



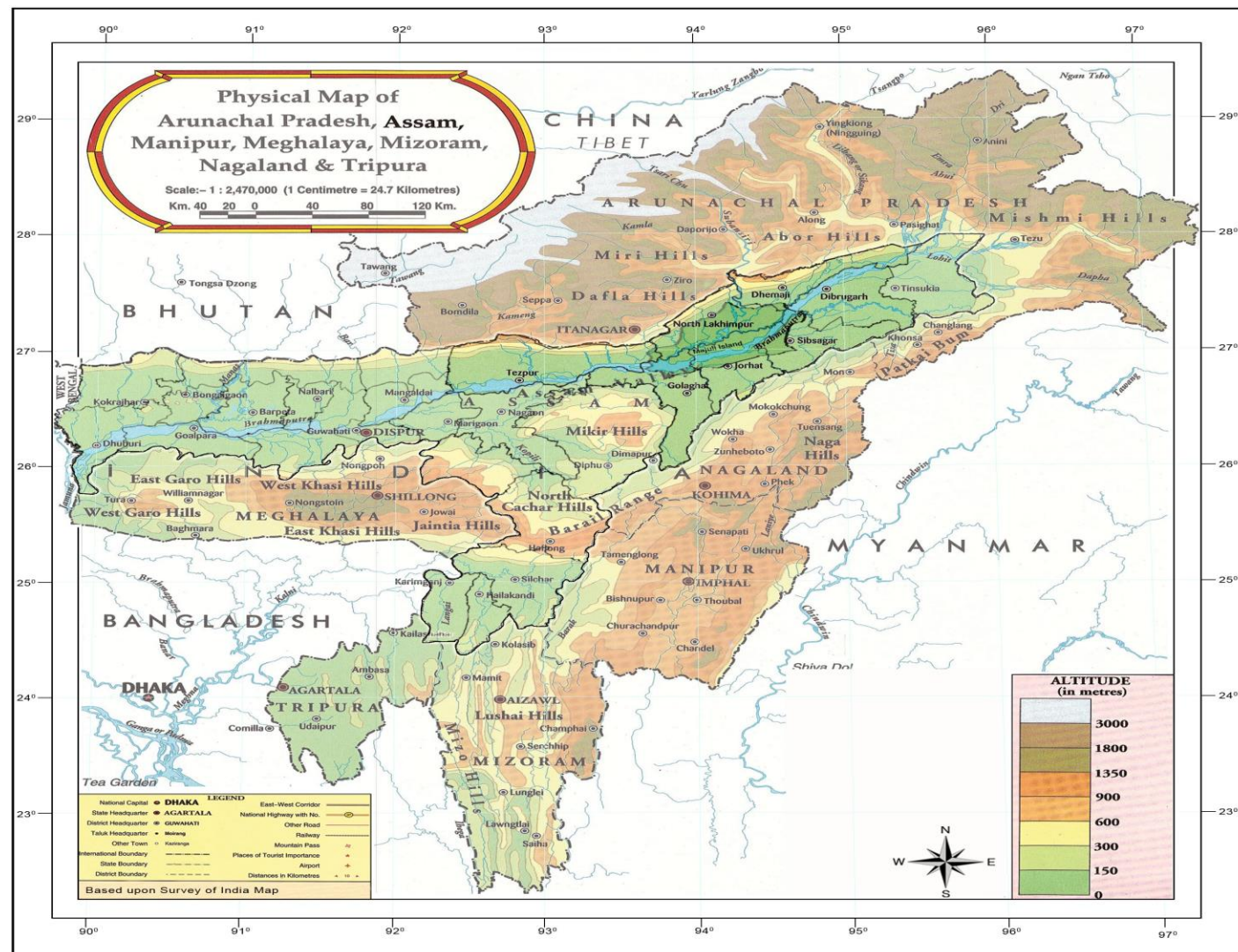
# North-East India: Population Growth, Distribution and Density

- **Demographic Profile**

- India is having the largest concentrations of tribal population of the world (8.2%) and North East region occupies 8.55% (8.6 %) of the tribal population in India.

