



## Crystal Gazing Amicable Solutions for Inter-State Border Disputes in Northeast India



**Vaibhav Kullashri** is an Assistant Professor at the Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU), an University of national importance, Gandhinagar, India and Visiting Fellow at the Nepal Institute of International Cooperation and Engagement (NIICE), Kathmandu, Nepal. He previously worked as Research Assistant and officiating Web Manager cum Researcher at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi.

### Introduction

The Northeastern Region (NER) of India is one of the most fragile regions of the country— besides being landlocked, almost 98 percent of its border is an international sharing border with Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal. Also, majority of the border is porous, unfenced, and prone to illegal activities. People across the border are well connected through their ethnic and cultural linkage, hence, making it difficult for policymakers to have a 'black and white' approach to the prevailing situation. The region is connected to the country's narrow land passage that is the 'Siliguri Corridor'. Therefore, connectivity within and to the other part of the country is one of the foremost challenges the region is facing—connectivity in terms of infrastructure like road, rail, air, and water network along with people-to-people connectivity. The region also has its own unique identity — Mongolian feature, and is home to around 220 ethnic groups, many dialects sharing similar structural features.<sup>1</sup> However, despite being full of resources, the region is

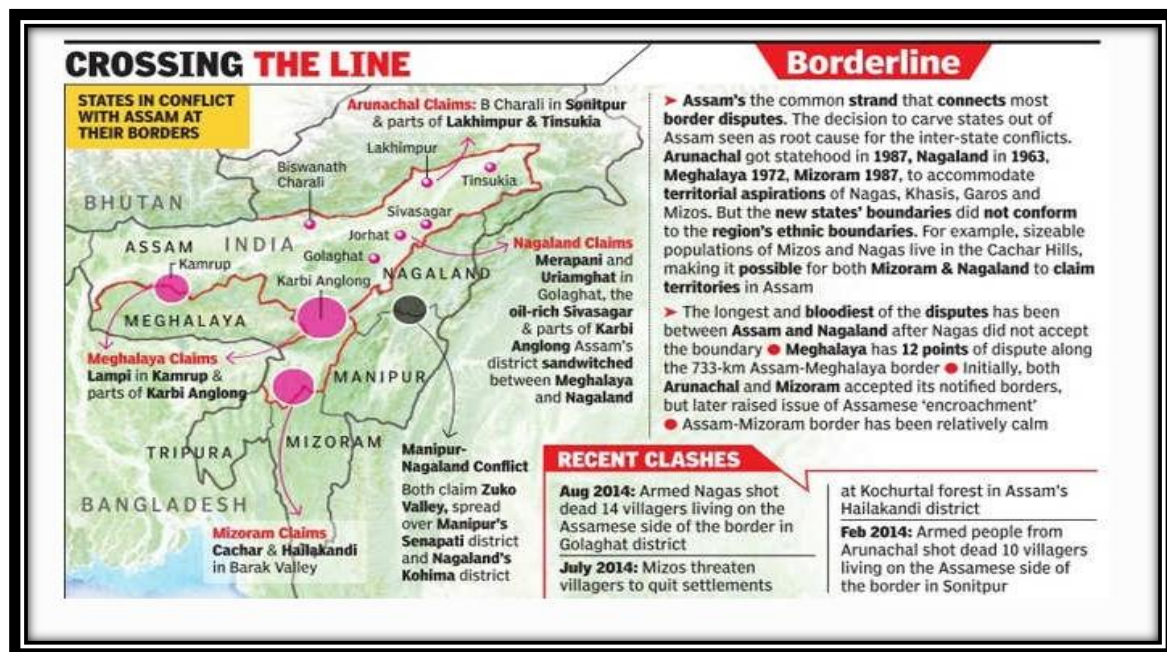
### Key Points

- Resolving inter-state border dispute requires a radical shift in approach— from Top-down to Bottom-Up, and as a result, the inclusion of locals becomes essential in resolving these disputes.
- The government of all the northeastern states, along with the neutral parties and all stakeholders, must look forward to 2025 as the year of resolving border disputes in the northeast region.
- Minor issues will escalate to major conflicts among the local people. Many times, minor problems amongst different tribes and communities, leads to a boundary dispute, and people with vested interest take advantage of such opportunities.

mainly underdeveloped, though self-sustained, but lacks industries. The contribution of the northeastern states to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is nearly 2.8 percent, while it accounts for 7 percent of the country's total area and around 3.76 percent of the total population.<sup>2</sup>

Besides all these challenges, the region faces new inter-state border disputes. Since the 1960s, these disputes are gaining ground whereas other challenges like insurgency are steadily declining. According to various reports, insurgency related incidents have reduced to 80 percent— civilian deaths reduced by 99 percent and death of security personnel came down to 75 percent.<sup>3</sup> Hence, the region is gradually moving towards lasting peace, indicated by signing of various peace process treaties. However, the Region is fraught with various challenges. The recent flashpoint came in the Assam-Mizoram border in 2020 wherein hundreds of vehicles, carrying essential supplies to Mizoram, were blocked. Both the States accused each other for the encroachment and the situation turned violent on 26 July 2021, when six police personnel of Assam were killed during alleged firing by the Mizoram police.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 1: Showing Major Land Boundary Dispute Site in Northeast India



