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Inter-state Border Conflicts of Assam with Meghalaya in terms of Social, Economic and Political Factors

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Abstract

The border conflict between Assam and Meghalaya has been a long-standing issue which started from colonial era administrative demarcations and following readjustments of seven states in Northeast India. Meghalaya became an autonomous state in 1970 when it was carved out of Assam and then declared a full-fledged state in 1972 leading to disputes between the two states over precise boundary demarcation. It has been more than 50 years since the conflict arose. There are various recommendations from academicians, cartographers, non-governmental organisations to resolve the matter through dialogue and advance technology such as satellite mapping. This paper analyses the root causes and historical factors behind the conflicts. Analysis done by the researcher based on the pilot study conducted and primary data collected from the communities living along the Assam-Meghalaya border and the data has also been collected from secondary sources. In the study, the researcher opted for qualitative method research design while also incorporating a descriptive approach. The primary respondents are the people affected from conflicts in 12 hotspots along Assam-Meghalaya border.

Keywords: Boundary; Border; Conflict; Inter-state; North-east India

INTRODUCTION

According to Census 2011, by 2030, the population of India is going to be youth dominated and in case of Northeastern region would be the same as of rest of the country. The young population is considered as an asset in the nation building, but by the time might not be able to sustain even their households in certain situations. At present, if we look at the service sector workforce, the youth from the Northeastern region of India has a significant contribution to it. Most of the literate youth from the Northeast especially from Assam migrate to the major cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, etc in search of job of different scale. In comparison to other states of the country, the Northeast region has more than 70% literacy but there are very less income generation activities which can contribute to upliftment of the livelihood.

While there is unity and respect among the diverse population across the region of Northeast but due to various reasons such as geographical disadvantages, political unawareness, interstate border conflicts, the development in the region has been stagnant. Almost all the states in Northeast India are having a certain degree of conflict with neighboring states as far as borders are concerned. Assam has border disputes with the maximum number of states because four out of seven Northeastern states were carved out of it post-Independence. In the Northeast, Assam is having border issue with Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland except Manipur and Tripura. According to Assam Assembly records, the total area of border disputes with the four states is around 690 sq km (Zahan, 2022).

OBJECTIVE

To examine the impact of inter-state border conflicts on local communities in terms of social, economic, and political factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bhattacharjee (1989), in his book, *Sequences in Development of Northeast India*, provides a comprehensive overview of the historical development of the Northeast region of India. The book delves into various aspects of the region's development, including its political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions. It explores the unique challenges faced by the region, such as ethnic diversity, insurgency movements, and issues of identity and autonomy. Through a series of chapters written by experts in the field, the book analyzes the historical processes that have shaped the

region and examines the contemporary issues and debates surrounding its development. The book serves as a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, and anyone interested in understanding the complexities of the Northeast region of India.

Baruah (2000), in his book *"India Against Itself: Assam and the Politics of Nationality,"* examines the insurgency in Assam to understand the dynamics of subnationalism in India. Baruah traces Assam's political and economic history, highlighting tensions between pan-Indianism and Assamese subnationalism. He argues that India's centralized governmental structure has contributed to insurgencies, human rights abuses, ethnic violence, and a drift toward illiberal democracy in the region. Baruah suggests that in multiethnic polities, loose federations make better democracies and more economic sense. This work, drawing on scholarly research and the author's insider perspective, contributes to the study of ethnic conflict and has broad relevance for the history of nationality.

Hazarika (2000), in the book, *Strangers of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's Northeast*, delves into the complex and often turbulent history of India's Northeast region and presents a collection of stories that explore the region's diverse cultures, histories, and conflicts. The book covers a wide range of topics, including the various insurgencies that have plagued the region, the impact of these conflicts on the lives of ordinary people, and the efforts towards peace and reconciliation. The author brings to light the voices of those who have been marginalized and often ignored in the mainstream narrative, providing a nuanced and insightful perspective on the region's socio-political landscape. Through his engaging storytelling and in-depth analysis, the author sheds light on the complexities of the Northeast and challenges readers to rethink their perceptions of this often misunderstood region.

