



Location: The 16,000 members of the Tapong tribe inhabit six villages just north of Falam Township in Myanmar's Chin State. In addition to those residing in the town, the six Tapong villages (Parte, Lati, Kulzam, Farkhawm, Simzawl, and Lungbum) are bordered by four other ethnic groups, with the Phadei located to the north, Sim to the west, Zanniat to the east, and Taisun to the south. Several other tribes inhabit areas just beyond their territory. Falam Township is mountainous, with peaks running east to west above the Myittha and Neyinzaya rivers. Mount Zinghmuh at 8,414 feet (2,565 meters) is the highest peak in Falam and the third highest in Chin State. Falam Township extends to the border of the Indian state of Mizoram, although the Tapong are not known to live in India.

Identity: Until recently, the Tapong were hidden from the world because most scholars ignored their claims of distinctiveness and

viewed them merely as one of many dialect groups of Falam Chin. When asked about his people in 2023, a Tapong Christian wrote: "We are very proud because God made us to be Tapong. We observe different festivals, and our women wear their own traditional dress. At the same time, while we are so happy to be Tapong people, we are also definitely part of the Chin race and we consider them all our brothers, including the tribes across the border in India and Bangladesh."¹

Language: The Tapong vernacular is an example of the folly of modern-day linguistic classifications, which have resulted in Tapong being disregarded as a distinct language variety. Ignoring the academics, Tapong Christians translated the New Testament into their language in 2019, because they were keen to have the Scriptures in their own tongue instead of having to use Falam Chin Bibles. Thus, the Tapong are now one of many people groups

that have the Bible in a language that SIL and other Christian organizations don't acknowledge the existence of.

History: Although little is known about Tapong history, one source surmises that they were one of two clans of Zanniat people that separated long ago.² The town of Falam, where the Tapong live, was founded around the year 1500 during a time of tribal warfare. When the survivors of an attack established a new village, they named it by combining two words: *fa* ("children") and *lam* ("secure place"). Thus, Falam was seen as a place where they hoped to raise their children in peace. As of March 2025, Falam Township remained the scene of intense fighting in the Myanmar civil war, with the Chin National Defence Force seeking to control the strategic town in an initiative code-named 'Mission Jerusalem'.³

Customs: With their own customs and proud ethnic identity, most Tapong people chose to marry within their tribe, although it is permissible to marry a person from a different Chin group. Tapong women wear beautiful red, green, and black dresses, while men have scarves displaying the same distinctive colors.

Religion: Apart from a relative handful of Buddhists in the town and animistic influence that persists in some villages, all Tapong people today identify as Christians. They are a happy people, thankful that their faith in Jesus has transformed their communities and given them peace, joy, and purpose in life.

Christianity: The Tapong New Testament was published in 2019, although no other Scripture or Gospel resources are available in their language. Falam Township contains many different Christian denominations, including Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, the United Pentecostal Church, Assemblies of God, and others. The town also contains Bible schools for believers who wish to be trained as church leaders.



Population in Myanmar:
16,000
(2025 Joshua Project)

Location:
Chin State

Language Family:
Tibeto-Burman

Main Religion:
Christianity (95.0%)

Christians:
15,200 (95.0%)

OVERVIEW

Population:
16,000 in Myanmar
(2025 Joshua Project)

Other Countries:

Other Names:
Chin Tapong

Location:
Chin State: Falam Township in Falam District

Language:
Chin, Tapong [cfm08]

Dialects: 1

Scripture:
New Testament 2019

Jesus film:
None

Global Recordings:
None

People ID: 21844