Source: <https://www.insightsonindia.com/2022/04/29/insights-into-editorial-towards-a-resolution-of-the-arunachal-assam-border-dispute/>

Such incident reflects negligence and poor governance in the region. Earlier, the Britishers used the region for their political and administrative convenience and current disputes too are figments of the colonial legacy. Later, subsequent delay in post-independence state reorganisation of the northeastern states, contributed to the present situation. Majority of the dispute in the region is due to uneven carving out of territories from Greater Assam— while defining the territory, due respect was not given to the needs and aspirations of the people living in the region. The boundaries were ‘abruptly drawn’ on the map and subsequently enforced on the ground. Currently, Assam has land boundary disputes with Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.<sup>5</sup> Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh have been carved out from Greater Assam and following the formation, the state borders were not widely accepted by the concerned stakeholders. Though, the Union Government tried to find the solution, but due to states’ ill cooperation and various other challenges prevailing in the region, such a solution never became feasible.<sup>6</sup>

The Northeastern Region, being a fulcrum of India’s Act East Policy, is poised to be a viable ground for India’s aspiration to reach Southeast Asian nations. Over the last few decades, all the governments— State and Centre, have focused immensely on reducing insurgency, bringing down alienation, and developing infrastructure to improve livelihood and enhancing the Region’s contribution to the national economy. Therefore, to realise the distant dream of acting east, it is in the nation’s interest to resolve such inter-state border disputes amicably and with utmost urgency. This paper will highlight the various interstate border disputes in the northeast region and make recommendations to resolve those issues amicably for a peaceful and prosperous northeast region.

## **Current Boundary Disputes and Efforts for Their Resolutions**

### ***Assam and Arunachal Pradesh***

The Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border dispute started with the announcement of the Inner Line Regulation— demarcation of the imaginary inner line between plains and frontier hills, by Britishers in 1873. The latter make up the present-day Arunachal Pradesh, then designated as North East Frontier tracts.<sup>7</sup> Post independence, the Northeast frontier tracts fell under Assam’s administrative control and became known as North East Frontier Agency



(NEFA). Later, it became the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh in 1972 and, finally, gained full statehood in 1987.

However, the real bone of contention lies in the 1951 report submitted by the then Assam Chief Minister Gopinath Bordoloi.<sup>8</sup> The delineation of the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border was done on the basis of 1951 notification of the Bordoloi Committee. On the recommendation of Committee, 3648 sq km of the plain area of Balipura and Sadiya foothills from Arunachal Pradesh (then NEFA) was transferred to the Darrang and Lakhimpur districts of Assam.<sup>9</sup> Arunachal Pradesh argues that the transfer of land was done without consulting the people and hence, they refused to accept the 1951 notification as the basis of delineation.

To resolve the border dispute, the Supreme Court of India filed a case in Original Suit No. 1/1989.<sup>10</sup> The case is in the trial stage, but skirmish keeps happening repeatedly. In 2022, tension flared up at Gogamukh in the Dhemaji District, leading to violence.<sup>11</sup> The local villagers from Assam obstructed a road construction by the Arunachal Pradesh government under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) and lit up the temporary camps built by the road construction gang. Before this, in 2020, the Assam Government raised the issue of forest land encroachment with Arunachal Pradesh, claiming encroachment of up to 6,375 hectares of forest land.<sup>12</sup> It also raised the issue of setting up illegal wood based industries and coke factories in the area. Also, time and again, the Assam Government conducts eviction drives to free the encroached land<sup>13</sup>, but the issue is often politicised by local leaders for their vested interest. Such political interest, time and again, nullifies the efforts made to resolve the border dispute. Likewise, the Assam Government does not respond to Arunachal Government' proposals to return 956 sq km of land<sup>14</sup>— this subsequent delay led to the latter claiming, in 2007, a return of 1,192 sq km of land from the earlier proposal of 956 sq km.<sup>15</sup> The proposal was made to the Tarun Chatterjee Committee by Arunachal Pradesh, and also it was made clear that the Committee' recommendation will be the basis of any future talk with Assam.<sup>16</sup> The Committee, in his report, upheld 70-80 percent of Arunachal Pradesh' claims.<sup>17</sup> Assam, in 2014, rejected the recommendation of the Committee and wanted the boundary to be settled on the basis of 'give and take approach'.<sup>18</sup> However, recently, the governments of both the states came together and signed the 'Namsai Declaration' to resolve the long pending border dispute.<sup>19</sup> With the Agreement, both

the states claimed to reduce the disputed villages from 123 to 86. Interestingly, the villages, whose boundaries were resolved via declaration comprises 34 villages that are already part of Arunachal Pradesh; 28 are in Arunachal Pradesh's territory, and for the other six, Assam does not have any revenue records.<sup>20</sup> This indicates that political will is crucial for resolving the border dispute, and if contesting parties sit together to solve the issue, it can be done with the stroke of a pen. Lack of political will and vested interest of some people hampers the prosperity of the Region by lingering on the prevailing situation or by maintaining the status quo. As rightly stated by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group (RRAG), an NGO—“The issue has never been the absence of technology and expertise to draw the boundaries of the States but the absence of political will”.<sup>21</sup>