Baruah (2003), in his article, *Citizens and Denizens: Ethnicity, Homelands, and the Crisis of Displacement in Northeast India*, explains that the US Committee for Refugees estimated in 2000 that there were 157,000 displaced persons in northeast India, many of whom are 'tribal' people entitled to protective discrimination under the Indian Constitution. This discrimination restricts the rights of 'non-tribals' in areas such as land ownership, business licenses, and access to elected office. The concept of exclusive homelands for ethnically defined groups has become normalized in the region, leading to a divisive politics of insiders and outsiders and resulting in

displacements. In states like Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh, non-tribals are considered denizens, a regime that originated in colonial times to protect vulnerable aboriginal peoples. Recent years have seen internal displacements due to violent ethno-national conflicts in Northeast India. The chapter discusses the crisis of citizenship arising from the tension between ethnic homelands and the political economy of the region, examining the historical and institutional context of ethno-political conflicts and why they lead to ethnic violence and displacement. The author suggests that former ethnic subjects should become full citizens and that the descendants of immigrants should not remain perpetual 'outsiders' in Assam, proposing dual citizenship as a potential solution.

Singha & Nayak (2015), in their article, *Reconsidering Ethnic Based Autonomy Movements in Meghalaya: An Analysis*, explained that the ethnic-based autonomy movements in Meghalaya highlight the region's complex socio-political dynamics. Home to major tribes like the Khasis, Garos, and Jaintias, the state has seen tensions due to historical grievances, economic disparity, and cultural assertions. Post-independence, movements initially targeted migrants but have increasingly shifted to inter-tribal feuds over perceived uneven development and political representation. The rise of insurgent groups like the HNLC (Hyniewtrep National Liberation Council) and ANVC (Achik National Volunteer Council) underscores demands for exclusive tribal homelands such as 'Khasi Land' and 'Achik Land.' Despite efforts to address these tensions, underlying issues of economic inequality, elite exploitation, and fragmented governance continue to fuel unrest.

Azad (2016), in his article, *Assam-Meghalaya Border Dispute over Langpih Remains Unresolved amidst Police Firing, Centre Intervenes*, explained about the situation in Langpih, a village on the border of Kamrup district in Assam and West Khasi Hills district in Meghalaya, has been a disputed area for over fifty years. Former Meghalaya chief minister Donkumar Roy claimed the village for Meghalaya, citing its historical association with West Garo Hills district post-1972 reorganization. The conflict escalated in 1974 when Meghalaya police evicted Nepali communities engaged in animal husbandry, prompting Assam Police involvement and subsequent tensions. Issues worsened after clashes in 2010 resulted in fatalities, and further disputes over land and jurisdiction persist. Both states accuse each other of

encroachments and claim multiple unresolved border disputes. Efforts by the Union government and state assemblies have so far failed to bring a lasting resolution to the Langpih issue.

Borah & Chakraborty (2018), in their article, *Conflicts in Northeast India: Intra-State Conflicts with Reference to Assam*, explained that Northeast India has long been plagued by conflicts stemming from historical, ethnic, and political factors, making it one of the most conflict-prone regions in the country. The genesis of these conflicts lies in colonial-era policies that disrupted the harmony of indigenous communities, introducing artificial ethnic identities and administrative divisions. Post-independence, the region's isolation, cultural diversity, and perceived neglect by the Indian state have fuelled separatist and sub-nationalist movements. In Assam, intra-state conflicts like the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) insurgency over migration and resource exploitation, and the Bodo movement for statehood, highlight the region's complex socio-political dynamics. Compounded by Northeast India's strategic location and cross-border links, these conflicts have evolved into prolonged struggles. Addressing the root causes, prioritizing demands, and fostering trust through measures like demilitarization are critical for achieving lasting peace.

Nath (2021), in his article, *Assam, Meghalaya to form Regional Committees to resolve Inter-state border Dispute*, gave an update about the matter. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma have agreed to establish regional committees to address inter-state border disputes. Following their second round of meetings in Guwahati, they announced the formation of three committees, each led by cabinet ministers from both states. These committees will focus on resolving disputes in six identified areas: Tarabari, Gizang, Hahim, Bakhlapara, Khanapara (Pilingkata), and Ratacherra. The committees, consisting of five members including bureaucrats and possibly local representatives plan to visit these locations and submit reports within 30 days. Both Chief Ministers emphasized that resolving these initial disputes would pave the way for addressing the remaining six areas of contention. They also expressed optimism that the regional committees would bridge differences, with higher-level intervention if needed.

