim territory is mountainous, there are also ample places for growing crops, including rice, pineapple,

guava, banana, and walnuts. In the past, meat was given as a precious gift to relatives and friends, and during auspicious occasions such as weddings. The giving of meat “bound people together through kinship relations and created goodwill among members of the tribe. Slaughtered animals were shared in defined ways, and the reciprocal way of sharing meat and drink by obligation within the community created a sense of societal unity.”²

Religion: For centuries the Sim people performed a complex array of animistic rituals designed to keep the spirits placated, overseen by shamans who acted both as mediators with the spirit world and as community leaders. One researcher says that “Sumtong, or Leandawusa, was viewed as the supreme god and was worshipped annually by sacrificing a pig. Those who converted to Christianity no longer worship that way.”³ Today, practically all Sim people in Myanmar are Christians, while the 2011 Indian census revealed that 98.6 percent of Simte people in that country followed Jesus Christ.

Christianity: Although the Gospel was first proclaimed among the Sim in 1917, Sim believers today recall: “The new faith was not readily accepted because the people were faithful to their animistic rituals. Sim villages were highly organized with the chiefs at the top, and they did not welcome the new faith, which made the inroad of Christianity into the tribe slow and very difficult.... There was progress in the 1940s, and a good number of Sim people embraced the new faith. By 1950, a group of believers came together and formed the Simte Christian Association.”⁴ The first portions of Scripture were published for the Simte people in India in 1957, followed by the New Testament in 1975 and the full Bible in 1992.⁵ Sim believers in Myanmar may not be able to access Simte Bibles from India due to the tight border between the two countries, resulting from the presence of armed insurgency groups in the area.



Population
in Myanmar:
3,500 (2025)

Location:
Chin State

Language Family:
Tibeto-Burman

Main Religion:
Christianity (98.0%)

Christians:
3,430 (98.0%)

OVERVIEW

Population:
3,500 in Myanmar
(2025 Asia Harvest)

Other Countries:
8,800 in India

Other Names:
Ngaihte, Ngaite, Paite Simte, Sim, Simhrim, Simte, Simte Chin

Location:
Chin State: Falam Township
in Falam District

Language:
Simte [smt]

Dialects: 0

Scripture:
Bible 1992
New Testament 1975
Portions 1957

Jesus film: None

Global Recordings:
Simte #1628

People ID: 19764