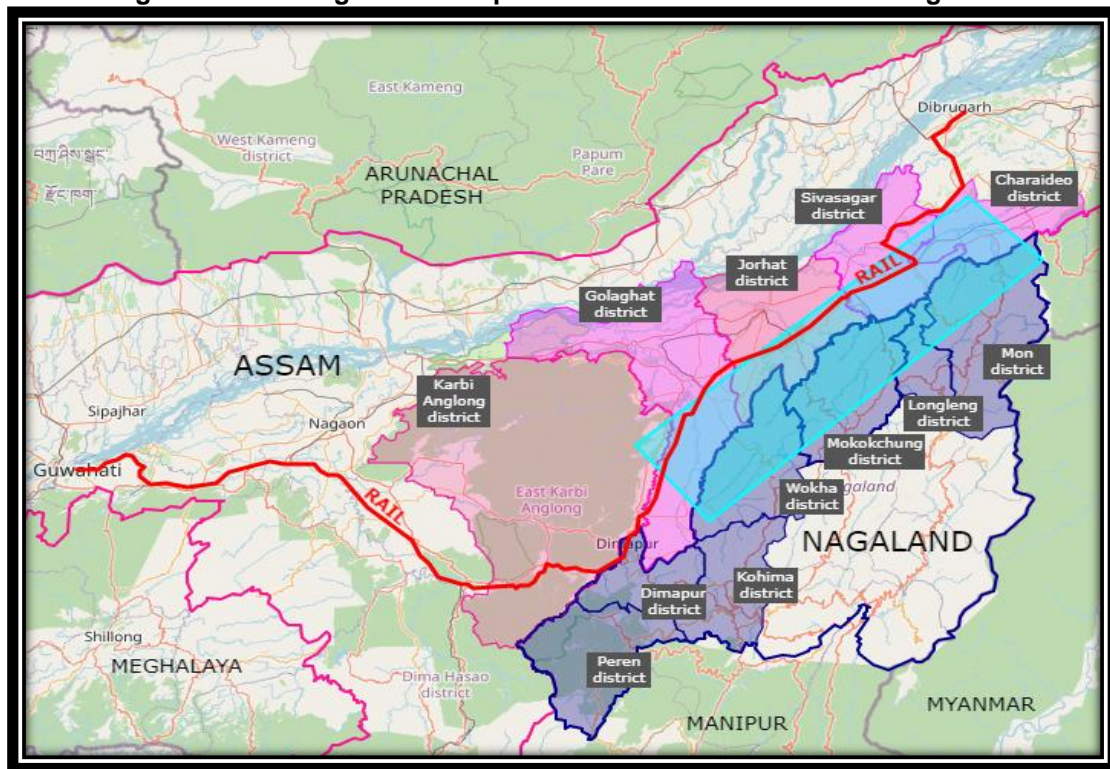
### ***Assam and Nagaland***

Of all the border disputes in northeast India, the Assam-Nagaland border dispute is the most violent. Total death in skirmish related incidents stands at 136— highest in the region.<sup>22</sup> The first mention of the border issue is found much before the creation of Nagaland as a State. Point 06 of the Hydari Agreement, signed in June 1947, mentions about bringing back into the Naga Hills District all the forests transferred to the Sivasagar and Nowgong Districts in the past.<sup>23</sup> The stance is reiterated again in the 16-point Agreement signed between the Union Government and the Naga people's Convention (NPC) in 1960.<sup>24</sup> Though, the state of Nagaland was created with the enactment of the State of Nagaland Act (1962) but the delineation of the border was carried out as per the 1925 notification.<sup>25</sup> Nagaland objected to the delineation of the state territory and wanted a 16- point agreement, which included restoration of all Naga territories that has been transferred out of Naga hills, to be the basis of delineation.<sup>26</sup> However, the Assam Government wanted to maintain the boundary as decided during creation of the hill state on 01 December 1963.<sup>27</sup>

This difference in the perception of boundaries led to frequent friction at the border with Assam alleging the encroachment of over 66,000 hectares in Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, and Karbi Anglong districts by Nagas.<sup>28</sup> Assam official claims that more than 27,000 Naga, in more than 150 villages, live in the disputed reserve forest.<sup>29</sup> Sporadic clashes between both the states was a regular sight. However, the clash turned violent at Chungajan on 05 January 1979 wherein 55 Assamese were killed and 467 houses were burnt by armed

Nagas. Again, in June 1985, at Merapani, Naga people, along with state armed police, killed 50 Assamese dead and left 90 people injured.<sup>30</sup> These violent events created a feeling of vengeance among the different communities living across the border especially after the 2014, violent incident at Dhanashri, subdivision of Golaghat district of Assam, that led displaced more than 10,000 people.<sup>31</sup> Various reports point out that the Naga insurgent group — NSCN(IM) was responsible for the incident.<sup>32</sup> The presence of the insurgent group in the region has worsened the matter; now, large number of Naga inhabitants living in the area made the issue even more complex.