Wahlong (2021), in his paper, *Internal Border Conflicts of North East Region: Special Focus on Assam and its Bordering States*, explained that

Meghalaya, established in 1972 after separating from Assam, moved its capital from Shillong to Dispur. A longstanding dispute between the states revolves around Langpih, in the district of West Garo Hills bordering Assam's Kamrup district, claimed by both for over a century due to differing border demarcations. Originally part of Kamrup during colonial rule, Langpih became part of Meghalaya post-independence, contested by Assam as its territory. Tensions escalated sporadically since 1974, notably in 2010 when clashes between Khasi, Garo, and Nepali communities left casualties. Subsequent incidents, including a 2012 hunger strike and 2018 clashes involving Assam police and locals, have underscored ongoing volatility. Efforts for resolution, such as a 2020 appeal to the Home Ministry by a Meghalaya legislator, aim to stabilize the region amid sporadic tensions, emphasizing the need for sustained border stability efforts.

Gupta (2023) in his article, *Tensions Arise in Assam-Meghalaya Border Areas Despite Government Resolution to Settle Boundary Disputes*, reported that tensions persist in Assam-Meghalaya border areas despite government efforts to resolve long-standing disputes. The conflict stems from Meghalaya's refusal to accept the Assam Reorganisation Act, 1969, leading to 12 disputed points along their over 2,000 sq km boundary. Recent incidents include houses being burnt and violent clashes, resulting in fatalities in November 2022 and injuries in May 2023. While Chief Ministers agreed to a "give and take" policy for demarcation in March 2022, some communities oppose this transfer of territory. The legal status is ongoing, with a Meghalaya High Court interim order being stayed by the Supreme Court.

Laitphlang (2025) in his article, *Assam-Meghalaya Tensions Rise Amid Fresh Land Dispute*, reported that tensions recently escalated at the Assam-Meghalaya border in Block I, where 400 Meghalaya villagers stormed a plantation site maintained by Assam's Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), alleging encroachment. Protesters dismantled structures and uprooted saplings, leading to Assam Police using tear gas. This incident occurred despite ongoing peace efforts and follows previous violence. The dispute, stemming from Meghalaya's 1972 carving from Assam, involves 12 contested areas. While a March 2022 Memorandum of Understanding

resolved six sectors, six, including Block I, remain unresolved. Recent Chief Minister talks aim to erect border pillars by August 2025 and use satellite imaging for further demarcation, but ground-level defiance persists.

METHODOLOGY

The research on border conflict uses qualitative method research design while also incorporating a descriptive approach. The researcher collected primary data from people who were involved in inter-state border conflicts by using interviews and FGDs. Secondary data collected from various academic institutions, NGOs, social activists, development professionals, defence personnel, local community representatives, journals, articles and newspapers.

The study is exploratory due to limited available information and aims to explore various aspects related to ethnic groups. It includes interviews with individuals who are affected in border conflicts, community members, affected children and their parents, civil society organizations, service providers, community leaders, academicians, and media persons. Telephonic interviews are also to be conducted for convenience. Additionally, the researcher collected data through focus group discussions with various groups. Observation and fieldwork analysis were also a primary tool to collect data.

RESEARCH DESIGN

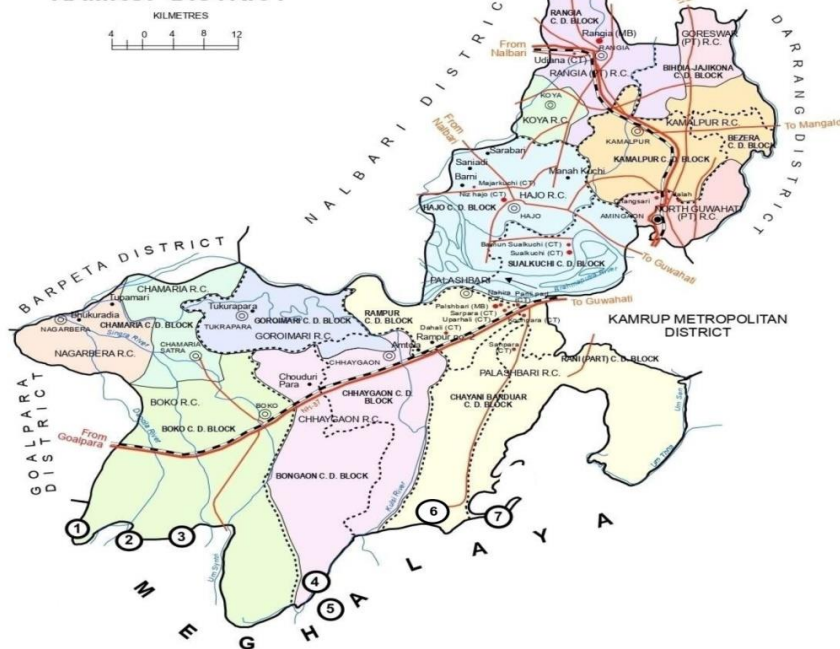
In this study, the researcher opted for Qualitative method research design while also incorporating a descriptive approach.