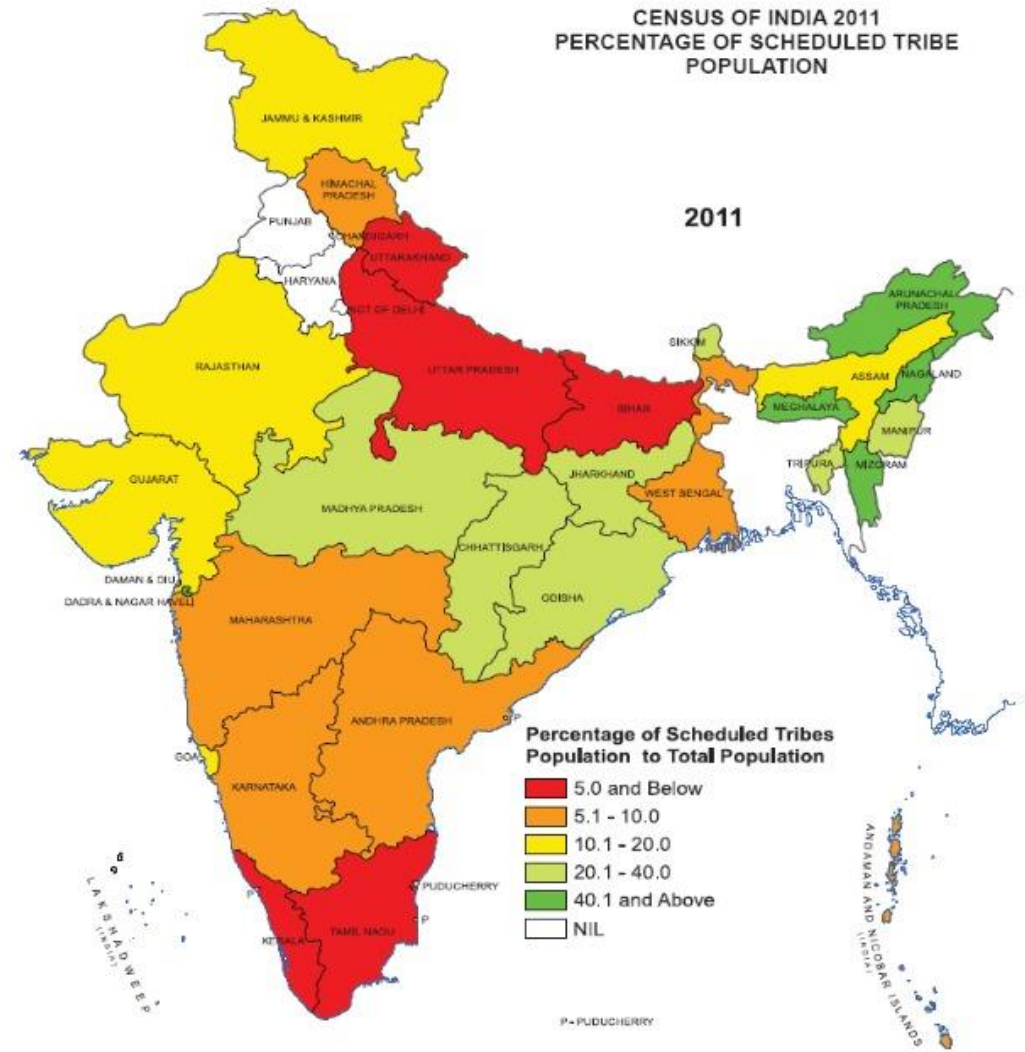
- **Scheduled Tribes in India**

- According to the 2011 Census, the Scheduled Tribes account for 104 million representing about 8.6% of the country's population.
- These Scheduled Tribes are spread throughout the country largely in forest and hilly regions.
- The essential characteristics of these communities are:-
  - Primitive Traits
  - Geographical isolation
  - Distinct culture
  - Shy of contact with community at large
  - Economically backward



