

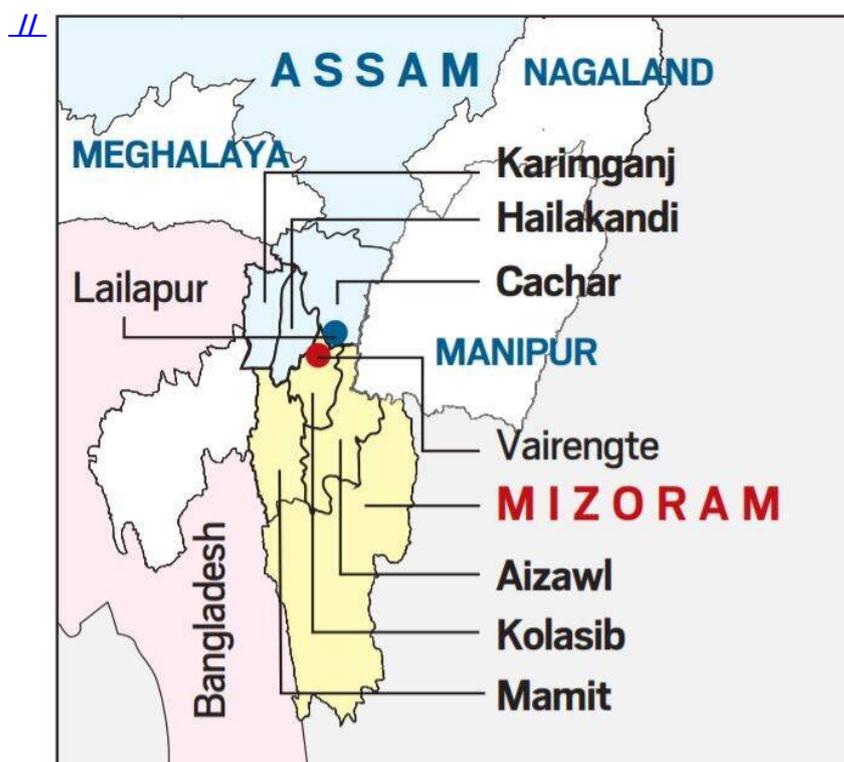


Assam-Mizoram Border Dispute

Why in News

Recently, **Assam-Mizoram border** witnessed firing over a territory dispute, which spotlights the **long-standing inter-state boundary issues in the Northeast**, particularly between Assam and the states which were carved out of it.

- **Mizoram borders Assam's Barak Valley** and the boundary between present-day Assam and Mizoram is **165 km** long. **Both states border Bangladesh.**



Key Points

- **Ongoing Tussle:**
 - Residents of Lailapur village in **Assam's Cachar district** clashed with residents of localities near Vairengte in **Mizoram's Kolasib district**.
 - Earlier in October 2020, a similar clash took place on the border of **Karimganj (Assam)** and **Mamit (Mizoram)** districts.
 - Mizoram civil society groups blame **"illegal Bangladeshis"** (alleged migrants from Bangladesh) on the Assam side.
- **Background:**

- The boundary issue between present-day Assam and Mizoram dates back to the **colonial era when inner lines were demarcated according to the administrative needs of British Raj.**
- The issue could not be settled once and for all when the **state was created in independent India.** The result is **both states continue to have a differing perception** of the border.
 - Mizoram was granted statehood in **1987** by the **State of Mizoram Act, 1986.**
 - Assam became a **constituent state of India in 1950 and lost much of its territory to new states that emerged** from within its borders between the early 1960s and the early 1970s.
- The Assam-Mizoram dispute **stems from a notification of 1875** that **differentiated Lushai Hills from the plains of Cachar,** and another of **1933** that **demarcates a boundary between Lushai Hills and Manipur.**
 - During colonial times, **Mizoram was known as Lushai Hills,** a district of Assam.
- **Mizoram** believes the **boundary should be demarcated on the basis of the 1875** notification, which is derived from the **Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) Act, 1873.**
 - Mizo leaders have argued in the past against **the demarcation notified in 1933** because Mizo society **was not consulted.**
- **The Assam government follows the 1933 demarcation,** and that is the point of conflict.
- According to an agreement between the governments of Assam and Mizoram, the **status quo should be maintained in no man's land** in the border area.
- In the Northeast's complex boundary equations, **clashes between Assam and Mizoram residents are less frequent than they are between other neighbouring states of Assam,** like with Nagaland.

▪ **Other Boundary Issues in Northeast:**

- During British rule, **Assam included present-day Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya besides Mizoram,** which became separate states one by one.
- Currently, Assam has **boundary problems with each of them.**
- **Assam-Nagaland:**
 - [Nagaland](#) shares a **500-km boundary** with Assam.
 - It achieved **statehood in December 1963** and was **formed out of the Naga Hills district of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh** (then North-East Frontier Agency).
 - **Violent clashes and armed conflicts,** marked by killings, have occurred on the Assam-Nagaland border since 1965.
 - The boundary dispute is in the [Supreme Court](#).
- **Assam-Arunachal Pradesh:**
 - Both states have a **boundary of over 800 km.**
 - [Arunachal Pradesh](#) was granted statehood by the **State of Arunachal Pradesh Act, 1986** in **1987.**
 - **Clashes were first reported in 1992** and since then, there have been several accusations of illegal encroachment from both sides, and intermittent clashes.
 - This boundary issue is also **being heard by the Supreme Court.**
- **Assam-Meghalaya:**
 - The **884-km boundary** between the two states also witnesses flare-ups.
 - [Meghalaya](#) came into existence as an autonomous state within the state of Assam in April 1970 comprising the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills districts. In **1972, it got statehood.**
 - As per Meghalaya government statements, today there are **12 areas of dispute between the two states.**

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