The researcher has selected Exploratory sequential design to conduct the study. The mentioned research designs make the study comprehensive and enable the researcher to do an in-depth analysis.

THE STUDY AREA

In this research, the study area mainly cover the region of Assam-Meghalaya border areas consist of 12 land dispute points, along the border of these two states, have been a bone of contention. These include Langpih, Upper Tarabari, Gijang reserve forest, Hahim, Borduar, Bakhlapara, Nongwah-Matamur, Khanapara-Pilingkata, Desh Dumra, Block I and Block II, Khanduli-Psiar and Ratacherra.

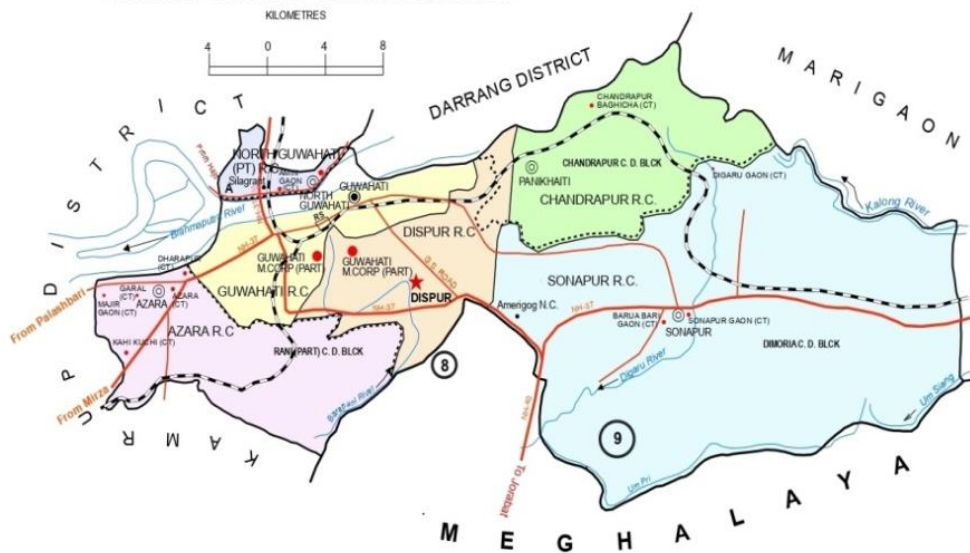
INDIA
ASSAM
KAMRUP DISTRICT



1. Tarabari
2. Gijang
3. Langpih
4. Hahim
5. Nongwah-
6. Borduar
7. Bakhlapara

Fig.1: Kamrup Rural District with disputed areas

INDIA
ASSAM
KAMRUP METROPOLITAN DISTRICT



8. Khanapara-
9. Desh Dumra

Fig.2: Kamrup Metropolitan District with disputed areas

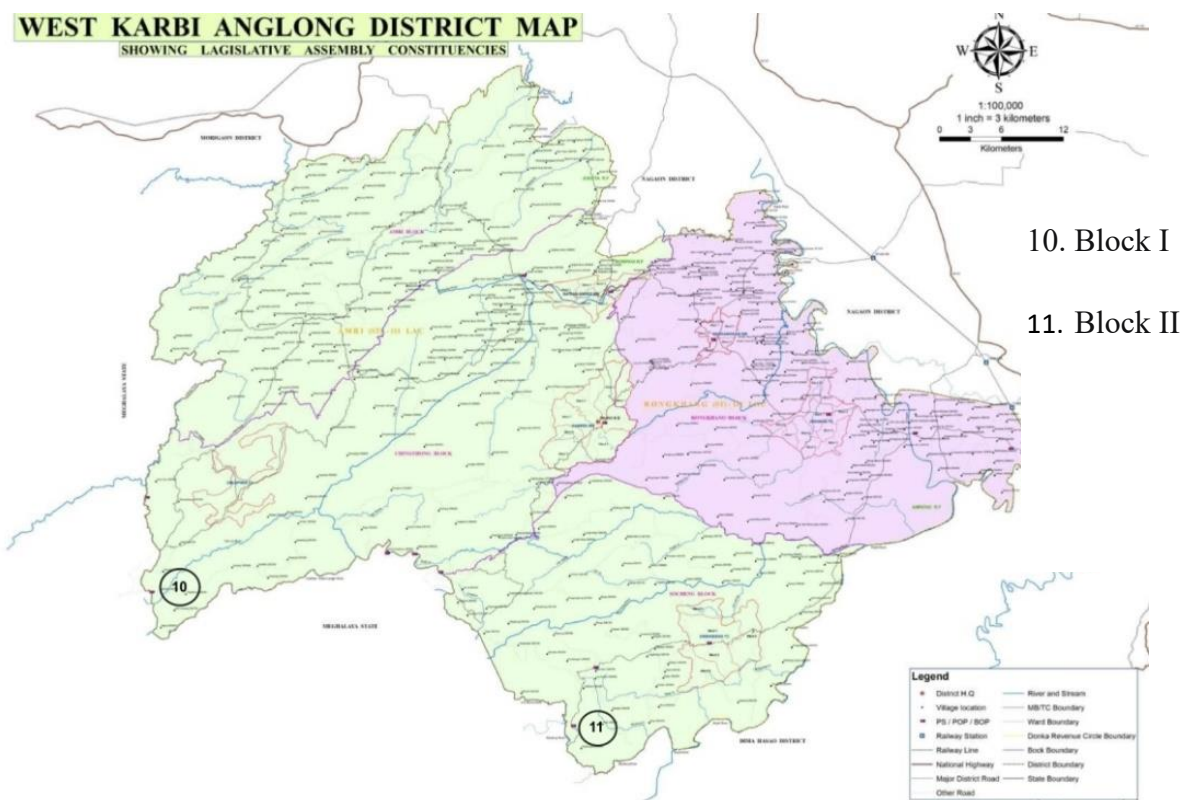


Fig.3: West Karbi Anglong District with disputed areas

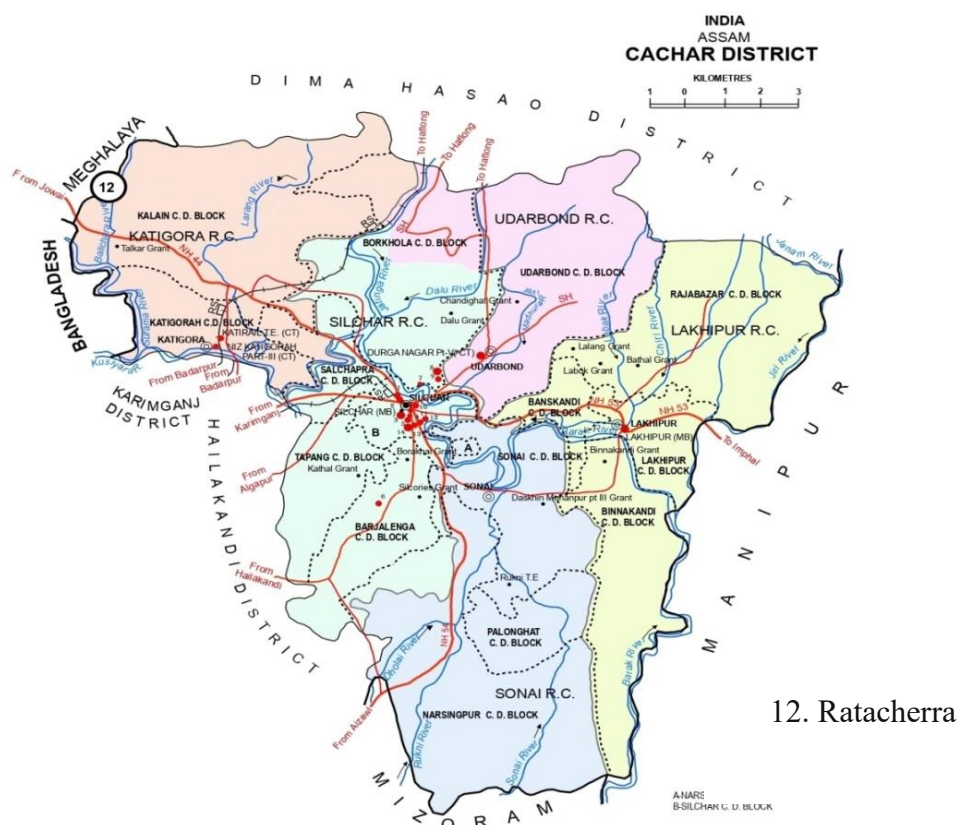


Fig.4: Cachar District with disputed areas

[Map Source: Directorate of Census Operations, Assam]

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The researcher opted for Purposive Sampling for selecting the conflict areas under Non Probability Sampling.

The researcher has chosen Systematic Random Sampling again for choosing the community samples under Probability Sampling for the study.

SAMPLE SIZE

The study aims at employing Purposeful sampling to select participants, ensuring diversity and representation. Key informants are identified through a Systematic Random sampling approach, harnessing the knowledge and network of the participants primarily involved stakeholders such as local citizen, Government line departments related to Panchayat, Land, Revenue collection, Armed or Police Force, Border Authorities, Forest Authorities Community based organisations, Non-government organisations, etc.

