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## Friendly Borders

### Urban Design as a bridge to connect Border Cities

The case of North-Eastern Indian Cities/Towns (Assam-Meghalaya Border)

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#### ABSTRACT:

Borders are generally conceived as an area bounded by a fence or rigid wall or a line of divide or separation. But the border between Meghalaya & Assam are seamless, friendly and are linked socially, culturally & economically and interdependent with each other for their everyday activities. It also has a multicultural behavioral and has become a place of confluence & co-existence of various ethnic groups of people. Suddenly, due to the new jurisdictional policy ILP-Inner line permit (which means one person needs to avail a permit to enter the other state) on both the states, the everydayness & live-work scenario will be hampered. Since the Assam-Meghalaya border had been seamless, friendly and had an interdependency with each other but now with ILP rule this interdependency will be broken. The borders now are conceived as a physical rigid wall/gated border and not as something as permeable as was earlier. As seen in other ILP states of North-East, ILP has created a different entity of divide- social, economic, cultural & spatial. It also breaks the idea of interdependency, the idea of bringing people together. Mixing the fact that we are separate groups however, we are a collective group. But due to tax ease & policy in Meghalaya, people of Assam & other states are mostly attracted to Meghalaya for different economic & recreational activities. As found on the site, due to developmental pressure and non-existent of proper building regulations/policy/guidelines. The ecology was being hampered and these areas have become susceptible to a natural disaster. In the case of Bhutan- Assam Friendship border. Despite having an international border, the interdependency across borders and mixed group of people is seen running the market and channel of cultural exchange are built between two neighboring nations due to easy cross-border trade and pass free accessibility from both nations.

Envisioning the idea of the Multicultural co-existence of people & interdependency to achieve the idea of social-sustainability & environment. It looks at how the border can be seamless & permeable and also addressed guidelines for the development of the border and establish ecological resilience through design. This Border has a collective group of people & is the gateway to the North-East. It has the potential to become a hub for collective culture, knowledge, and a place for economic development for the entire North-East, India that will enhance the idea of multicultural & social sustainability. And hence the border can be a place for all.

**Keywords:** Friendly Border; Multi-cultural neighborhood; Socio-cultural & economic Interdependency; Environmentally Sensitive development; ILP policy.

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