



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalaivar Kamarajar"

INDIA'S NORTHEAST AS A ENGINE OF GROWTH

Published On: 14-09-2025

Why in news: On 13th September 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi undertook a landmark visit to Mizoram and also emphasised that the India's North east region would be growth engine.

Introduction

On 13th September 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi undertook a landmark visit to Mizoram, inaugurating the Bairabi–Sangria railway line. Alongside this, he laid foundation stones for infrastructure works exceeding ₹9,000 crore, spanning roads, gas bottling, schools and bypasses.

This visit marks a strategic push to enhance **connectivity, integration, and development** in the Northeast under India's broader geopolitical and economic priorities notably the *Act East Policy*, boosting trade with Southeast Asia, and strengthening internal infrastructure to reduce regional disparities.

Significance of North-East for India

1. Geostrategic Importance

Shares over **5,300 km of international borders** with five countries: China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal.

Acts as India's **gateway to Southeast Asia** under the *Act East Policy*.

Example: The recently inaugurated **Bairabi–Sairang railway line (2025)** in Mizoram enhances connectivity to Myanmar and Bangladesh corridors.

1. National Security & Stability

Region is sensitive due to **cross-border insurgency, migration, and drug trafficking**.

Strengthening infrastructure ensures better **border management and internal stability**.

Example: Ongoing efforts to modernize border fencing along the **India–Myanmar border** and integrate surveillance technology.

1. Economic Growth & Connectivity

Rich in natural resources (oil, gas, coal, bamboo).

Improved transport and logistics will integrate NE into national and global supply chains.

Example: **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project** links Mizoram to Myanmar's Sittwe port, enhancing Indo-ASEAN trade.

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthy Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833**

1. Cultural Diversity & Soft Power

Home to 200+ ethnic groups, diverse languages, and festivals.

Promotes India's image of **unity in diversity** and enriches tourism.

Example: Hornbill Festival in Nagaland attracts global tourists and boosts local economy.

1. Biodiversity & Ecological Significance

One of the **world's biodiversity hotspots** (Eastern Himalayas & Indo-Burma region).

Example: **Kaziranga National Park (Assam)** — UNESCO World Heritage Site, crucial for rhino conservation.

6 Integration of Border Communities

Infrastructure development reduces isolation and alienation.

Example: New **airports in Itanagar (2023) and Tez (2024)** improve accessibility.

7 Agriculture & Agro-based Industries

Known for **organic farming** and horticulture (pineapple, orange, spices).

Example: **Sikkim – India's first organic state**; Tripura's pineapple exports to Dubai (2024).

8 Strategic Connectivity Projects

India–Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (2023) supplies petroleum to NE.

Rail link projects like Agartala–Akhaura (with Bangladesh) reduce dependence on Siliguri Corridor.

Challenges associated with India's North east

1 Geographical Isolation & Connectivity Gaps

- Heavily dependent on the **Siliguri Corridor (Chicken's Neck)** for access to the mainland.
- Limited road, rail, and digital infrastructure hampers integration.
- Example: Despite the inauguration of the **Bairabi–Sairang railway line (2025)** in Mizoram, large parts of Arunachal and Nagaland still lack rail connectivity.

2 Insurgency & Internal Security Issues

- Long history of insurgent groups demanding autonomy or secession.
- Although militancy has reduced, sporadic violence continues.
- Example: **Manipur ethnic conflict (2023–24)** left over 200 dead and displaced thousands, highlighting fragile peace.

3 Ethnic Tensions & Identity Politics

- Region has 200+ ethnic groups, often leading to **clashes over land, resources, and political representation**.
- Example: Ongoing tensions between **Meitei and Kuki tribes in Manipur**.

4 Illegal Migration & Demographic Pressures

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthy Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833**

- Porous borders with Bangladesh and Myanmar fuel **illegal migration**, impacting demography and politics.
- Example: **Assam NRC issue** and protests over CAA implementation.

5 Border Disputes

- Frequent inter-state disputes among NE states.

6 Example: **Assam–Mizoram border clashes (2021, 2024 intermittent skirmishes)** resulted in casualties and curfews.

7 Drug Trafficking & Organized Crime

- Proximity to the **Golden Triangle (Myanmar–Laos–Thailand)** makes the region a hub for narcotics.
- Example: In **2024, Assam Police seized heroin worth ₹40 crore** from Manipur-bound traffickers.

8 Economic Backwardness

- Low industrial base, poor private investment, and inadequate markets.
- Example: NE contributes less than **3% to India's GDP**, despite being 8% of land area.

9 Natural Disasters & Climate Vulnerability

- Prone to floods, landslides, and earthquakes.
- Example: **Assam floods (2024)** displaced over 5 lakh people, damaging crops and infrastructure.

Way Forward for India's North-East Region

o Strengthening Connectivity

o Complete **railway, highway, and digital infrastructure projects** under *Act East Policy*.

o Example: Accelerate **Agartala–Akhaora rail link** with Bangladesh to reduce dependence on the Siliguri Corridor.

o Peacebuilding & Conflict Resolution

o Continue dialogue with insurgent groups through **peace accords**.

o Promote **community reconciliation mechanisms** to address ethnic tensions.

o Example: Implementation of **Bodo Peace Accord (2020)** brought relative stability in Assam's BTAD region.

o Border Management & Migration Control

o Use **smart fencing, surveillance drones, and better patrolling** along porous borders with Bangladesh & Myanmar.

o Balance **humanitarian concerns with demographic stability** in CAA-NRC implementation.

o Boosting Regional Economy

o Promote **agro-processing, handicrafts, tourism, and IT-based services**.

o Encourage private investment via **North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS 2017)**.

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthy Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040
Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833**

oExample: Tripura's **pineapple exports to Gulf countries (2024)** show export potential.

o**Harnessing Energy Potential**

oDevelop **hydropower, solar, and oil & gas** resources sustainably.

oExample: Expedite projects like **Etalin Hydropower Project (Arunachal Pradesh)** while ensuring environmental safeguards.