CENSUS OF INDIA 2011  
PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED TRIBE  
POPULATION

2011



- The region is shared by the tribals and non-tribals.
- The percentage of non-tribal is 47.22 percent but the land area under the tribal as a whole is more than the area under non-tribal.
- Among the eight states, four states have tribal population as a majority; specifically, Mizoram (94.5 per cent), Nagaland (89.1per cent), Meghalaya (85.9per cent), and Arunachal Pradesh (64.2 per cent) - Census 2011.

State wise no. of district where the ST population is more than 50% and between 25% to 50 percent as per Census 2011						
State	Name	Total Population	ST Population	Percentage of ST	more than 50% ST Popln.	Between 25% to 50% ST Popln.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
01	Jammu & Kashmir	12541302	1493299	11.9	2	3
02	Himachal Pradesh	6864602	392126	5.7	2	1
08	Rajasthan	68548437	9238534	13.5	3	3
11	Sikkim	610577	206360	33.8	1	3
12	Arunachal Pradesh	1383727	951821	68.8	13	3
13	Nagaland	1978502	1710973	86.5	11	0
14	MANIPUR (Excl. 3 Sub-Divisions of Senapati Distt.)	2570390	902740	35.1	5	0
15	Mizoram	1097206	1036115	94.4	8	0
16	Tripura	3673917	1166813	31.8	1	3
17	Meghalaya	2966889	2555861	86.1	7	0
18	Assam	31205576	3884371	12.4	2	5
20	Jharkhand	32988134	8645042	26.2	5	8
21	Odisha	41974218	9590756	22.8	8	6
22	Chhattisgarh	25545198	7822902	30.6	7	6
23	Madhya Pradesh	72626809	15316784	21.1	6	13
24	Gujarat	60439692	8917174	14.8	5	4
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	343709	178564	52.0	1	0
27	Maharashtra	112374333	10510213	9.4	1	3
28	Andhra Pradesh	84580777	5918073	7.0	0	1
31	Lakshadweep	64473	61120	94.8	1	0
35	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	380581	28530	7.5	1	0
	<b>Total</b>				90	62

## **Total Population –**

- The region is the home of extraordinarily diverse mosaic of ethnic groups having distinctive social, cultural and economic identity.
- As per census data from 1971 to 2011 about four percent of India's total population has been contributed from the north-eastern region.
- According to the census 2011, the total population of the region is about 45 million, of which Assam contributes the highest (68%) of the total population followed by Tripura (8 %).
- The population of Assam is 31 million compared to only 3.67 millions in Tripura, 2.96 in Meghalaya and 2.72 millions in Manipur. Sikkim records the least with 0.61 million population.



- **Decadal Growth Rate of Population**

- The most remarkable demographic feature of the region is the very rapid growth of its population.
- The table 1 shows that the growth of population in the north eastern states has been higher than the national average.
- The decadal growth rate ever since 1971- 81 census shows, except for Assam, that the growth rate of population in all the north eastern states is higher than the national average of 24.66.
- Tripura recorded the highest growth rate (50.77 percent) followed by Nagaland (50.05 percent) in 1971-81. In the next decade (i.e. 1981-91), Assam has reported the lowest growth rate of population (24.24 percent) higher than the national average of 23.85 percent.

- During the period 1981-91 to 1991-2001, Nagaland records the highest growth rate of 56.08 percent and 64.46 percent consecutively.
- Except Assam and Sikkim all other states have recorded growth rate of population higher than the national level of 21.54 percent in 1991-2001.
- It is worth noting that Nagaland is the only state which records negative growth rate of -0.47 per cent during the period between 2001 and 2011, while other states like Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram exhibit higher growth rate exceeding national figure of 17.64 per cent.
- This clearly shows that though the North eastern states have been experiencing lower population growth rate compared to earlier decades yet most of the states record the growth rate larger than the nation which should be the major concern in this region.