DATA COLLECTION

The data collected by the researcher through in-depth, unstructured individual interview, household visits and different government office visits. The pilot study provided an insight was conducted with the help of an interview schedule developed by the researcher.

Primary Data

The data collected by the researcher with the help of the interview schedule were unstructured

conversations. This helps to find valid and accurate data which considered as primary data.

Secondary Data

The researcher gathered secondary data from different sources such as online articles, journals, newspapers, books, research papers, magazines, published data from different government line departments, NGOs, etc.

ANALYSIS

The analysis made by the researcher is based on the pilot study conducted, primary data and secondary data collected by the researcher to examine the impact of inter-state border conflicts on local communities in terms of social, economic, and political factors.

The pilot study was conducted by the researcher in Borduar and Bakhlapara area from 22nd May to 27th June, 2025. This analysis drawn by the researcher on the provided excerpts, “Assam-Meghalaya Border Conflicts: Local Perspectives and Solutions,” to provide insights into the complex nature of the disputes from the viewpoint of those directly affected.

The analysis integrates the reviewed literature and field-based insights, and explicitly examines social, economic, and political impacts on local communities, while situating the dispute within the broader Assam-Meghalaya context.

A time-line can be formed regarding the Assam-Meghalaya Border Dispute

Year	Key Events	Thematic Significance
1951	Boundary recommendations by Bordoloi Committee	Colonial-administrative legacy, ignored ethnic realities
1970	Meghalaya carved out as autonomous state	Beginning of territorial ambiguity
1972	Meghalaya attained statehood	Institutionalisation of dispute