**Figure 2: Showing Border Dispute Sites between Assam and Nagaland**



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast\\_India\\_border\\_disputes#/media/File:Assam-Nagaland\\_area\\_covered\\_in\\_four\\_interim\\_agreements\\_1972.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_India_border_disputes#/media/File:Assam-Nagaland_area_covered_in_four_interim_agreements_1972.png)

Further, poor cooperation between the state governments can be considered as a major factor in keeping the border issue boiling till date. The initiative has been taken many times but refusal to accept the proposal by any one of the state governments jeopardises the efforts. Like, in 1971, the Union Government constituted the Sundaram Committee, on the suggestion of whom, in 1972, four agreements were signed between both the state

governments.<sup>33</sup> However, Nagaland failed to follow the guidelines of the Agreement and kept encroaching on Assam's reserve forest land.<sup>34</sup> So much so that Nagaland established three subdivisions within the Assam territory viz. Tizit subdivision, Newland subdivision and Kohoboto subdivision.<sup>35</sup> This unilateral encroachment and subsequent violent incident led the government to make a 10 km wide Disputed Area Belt (DAB) inside the Assam administrative area, claimed by Nagaland.<sup>36</sup> The area has been divided into four divisions— Sector A (131.12 square miles), Sector B (586 square miles), Sector C (2825.76 square miles) and Sector D (285.76 square miles).<sup>37</sup> The Sundaram Committee was officially made available to both the governments in 1979. The Commission mentioned that the Naga claim to 4,975 square miles of Assam territory was not based on verifiable facts and therefore the Naga Government considered it 'one sided'.<sup>38</sup> The government even rejected the recommendation of the Shastri Committee which was formed after the Merapani incident in 1985.<sup>39</sup> Another effort to resolve the border dispute was made but this time Assam government rejected the report made by the JK Pillai Commission in 1997.<sup>40</sup> This repeated rejection of the report by the state government, whose political agenda was not met in the report, has made matters worse and more complex. Both states' governments find it difficult to reach a common conclusion and any positive effort to solve the issue is rejected by the government whose political agenda is not met in the report's findings. Even the local commission tried to find the solution but was unable to succeed due to apprehensions. The reasons for not accepting recommendations are largely political and the non-binding nature of the report gives scope to the state government to nullify them. Therefore, if the Commission is constituted, then its recommendation must be binding on the states. However, while formulating a committee, equal representation of both the states must be ensured.

In situations wherein ethnic rivalry is prevailing, even mediation does not work as tried by the Supreme Court in 2010.<sup>41</sup> Before this, the Assam government, in 1988, filed a civil suit in the Supreme Court for the demarcation of its 434 km long boundary with Nagaland.<sup>42</sup> The Court, in 2015, stated that "the border dispute between Assam and Nagaland could be resolved either by deciding the law suit or by referring it for arbitration".<sup>43</sup> The SC further ordered both the governments to file the list of their witnesses with their testimony in the form of affidavits. However, the matter remained in silos for six years before both the state

governments decided to have a Secretary level meeting in 2020.<sup>44</sup> In 2021, Assam and Nagaland signed an agreement to end the standoff at the border and agreed to withdraw the state police force and use technology to keep vigil against any incursions.<sup>45</sup> Though the state government is taking the initiative to maintain the status quo, but a permanent solution is the only way to maintain peace and tranquillity in the region. Perpetual delay in solving the border dispute will lead to the feeling of 'alienation and revenge' among the local people living across the border. At any point in time, with respect to the northeastern state, the ethnic affiliation will supersede the state affiliation and fuel the emotions of the people. This, time and again, has created friction at the border of Assam and Nagaland and resulted in loss of innocent lives. At the current pace, the situation is highly unlikely to change.

### ***Assam and Mizoram***

Assam shares a 164.6 km long border with Mizoram. It was made union territory in 1972 after carving out of Assam's Lushai hills, and later it was established as a full-fledged state in 1987. However, dispute between both states date back to the colonial era when the boundary was drawn between Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) and Chachar Plains (a district of Assam) in August 1875. As per the Mizo people, this was the only time when boundary was drawn with consultation with their Chiefs.<sup>46</sup> Later, when, in 1933, demarcation of the boundary was done between Lushai Hills and the princely state of Manipur, the Mizo people pointed to the demarcation of 1875 and raised their concerns about accepting it, which was drawn as per the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) Act 1873, also known as the Inner Line Regulation.<sup>47</sup> The current boundary between two states is defined in the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act of 1971 which in turn is based on notification No. 2016 Arunachal Pradesh dated 09 March 1933.<sup>48</sup> The Mizo people favours the demarcation of boundaries as mentioned in the 1985 notification thereby claiming approx.. 819.15 sq. km of forested territory from Assam.<sup>49</sup>

This situation has led to many clashes along the Assam-Mizoram border, recently in July 2021, at the border point Lilapur in the Chachar district of Assam.<sup>50</sup> It was one of the rare incidents wherein the police force of each state was up against each other and resulted in the killing of some Assam police personnel. Earlier in 2020, the locals on each side of the border clashed and Assam blocked the NH-306, considered to be the lifeline of Mizoram.<sup>51</sup>