**Decadal Growth Rate of Population in the North Eastern Region**

State	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001	2001-2011
Arunachal Pradesh	35.15	36.83	27.00	25.92
Assam	23.36	24.24	18.92	16.93
Manipur	32.46	29.29	24.86	18.65
Meghalaya	32.04	32.86	30.65	27.82
Mizoram	48.55	39.70	28.82	22.78
Nagaland	50.05	56.08	64.53	-0.47
Sikkim	31.92	34.30	16.03	12.36
Tripura	50.77	24.47	33.06	14.75
India	24.66	23.85	21.54	17.64

Source: Census of India 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011

- As mentioned earlier, such higher growth rate in the region mostly above the national average firstly, indicates the incoming of a large immigrant population.
- Secondly, health and hygiene condition has also improved after independence leading to the check on epidemics like Kala-Azar, malaria, cholera, dysentery, etc.
- Thirdly, social awareness and literacy being low among some groups, the family planning measures have not been adopted leading to a higher growth rate among them. Fourthly, there has been more exhaustive enumeration in the recent census operations. These and some such factors have contributed to the unchecked rise of population in the region.

- **Distribution and Density of Population**

- The distribution of population in north-east India is very much uneven. This is mainly because of various physical and socio-economic reasons.
- About 72 percent of the region is covered by mountains, hills and plateaus, where the distribution of population is sparse.
- It is only the remaining 28 percent of the area, covered by the plains, that supports the bulk of the population of the region.
- The hills and mountains being agriculturally less productive, cannot support a dense population. In the plains again, population is sparse on the immediate flood-plains of the Brahmaputra (except in the western part, where immigrants peasants have settled in the last several decades) and in the foothills where thick forest and unproductive soils restrict traditional agricultural activities.
- Besides, the lines of transport and communication have also influenced human settlement patterns.

- North east region has been experiencing not only high population growth rate but also it bears uneven distribution of population across the states.
- It is now found that Assam, with its extensive Brahmaputra and Barak plains, support slightly more than  $2/3$  of the total population of the region.
- Next comes Tripura, which also has a large proportion of undulating plains, especially in its western part supporting the bulk of the state's populations. The Manipur basin, though small in area compared to its hilly region, supports more than  $2/3$  of the state's populations.

- The region is basically a rural economy which covers about 84 percent rural population having an average population density of 173 people per sq. km. of area according to 2011 census report.
- Along with increase in the size of population, density of population per sq. km. has been increasing gradually in all the eight states as shown in table.
- In last two decades, there is 15.23 percent increase in density of population in north east region compared to 17.53 percent increase for the nation as a whole.
- In both the time periods, i.e. 2001 and 2011, the region records high variability in the density of population.
- Assam has recorded high density of population even above the national average in 2001.
- The most sparsely populated among the States and Union Territories in the country is Arunachal Pradesh.

- Out of eight states, Assam and Tripura are the most densely populated states sharing almost 76.4 per cent of total NER population in 2011.
- In 2011, the North East region occupies total population of 45,588 thousands with density varying from 17 persons per sq. kilometer in Arunachal Pradesh (the biggest state in the region) to 397 in Assam followed by Tripura (350), Meghalaya (132), Manipur (122), Nagaland (119) and Sikkim (86).
- Thus, unevenness of concentration of population has been the typical nature of the region.
- There is high degree of population concentration in the central part of the region, where economic conditions and better infrastructural facilities ensure a quality life. In peripheral mountainous portion of the region negligible concentration has been found due to isolation and inaccessibility.

### Density of Population in North east India

State/ Country	2001	2011
Arunachal Pradesh	13	17
Assam	340	397
Manipur	103	122
Meghalaya	103	132
Mizoram	43	52
Nagaland	120	119
Sikkim	76	86
Tripura	305	350
NER	151	174
India	325	382

Source: Census of India, 2001 and 2011