1983	Joint Committee recommended Survey of India demarcation	Governance failure due to lack of follow up
1985	Rejection of Chandrachud Committee report	Political mistrust
1991	Partial demarcation	Administrative deadlock
2011	Central intervention and nodal officers	Conflict management, not resolution
2019	Supreme court petition dismissed	Judicial limits in Federal disputes
2022	MoU to resolve 6 out of 12 dispute areas	Cooperative federalism milestone, delay in implementation
2023-present	Mukroh, Lapangap clashes	Persistent local level tensions

Table 1. Timeline of the Assam–Meghalaya Border Dispute.

The historical evolution of the Assam–Meghalaya border dispute reflects persistent administrative ambiguity, political mistrust, and delayed resolution, resulting in recurring local tensions. Originating from the 1951 boundary recommendations, colonial-era demarcations ignored ethnic, cultural, and traditional land-use realities, creating enduring structural fault lines. Meghalaya’s transition to autonomy in 1970 and statehood in 1972 institutionalized these ambiguities, transforming administrative boundaries into contested interstate borders. Subsequent governance efforts, including the 1983 joint committee and partial demarcation in 1991, failed due to poor

implementation and deepening mistrust, particularly after the rejection of the Chandrachud Committee report. Central and judicial interventions between 2011 and 2019 focused more on conflict management than resolution, revealing institutional limitations. The 2022 MoU marked progress through cooperative federalism by resolving half the disputed areas, yet unresolved sectors continue to trigger violence, as seen in recent incidents. Overall, the dispute illustrates path dependency, institutional inadequacy, and a disconnect between state-level agreements and grassroots realities, underscoring the need for inclusive, community-engaged solutions.