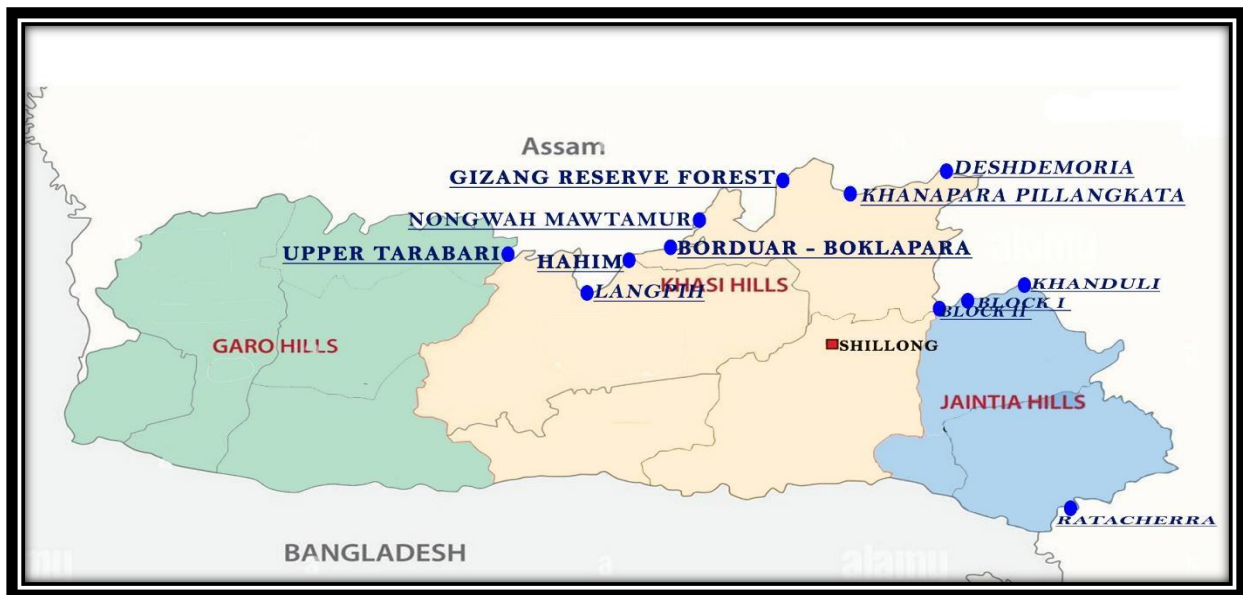
However, major clashes along the border broke out in 2006 and 2018 wherein Mizoram repeatedly alleged Assam of attempting to extend its control over the reserve forest.<sup>52</sup>

Various attempts have been made to resolve border dispute between the two states, however, nothing concrete has been achieved so far, reason being the government's approach since various attempts were directed towards maintaining the status quo rather than towards resolving the border dispute. There was a demand, in 2018, by Mizo youth and civil society organisations, to constitute a boundary commission, the discussion on which was not taken.<sup>53</sup> However, in September 2022, after the clash, both the state government agreed to form a regional committee to resolve the long pending dispute.<sup>54</sup> Although, forming the regional committee is undoubtedly a good idea, but implementing the Committee's recommendation is where the problem lies. The long pending issue can only be solved if the Committee's recommendation becomes binding on both the parties.

### ***Assam and Meghalaya***

Meghalaya, was carved out of Assam in 1972, and thereafter, it challenged the Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act 1969, as it feels that much of its territory is still with Assam. There are 12 points of dispute between the states, major ones being in Langpih district, bordering the Kamrup District of Assam and the Mikir Hills (Karbi Anglong) district of Assam. There are claims and counter-claims by both the state governments on these territories. In comparison, Meghalaya believes that these areas originally belonged to the Khasi-Jaintia hills and that inhabitants belonged to the Khasi Pnar tribe. Assam, on the other hand believes that Meghalaya's claims do not hold value and Meghalaya do not have documents to prove the same.

**Figure 3: Showing Border Dispute Sites between Assam and Nagaland**



Source: <https://www.claws.in/changing-approach-for-resolving-border-dispute-in-northeast-india/>

A joint official committee was formed in 1983 to resolve the issue, but no suitable action was taken on the committee's recommendation. Further, due to subsequent delay and inaction by the State and Union Government, more disputes along the border began to emerge. Later, when the Justice Chandrachud Committee was constituted in 1985, its report was rejected by Meghalaya as the findings were not in its favour. The basis for rejecting the report was the maps provided by the United Khasi - Jaintia Hills District Council and also by tradition chieftain of the area. Further, by 1991, with mutual consent of both the state governments, a 100 km border was demarcated by both the states with the help of Survey of India. However, it could not be completed due to apprehensions of the Meghalaya Government. Later, in 2011, when the Meghalaya Assembly passed the Resolution requesting the Union Government to constitute a boundary commission and intervene in the matter; the Assam Government passed a counter-resolution opposing the move. However, a positive development emerged in March 2022 when the governments of both states signed a pact to resolve the border dispute. According to the pact, six out of twelve disputed areas viz. Hahim, Gizang, Tarabari, Doklapara, Khanapara, Pilingkata and Ratacherra, has been resolved through peaceful negotiations. The Pact's signing is based on the give-and-take approach, executed in five phases and is seen as a welcoming step to resolve other

significant disputes. The five-phased approach used in the current resolution mechanism includes exchanging records, joint field visits, detailed deliberations, negotiations and preparing a final draft resolution. Though welcoming, however, just after the pact signing, locals protested at the border site by claiming that they were not consulted and ignored in the process. Even the opposition members questioned the approach used to settle these border disputes, especially Assam's legislative council members. The regional committee headed by a cabinet minister will be formed to resolve the remaining six areas of disagreement. Resolving these six disputes will be complicated as these comprises significant conflict areas. Therefore, there is a need for a more proactive and beyond give-and-take approach. Point to notice that these disputes are not understood properly by the policymaker and thereby many attempts to resolve this issue fail and is likely to be the scenario in future.

