



# DAILY EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

TOPIC

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**RISING NORTHEAST: A VISION FOR  
THE NORTHEAST INDIA**

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## RIISING NORTHEAST: A VISION FOR THE NORTHEAST INDIA

### Context

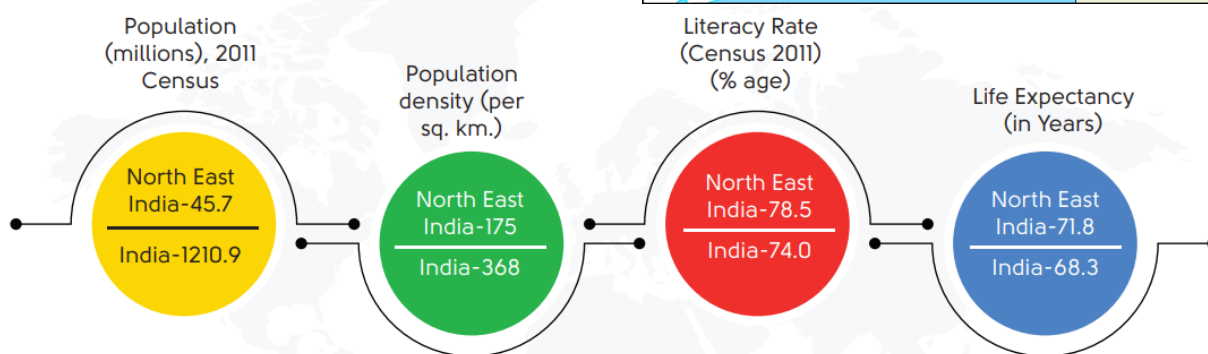
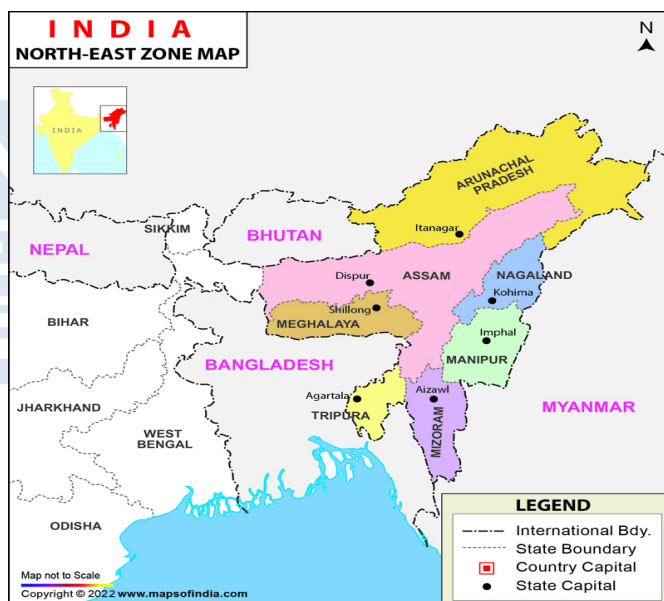
- The Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER) is organizing the '**Rising Northeast: The Investor Summit**' in New Delhi to showcase the investment and trade potential of the Northeast Region of India.

### Key Highlights of Rising Northeast Investors Summit 2025

- Inaugurated by:** Prime Minister of India
  - He outlined the **EAST Vision: Empower, Act, Strengthen, and Transform**, as the **guiding principle** for development.
- Summit Agenda:** Includes ministerial sessions, Business-to-Government (B2G) and Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings, and an exhibition zone.
- Focus Sectors:** Agri, Food Processing & Allied Sectors; Textiles, Handloom & Handicrafts; Entertainment and Sports; Education & Skill Development; Healthcare; IT & ITES; Tourism & Hospitality; Infrastructure and Logistics; and Energy.
- It serves as a platform for policy discussions, business collaborations, and investment partnerships to accelerate the Northeast's growth trajectory.