Demography of the 12 disputed area:

Location	No. of Households	No. of Individuals	ST Category	Other Category
Hahim	208	889	561	328
Gizang	130	695	684	11
Upper Tarabari	65	331	331	0
Bakhlapara (Jimirigaon N.C.)	25	123	123	0
Bakhlapara (Jimirigaon)	45	249	249	0
Khanapara-Pilingkata	124	618	579	39
Rathacherra	11	53	0	53
Langpih (Upper Lumpi)	28	147	0	147
Langpih (Lower Lumpi)	130	662	4	658
Borduar	695	3295	2412	883
Nongwah-Matamur	42	256	256	0
Tapat (Block I)	111	609	596	13
Mukroh (Block II)	17	39	39	0
Khanduli-Psiar	8	44	44	0
Desh Dumra	108	596	596	0

Table 2. Demographic profile of the 12 disputed areas. [Source: Census, 2011]

The demographic profile of the twelve disputed areas along the Assam–Meghalaya border shows that tribal communities are disproportionately affected by the inter-state border conflict. In most locations, Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations form an overwhelming majority, indicating that indigenous groups bear the greatest social and economic burden. Villages such as Gizang, Upper Tarabari, Bakhlapara, Nongwah–Matamur, Tapat (Block I) and Mukroh (Block II), Khanduli–Psiar, and Desh Dumra are almost entirely tribal, with ST populations close to 100

percent. Even in mixed-population areas like Hahim, Khanapara–Pilingkata, and Borduar, tribal residents remain numerically dominant, with Borduar alone accounting for over 2,400 ST individuals. Only a few areas, such as Rathacherra and parts of Langpih, have higher non-tribal populations, often intensifying ethnic tensions. Overall, the data highlights that border disputes primarily threaten tribal livelihoods, land rights, cultural identity, and security, underscoring the need for tribal-sensitive, community-led, and rights-based conflict resolution approaches.

Social Impact on Local Communities

Sub-theme	Description	Evidence from Literature / Field Insights
Disrupted Social Relations	Breakdown of inter-community ties	Friendships and kinship strained due to land disputes
Identity Fragmentation	Divided sense of belonging	People born in undivided Assam now divided across states
Displacement & Migration	Forced relocation of families	Temporary camps, migration to safer areas
Education Disruption	Interrupted schooling	School closures, low attendance, exam disruptions
Psychological Trauma	Fear, anxiety, insecurity	Constant fear of sudden violence
Gendered Impact	Women as peace-builders and caregivers	Women play central roles in mediation

Table 3. Social impacts of the border conflict on local communities.

The Assam–Meghalaya border conflict has deeply altered the social fabric of border communities, turning once-shared spaces into zones of tension and mistrust. Beyond territorial disputes, the conflict has strained inter-community relations, weakened kinship ties, and reduced everyday cooperation due to competing land claims. It has also fragmented identity, as residents born in undivided Assam now face divided political and administrative affiliations, leading to feelings of marginalization and insecurity. Recurrent violence has caused displacement and migration, disrupting livelihoods, social networks, and access to basic

services, particularly affecting women, children, and the elderly. Education has suffered through school closures, low attendance, and disrupted examinations, threatening long-term human development. Persistent fear and uncertainty have resulted in widespread psychological distress, often unaddressed due to limited mental health support. Despite these challenges, women have emerged as key peace-builders, mediators, and caregivers. Overall, the conflict represents a profound social crisis, highlighting the need for inclusive, community-based, and gender-sensitive conflict resolution approaches.

Economic Impact and Livelihood Insecurity

Sub-theme	Description	Impact on Communities
Resource Competition	Control over forests, land, minerals	Intensified disputes, illegal exploitation
Livelihood Disruption	Cross-border work restricted	Farmers, daily wage workers affected
Market Decline	Disappearance of traditional markets	Reduced income, trade barriers
Developmental Uncertainty	Investor reluctance	Stalled infrastructure projects
Uneven Development	Competitive infrastructure building	Duplication, inefficiency
Emerging Alternatives	Tourism initiatives (e.g., Orange Village)	Limited but positive economic adaptation

Table 4. Economic impacts and livelihood insecurity in the disputed areas.