### **Way Forward**

Following India's independence, the State was reorganised by the State Reorganisation Act (1956). Further, various states are carved out of the existing state, based on 'demand and need', for administrative convenience. This situation also applies to the northeastern state but with a different outlook. The demography of the northeast state is very complex compared to others, therefore, solution regarding demarcation of boundaries also requires a different approach. Almost all states were carved out of Assam except Manipur and Tripura in the northeastern region. These two states are the only ones with no boundary dispute with Assam. It indicates the fallout of the policy adopted, to demarcate the boundary, while carving out a new state from Assam. Any delay will further complicate the issue and keep the northeastern state entangled in conflict. Thus, policy initiatives that needs to be adopted are:

- ***Changing Approach Towards Border Dispute Management in Northeast India.***

The government's approach towards the northeastern region has always been passive; therefore, a proactive approach is required for early solutions. First and foremost, is changing the policy initiative from a 'top-down' to a 'bottom-up' approach. It indicates the formation of committees at the village level and then resonating at the higher level. It will infuse confidence among the locals and help propagate the idea of

a peaceful resolution for better livelihood. Otherwise, the earlier committee failed to address the grievance of the local people due to lack of representation. Thus, including locals in the regional committee is a must and holds more relevance for northeastern people. The northeast region has always been neglected; now, the locals view any positive development with suspicion. The inclusion of locals would bridge the gap between government and people, thus, enhancing communication. Building trust is crucial and comes with building institutions which must hold locals as their stakeholders. However, the solution must not be seen as a win or loss to any state, it's a mutual gain and this must be done with utmost responsibility. With the help of NGOs, civil societies and student organisations, the government must propagate the idea of 'mutual co-existence and development'.

**Figure 4: Possible Steps for Resolution of Border Dispute through Bottom-up Approach**

<b>Step 01</b>	<b>Recognition of Inter -State dispute site along the border</b>
<b>Step 02</b>	<b>Recognition of villages falling within the disputed territory</b>
<b>Step 03</b>	<b>Formation of regional committee within the village and organising roundtable conference among the villagers</b>
<b>Step 04</b>	<b>Addressing the recommendation and grievance of the villagers with the regional committee appointed (It includes SC appointed member having all stakeholders from the region)</b>
<b>Step 05</b>	<b>Demarcation and delineation of inter-state boundary in accordance with the recommendation of regional committee</b>
<b>Step 06</b>	<b>Re-habilitation and compensation to the displaced people, if any</b>

*Source: Prepared by Author*

- **Give and Take Including Whole of Government Approach.** This approach is often used to solve complex issues. The recent usage is seen in solving the decade old boundary dispute between India and Bangladesh.<sup>55</sup> India gave 111 enclaves while receiving 51 enclaves in return; however, the outcome is 'shared prosperity' and 'peace' in the region. The crucial element in this approach is a political willingness

from the government and all stakeholders, including opposition parties. Recently, Assam and Meghalaya have solved some sites of dispute with this method, but opposition parties raised questions and protests were lodged. Therefore, this requires a whole of government approach with inclusion of all stakeholders in decision making. The critical aspect that needs consideration, while adopting a give-and-take approach, is by not seeing it as a zero-sum game. It must be a win-win situation for both parties; redressal must be the responsibility of the union government and due compensation must be given on time.

- **Formation of Boundary Commission Whose Recommendations Must be Binding on all Parties.** Committees are generally formed to understand the ground situation; however, their success depends on effective implementation. In the northeastern state, committees have been formed repeatedly to resolve border disputes, but varied political interests of various groups, resulted in poor implementation of recommendations. Thus, it becomes crucial that the committee's recommendation be binding and made all-inclusive—it must include all stakeholders. The decision must reflect all aspects of the region and be implemented strongly.
- **Time Bound Dispute Resolution Module.** Another critical aspect that needs a review is, time bound resolution of the border dispute. The northeastern states are poised to be the nation's growth engine and holds immense potential interest in terms of human capital and natural resources. The interstate boundary dispute creates trouble when other security parameters subsumes in the region. Therefore, resolution must be time-bound, and central government's intervention is critical. The government of all the states, with neutral parties and all stakeholders must look forward to 2025 as the year of resolving border disputes in the northeast region. Any delay beyond this will not be good for overall security apparatus of northeast India. Delays in resolving such issues will make the resolution process difficult and complex.
- **People Friendly Re-habilitation and Settlement Policy.** Resolution of border disputes, at times, leads to displacement of people. A people-friendly settlement policy will augment the dispute-resolution process and help develop trust among the people. Resettlement is the core concern of the people residing in the disputed



area—their main issue is the loss of land and livelihood. If the government can ensure proper rehabilitation of the people in the resolution process, the resolution will become peaceful and people-friendly.

It is in the nation's interest to resolve the inter-state border dispute in northeast India. Any delay in such a process will undoubtedly create problems in times to come. However, while resolving such issues, the local public's interest must be the government's priority. The point here is that policymakers must understand the dispute's core issues. Otherwise, the minor issue will lead to conflict among the local people. Many times, minor personal problems among the different tribes and communities will lead to a boundary dispute, and people with a vested interest will flourish in those opportunities. The boundary issues in the northeast are emotive and, with time, are becoming sensitive. Therefore, all stakeholders must take the matter seriously and resolve the issue as early as possible.

