

**PAPER 603**  
**UNIT 1: NORTH-EAST INDIA**

**DISTRIBUTION AND DENSITY OF POPULATION  
IN NORTH EAST INDIA**

The distribution and density of population in North East India is very much uneven. This is mainly because of various physiographic and socio-economic reasons. About 72% of the region is covered by mountains, hills, plateaus where the distribution of population is sparse. It is only the remaining 28% of the area covered by plains that support the bulk of the population of the region. These hills and mountains being agriculturally less productive cannot support of dense population. In the plain where soils are suitable for agriculture and other infrastructural facilities that bear huge amount of population and hence density of population is high.

The overall density of population in North East India was 123 persons per sq. km in 1991 which increased to 150 persons per sq. km in 2001 and 176 persons per sq. km in 2011, which is lower in comparison to country's density (368 persons per sq. km). This low density of population reflects the hilly topography with limited cultivable land, poor economy and under developed transport and communication system.

Assam ranks first among all the states of North East India in terms of density of population in the region with 397 person per sq. km followed by Tripura (350 person per sq. km), Meghalaya(132 person per sq. Km), Manipur (122 person per sq. km), Nagaland (119 person per sq. Km), Mizoram (51 person per sq. Km) and Arunachal Pradesh (16 person per sq. Km) according to census year 2011.

Undoubtedly it is difficult to assess the pressure of population on land of non-availability of data relating to carrying capacity of land. In this case physiographic and agricultural density of population can be considered to assess the pressure of growing population on land resource. Among all the states of North East India, the physiographic density of population is highest in Manipur followed by Mizoram and Tripura in 1991 and Manipur remain at the top of physiological density in 2001.

Arunachal is only the state which has the least density of population in the country. So, three density zones can be recognized in the region. The region of very sparse population with below 50 persons per sq.km includes Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, region of sparse population between 50-150 persons is constituted by Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland and the region of dense population above 150 is formed by Assam and Tripura.

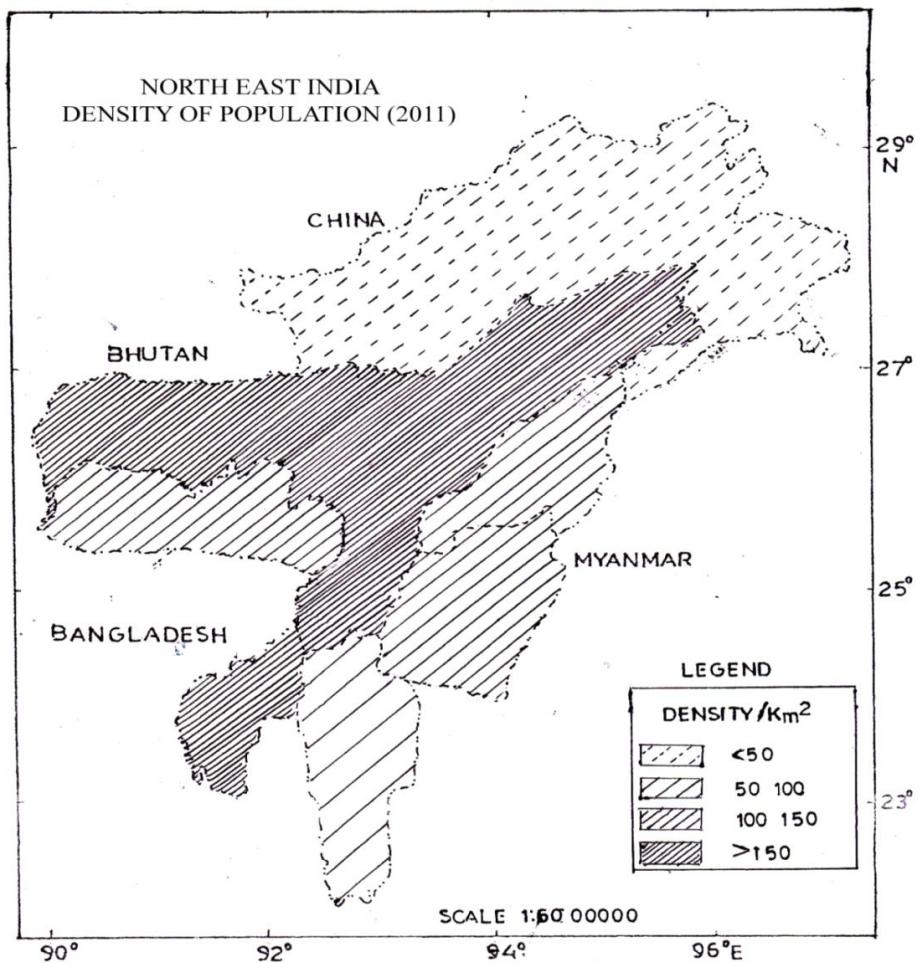


Fig: Density of population in North-East India