### About Northeast Region of India

- It consists of **eight states**: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.
- Geographical Area:** Covers 7.97% of India's total landmass.
- Population:** Around 3.78% of India's total population.
  - Hilly areas population:** Over 54%
- International Borders:** Shares 5,484 km of borders with **Bangladesh** (1,880 km), **Myanmar** (1,643 km), **China** (1,346 km), **Bhutan** (516 km) and **Nepal** (99 km).
  - It is positioned as a **gateway** to ASEAN and East Asia, reinforcing India's Act East Policy.



### Concerns and Challenges Hindering Development of Northeast Region

- Geographical & Connectivity Issues:** The region's rugged terrain and heavy monsoons make infrastructure development difficult.
  - Limited rail and road networks restrict trade and mobility.

- **Political & Ethnic Conflicts:** Insurgency and ethnic tensions have historically disrupted stability. Demands for autonomy and special status create governance challenges.
  - ♦ **Naga and Mizo separatist movements** gained momentum until the 1980s.
  - ♦ **ULFA and NDFB** emerged in Assam demanding autonomy and sovereignty.
  - ♦ **Infiltration from Bangladesh** led to large-scale protests, culminating in the **Assam Accord of 1985**.
- **Economic Underdevelopment:** The region contributes **only about 2.8% to India's GDP**, with **Assam being the largest contributor**.
  - ♦ Limited industrialization and dependence on agriculture slow economic growth.
- **Environmental Challenges:** Deforestation, floods, and landslides impact agriculture and infrastructure.
  - ♦ Climate change threatens biodiversity and traditional livelihoods.
- **Policy & Governance Gaps:** Delayed implementation of key policies like the **Inner Line Permit (ILP)** in Meghalaya.
  - ♦ Need for better coordination between central and state governments.

### Policy Transformation in Northeast India

- **From Insurgency to Integration:** Post-Independence, the Northeast remained marred by insurgencies.
  - ♦ The government viewed the Northeast mainly through a **security lens**, with little focus on development. Many in the region felt alienated, both **physically and emotionally**.

### Strategic Shift: Look East to Act East

- The **Look East policy** was initiated by the **Narasimha Rao government** to boost ties with Southeast Asia.
  - ♦ **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** formalized this direction by **establishing the DoNER Ministry in 2001**.
  - ♦ In **2014**, the **Modi government** adopted the **Act East policy**, marking a decisive turn in India's regional strategy.

### Era of Infrastructure and Integration

- **Ground-Level Transformation:** The Northeast became central to India's economic and geopolitical vision.
  - ♦ Union ministers maintained a **continuous presence** in the region, closing the emotional gap between people and government.
- **Infrastructure Push:** Government initiatives like **NESIDS** and **PM-DevINE** aim to improve roads, water supply, and power infrastructure.
  - ♦ **North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS)** launched in 2018 with a **\$1 billion budget** for roads, power, and water supply.
  - ♦ **4,950 km of National Highways** constructed.
  - ♦ **More than \$5Bn invested** via the **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**, allocating **10% of its budget** to the region.
- **Key Infrastructure Projects:**
  - ♦ India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway
  - ♦ Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project
  - ♦ Revival of Stilwell Road
- These initiatives aim to **boost land-based trade with ASEAN**. Additionally, maritime connectivity will be strengthened through the **upcoming Sittwe Port** (Myanmar), and the **Chittagong Port** (Bangladesh).

### Conclusion

- The **'Rising Northeast'** summit symbolizes the transformation of a once-neglected region into a dynamic investment and strategic hub.

- With enhanced connectivity, committed infrastructure development, and sustained political engagement, the Northeast is now poised to serve as **India's gateway to Southeast Asia**.

### Mains Practice Question

[Q] How does the vision for the Northeast align with India's broader economic and strategic goals, and what challenges might hinder its full realization?

Source: IE

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