An easy way out is to resolve the dispute at the village level. Addressing the issue from the bottom helps resolve genuine and core grievances to the conflict. Therefore, people's interests must remain paramount in solving such crisis. Also, resolving these disputes will help improve the region's connectivity and reduce alienation among the people, which is core to India's Act East Policy.

## End Notes

---

1. Amrita Dhillon, "Indigenous Culture and Tribes of North-East", *The Kootneeti*, 03 November 2017. Available at <https://thekootneeti.in/2017/11/03/indigenous-culture-and-tribes-of-north-east/>. Accessed on 22 January 2022.
2. Sreeradha Datta, *Act East Policy and Northeast India*, New Delhi: Vitasta Publishing Pvt Ltd, 2021, p.2. ISBN 978-81-948200-5-5.
3. Neeraj Chauhan, "Insurgency-Related Incidents Dipped by 80% in N-E States Last Year: MHA data", *The Hindustan Times*, 02 March 2021. Available at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/80-reduction-in-insurgency-related-incidents-in-n-e-states-last-year-mha-data-101614676827488.html>. Accessed on 22 January 2022.
4. Tora Agarwal, Deeptiman Tiwary, "Five Assam Policemen Killed in Violent Border Dispute with Mizoram", *The Indian Express*, 27 July 2021. Available at <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/five-assam-policemen-killed-in-violent-turn-to-border-dispute-with-mizoram-7423835/>. Accessed on 22 January 2022.



5. Zia Haq, "Why Northeast has a Hot Internal Border", *The Hindustan Times*, 27 July 2021. Available at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/why-northeast-has-hot-internal-borders-101627377129231.html>. Accessed on 22 January 2022.
6. Pushpita Das, "Inter-State Border Dispute in Northeast", *MP-IDSA*, 29 July 2021. Available at <https://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/disputes-in-northeast-india-pdas-290721>. Accessed on 24 January 2022.
7. Tora Agarwala, "Explained: At the root of Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border dispute, a Committee Report from 1951", *The Indian Express*, 03 February 2022. Available at <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-at-the-root-of-assam-arunachal-pradesh-border-dispute-a-committee-report-from-1951-7750914/>. accessed on 26 March 2022.
8. N.6.
9. N.7.
10. "Border Protection and Development", *Government of Assam*. Available at <https://bpdd.assam.gov.in/portlets/border-dispute>. Accessed on 26 March 2022.
11. Outlook Web Desk, "Assam-Arunachal Border: Road Construction Leads to Exchange of Fire", *Outlook*. Available at <https://www.outlookindia.com/national/assam-arunachal-border-road-construction-leads-to-exchange-of-fire-news-47950>. Accessed on 22 April 2022.
12. Special Correspondent, "After the Row with Mizoram, Assam Raises Border Issue with Arunachal", *The Hindu*, 06 November 2021. Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/after-the-row-with-mizoram-assam-raises-border-issue-with-arunachal/article33041756.ece>. Accessed on 24 April 2022.
13. Rokibuz Zaman, "Assam: Won't let An Inch of Land to be Encroached Upon", *The Hindu*, 05 July 2021. Available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/assam-wont-let-an-inch-of-land-to-be-encroached-upon/articleshow/84134282.cms>. Accessed on 24 April 2022.
14. N.6.
15. Ibid.
16. "Tarun Chatterjee Recommendation will be the Basis for Any Talk with Assam: Rebia", *The Arunachal Times*, 19 August 2022. Available at <https://arunachaltimes.in/index.php/2021/08/19/tarun-chatterjee-recommendation-will-be-the-basis-for-any-talks-with-assam-rebia/>. Accessed on 24 April 2022.
17. N.6.
18. Ibid.
19. "Assam and Arunachal Pradesh Sign Namsai Declaration", *Pratidin Times*, 15 July 2022. Available at <https://www.pratidintime.com/latest-assam-news-breaking-news-assam/assam-and-arunachal-pradesh-sign-namsai-declaration>. Accessed on 25 April 2022.
20. ANI, "Arunachal Pradesh, Assam CMs Sign Namsai Declaration to Resolve Dispute of 86 Villages", *The Times of India*, 16 July 2022. Available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/videos/news/arunachal-pradesh-assam-cms-sign-namsai-declaration-to-resolve-dispute-of-86-villages/videoshow/92907934.cms>. Accessed on 17 July 2022.
21. Bikas Singh, "Interstate Border Clashes between 1979 and 2021 led to the Death of at least 157 in Assam", *The Economic Times*, 10 August 2021. Available at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/interstate-border-clashes-between-1979-and-2021-led-to-the-death-of-at-least-157-in-assam/articleshow/85211561.cms>. Accessed on 17 July 2022.
22. Ibid.
23. "Naga-Akbar Hydari Accord (Nine Point Agreement) Kohima", 26-28 June 1947. Available at [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IN\\_470628\\_Naga-Akbar%20Hydari%20Accord.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IN_470628_Naga-Akbar%20Hydari%20Accord.pdf). Accessed on 17 July 2022.
24. "The 16 Point Agreement between the Government of India and the Naga People's Convention", 26 July 1960. Available at [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IN\\_600726\\_The%20sixteen%20point%20Agreement\\_0.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IN_600726_The%20sixteen%20point%20Agreement_0.pdf). Accessed on 19 July 2022.