The Assam–Meghalaya border conflict has caused significant economic stress and livelihood insecurity for communities in the disputed areas, disrupting traditional economic systems and weakening regional cooperation. Competition over forests, land, and mineral resources has intensified disputes and encouraged illegal exploitation, often disadvantaging

local populations dependent on these resources. Restrictions on cross-border movement have disrupted livelihoods, particularly for farmers and daily wage workers, increasing economic vulnerability and forcing reliance on insecure income sources. Traditional border markets have declined due to insecurity and administrative barriers, reducing

household incomes and raising transportation costs. Persistent conflict has also created developmental uncertainty, discouraging public and private investment and delaying infrastructure projects. Competitive infrastructure development by both states has led to duplication, inefficiency, and uneven growth. Despite these challenges, communities have

Political and Governance Dimensions

Sub-theme	Description	Key Observations
Policy Ambiguity	Lack of clear border enforcement	Conflicting administrative control
Weak Governance	Corruption, lack of accountability	Failure to implement committee findings
Political Instrumentalisation	Border issue used in elections	Rhetoric without grassroots solutions
Limited Security Response	Inadequate policing	Remote police stations, delayed response
Cooperative Federalism	MoU and joint committees	Positive but incomplete progress
Technocratic Solutions	Satellite mapping (NESAC)	Neutral data, but community consent needed

Table 5. Political and governance dimensions of the border dispute.

The Assam–Meghalaya border dispute highlights deep political and governance challenges, where institutional weaknesses and policy ambiguities have prolonged the conflict and affected local communities. The lack of clear and enforceable border demarcation has resulted in overlapping administrative control, creating confusion over land, policing, and public services and escalating tensions. Weak governance marked by corruption, limited accountability, and poor institutional capacity has further undermined resolution efforts, as recommendations from expert committees remain largely unimplemented, eroding public trust. The issue is often politically instrumentalised during elections through ethnic or nationalist rhetoric, deepening divisions without offering grassroots solutions. Inadequate security infrastructure, including remote police stations and delayed responses, leaves communities vulnerable during flare-ups. While recent initiatives such as the MoU and joint committees reflect cooperative federalism and political willingness to compromise, progress remains incomplete. Technocratic solutions like satellite mapping offer neutral data but require community consent. Overall, lasting resolution demands an accountable governance, depoliticisation, clear enforcement, and inclusive, people-centred approaches.

Conclusion

Inter-state border conflicts, as illustrated by the

shown resilience through alternative initiatives such as tourism ventures like the “Orange Village,” offering limited economic opportunities. Overall, sustainable economic recovery depends on lasting peace, clear boundary demarcation, cooperative planning, and community-centered development approaches.

Assam–Meghalaya dispute, have had deep and multidimensional impacts on local communities, extending far beyond questions of territorial control. Socially, these conflicts have fractured long-standing inter-community relations, weakened kinship networks, and created fragmented identities among border residents whose everyday lives do not align with rigid administrative boundaries. Recurrent violence and uncertainty have led to displacement, disrupted education, and widespread psychological distress, particularly affecting women, children, and the elderly. At the same time, women have emerged as key caregivers and peace-builders, highlighting the importance of inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches to conflict resolution.

Economically, border disputes have undermined traditional livelihoods by intensifying competition over land and natural resources, restricting cross-border mobility, and contributing to the decline of local markets. Persistent insecurity and legal ambiguity have discouraged investment and stalled infrastructure development, while competitive state interventions have often resulted in uneven and inefficient use of resources. Although local initiatives such as community-based tourism demonstrate resilience, their sustainability remains dependent on long-term stability.

Politically, policy ambiguity, weak governance, and the instrumentalisation of border issues have

eroded public trust in institutions and limited effective conflict resolution. While recent cooperative federal efforts offer cautious optimism, lasting peace requires people-centred governance, clear demarcation, accountable institutions, and sustained community engagement to ensure that border regions become spaces of security, opportunity, and social cohesion rather than persistent conflict.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical standards were strictly adhered to throughout all stages of the study. Informed consent was obtained from every participant after clearly explaining the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity were ensured, and they were assured that the information provided would be used solely for research purposes. The research design prioritized the well-being of participants and took all necessary measures to avoid harm or discomfort.

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