

# The Making of a Borderland: Rethinking Politics and Society in India's Northeastern Region

Arambam Noni Meetei\*

## Abstract

*The concept of borderland, in most instances, is constituted externally. Although, all borders, do not necessarily transpire into difficult frontier(s). Physical location in a distinct geographical space ought not to be a precondition to becoming an objectified spatial region. Borderlands have a tendency of becoming politically susceptible sites; of select administrative designs and policies. The paper seeks to revisit how the colonially construed borderlands continue to unfold in complex forms in postcolonial identity politics. The paper attempts to understand how the oversimplification of politics in colonial frontiers led to problems in postcolonial times as the frontiers seem to have been caught in a complex web of geography and demography. The contemporary politics in India's Northeast borderlands exemplify such a difficult terrain of politics. The colonial administration in India's Northeast region was reminiscent of such a framework. Physical location in a distinct geographical space ought not to be a precondition to becoming an objectified spatial region. Borders are often altered into politically susceptible sites – of select administrative designs and policies. From a definitional perspective, a border denotes a physical identity of a geography, while borderlands are constituted as an objectified site where the possibility of select bio-political deliberation is either high or enacted upon.*

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Borderlands, Administration, Geopolitics, Frontiers

## Introduction

The identity of borderlands is complex largely for the reason that it is constituted externally. All borders as frontiers in political perception is a source of policy perception and administration thereby resulting in the

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\* The author is Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, D.M. University, Manipur.