25. N.6 and The State of Nagaland Act, 1962. Available at <https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A1962-27.pdf>. Accessed on 25 April 2022.  
\*In 1925, British India issued notification defining boundary between Naga hills and adjacent district of Assam.
26. Samudra Gupta Kashyap, "Explained: Assam Vs Nagaland, A Border Dispute of Five decade", *The Indian Express*, 22 August 2014. Available at <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/explained-assam-vs-nagaland-a-border-dispute-of-five-decades/>. Accessed on 27 July 2022.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ramesh Menon, "Naga Settlers Cause Tension in Border Village of Assam", *India Today*, 15 October 1987. Available at <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/indiascope/story/19871015-naga-settlers-cause-tension-in-border-villages-of-assam-799401-1987-10-15>. Accessed on 22 August 2022.
30. Ibid.
31. Nazimuddin Siddique, "Assam-Nagaland Border Violence", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 13 September 2014. Available at <https://www.epw.in/journal/2014/37/reports-states-web-exclusives/assam-nagaland-border-violence.html>. Accessed on 27 July 2022.
32. Ibid.
33. N. 6.
34. RK Shastri, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry on the Incidents Relating to the Assam-Nagaland Border Conflict April-June 1985", Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Available at <https://indianculture.gov.in/reports-proceedings/report-commission-inquiry-incidents-relating-assam-nagaland-border-conflict>. Accessed on 29 July 2022.
35. Bhubaneswar Bhattacharyya, "Assam-Nagaland Boundary", *The Troubled Border*. Shri Khagendra Narayan Dutta Baruah (1995), pp. 1-97.
36. N.6.
37. Tanmay Das and Angshuman Sarma, "Nagaland-Assam Dispute: Past Perspective", *Newslandry*, 09 September 2014. Available at <https://www.newslandry.com/2014/09/09/nagaland-assam-border-dispute-past-perspective>. Accessed on 29 July 2022.
38. Ibid.
39. N.21.
40. N.06.
41. Bhadra Sinha, "In a first, SC Refers Border Row to Mediator", *The Hindustan Times*, 21 August 2010. Available at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/delhi-news/in-a-first-sc-refers-border-row-to-mediators/story-eo8Z3VP9AHkZR4UVzAK6YI.html>. Accessed on 01 August 2022.
42. PTI, "Assam-Nagaland Border Case, SC takes Note of Adjournment Plea", *The Hindu*, 02 July 2015. Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/assamnagaland-border-case-supreme-court-takes-note-of-adjournment-plea/article7378823.ece>. Accessed on 02 August 2022.
43. Ibid.
44. Special Correspondent, "Assam, Nagaland Discuss Way to End Decades-Old Border row", *The Hindu*, 26 September 2020. Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/assam-nagaland-discuss-ways-to-end-decades-old-border-row/article32701721.ece>. Accessed on 04 August 2022.
45. Prabin Kalita, "Border Dispute: Assam Sign Agreement with Nagaland to Diffuse Stand-off on Eastern Front", *The Times of India*, 01 August 2021. Available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/border-dispute-assam-signs-agreement-with-nagaland-to-diffuse-stand-off-on-eastern-front/articleshow/84925132.cms>. Accessed on 04 August 2022.
46. Express News Service, "Assam-Mizoram Border Dispute: Faultline from History Flares up in the Present", *The Indian Express*, 30 July 2021. Available at <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/assam-mizoram-border-dispute-fault-line-from-history-flares-up-in-the-present-7423884/>. Accessed on 04 August 2022.



47. Ibid.
48. N. 6.
49. Ibid.
50. Ratnadip Choudhary, "Mizoram Hardens Stands on Assam Border, Blockade Enter Fourth Day", *NDTV*, 31 October 2020. Available at <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/mizoram-hardens-stand-on-assam-border-blockade-enters-fourth-day-2318485>. Accessed on 18 August 2022.
51. Ibid.
52. N.6.
53. Ibid.
54. Utpal Parashar and H Lalhimum, "Assam, Mizoram CMs Agreed to Form Regional Panel to Resolve Border Dispute", *The Hindustan Times*, 21 September 2022. Available at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/assam-mizoram-cms-agree-to-form-regional-panel-to-resolve-boundary-dispute-101663769140305.html>. Accessed 10 October 2022.
55. Library of Congress, 11 August 2015. Available at <https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2015-08-11/bangladesh-india-decades-long-border-dispute-resolved-through-implementation-of-land-swap-agreement/#:~:text=India%20will%20hand%20over%2051,Nearly%204%20Decades%2C%20supra.>. Accessed on 10 October 2022.

---

*The views expressed and suggestions made in the article are solely of the author in his personal capacity and do not have any official endorsement. Attributability of the contents lies purely with author.*



**CENTRE FOR LAND WARFARE STUDIES (CLAWS)**

RPSO Complex, Parade Road, Delhi Cantt, New Delhi 110010

Tel.: +91-11-25691308, Fax: +91-11-25692347, CLAWS Army No. 33098; Email: [landwarfare@gmail.com](mailto:landwarfare@gmail.com)

Website: [www.claws.in](http://www.claws.in)