

Surface Connectivity Improvement and Market Integration: A Study of Impact of Bogibeel and Dhola-Sadiya Bridges in Two Pockets of Northeast Assam

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Abstract

One of the factors contributing to market fragmentation in Northeast India is the difficulty of surface communication mainly due to geographical conditions. About 70% of the region is mountainous. Even its plains are geographically separated by the mighty Brahmaputra and its territories. However, over the last decade several of the surface communication projects have been completed. The present study is motivated by the query whether improvement in surface communication has brought about desired market integration. The study is located in the area surrounded by two important bridges – the Dhola-Sadiya Bridge over river Lohit and the Bogibeel (rail-cum road) Bridge over the Brahmaputra. The pockets of particular focus in this area are the Dhemaji district and the Sadiya subdivision of Tinsukia district. In the otherwise relatively prosperous region of the upper Brahmaputra valley, these two relatively disconnected pockets have remained economically somewhat backward. Based on the inputs gathered from field investigations, our findings suggest that changes in the two surveyed areas have gone in the expected lines indicating that the smaller markets in the earlier remote pockets of Dhemaji and Sadiya are in the process of getting integrated to a wider market.

Keywords: Market Integration, Connectivity, Dhola-Sadiya Bridge, Bogibeel Bridge

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