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Notes on Nagaland's Area

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Empirical research in economics and, to a lesser extent, in other social sciences is largely dependent upon government statistics. It is generally assumed that governments are committed to collecting and disseminating correct statistics. As a result, the mutually constitutive relationship between politics, economy, and statistics, and the possibility of systematic manipulation of statistics driven by the structural features of this relationship, has received insufficient attention within economics. This paper examines the implications of the absence of shared preferences over the quality of statistics within a government. It explores the multiplicity of conflicting maps of the State of Nagaland issued by different tiers and wings of the government to underscore the lack of attention paid to a statistic as crucial as area. The paper situates the cartographic-statistical confusion in its political and economic contexts, and suggests that political-geographic arguments are being used to advance political-economic interests along contested borders. It argues that the confusion is not amenable to a technical resolution as it is linked to the dispute over Nagaland's place within the Union of India and the border disputes between Nagaland and its neighbouring states.

Key Words: Area, Assam, Border dispute, Census, Conflict, Federation, India, Map, Nagaland, Population, Statistics

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1. Introduction

The diversity of the maps of Nagaland published by different tiers and wings of the government strikes anyone who visits government offices in Kohima, the capital of the state. The map of the state published by the Census of India (Map 1) and the *Administrative Circles* map (Map 2) and *Index* map (Map 3) published by Nagaland GIS and Remote Sensing Centre differ from each other with respect to the boundary between Nagaland and Assam. Similarly, various maps depicting the legislative assembly constituencies of the state differ from each other (Map 4).¹ At times even the maps published on the same page are mutually inconsistent (Map 5).²

Unable to find an authoritative estimate of the state's area, one of the authors of this paper met a senior official in-charge of border affairs (Interview, Kohima, June 25, 2013). The officer first denied the cartographic diversity and then explained it away by arguing that each department publishes maps depicting its own footprint. So, for example, the education department's map of the location of schools differs from the health department's map of the location of dispensaries. However, this can at best explain the differences in the contents shown within the boundaries. It cannot explain the differences between maps with regard to the state's external boundaries. The official finally admitted that there might be discrepancies resulting from the longstanding boundary dispute with Assam. He added that he was unable to share the official estimate of Nagaland's area as the matter was sub judice (*State of Assam vs. Union of India & Ors*, Original Suit 2 of 1988) and that researchers will have to rely upon existing government publications, such as the census.

1 We have also seen at least three other maps of assembly constituencies that differ from the maps reproduced here.

2 Similar differences can also be spotted between maps published by other government departments. To these we can add maps circulated by insurgents/partisans of independence (Map 10) that adorn the walls of private as well as government establishments.

In light of the above, this paper examines anomalies in the estimates of Nagaland's area and the multiplicity of conflicting maps of the state issued by different tiers and wings of the government. Our findings question the assumptions that (a) governments are committed to collecting and disseminating correct statistics and (b) in a federal setup, different tiers of the government have shared statistical preferences. The paper complements Agrawal and Kumar (2012, 2013), who examine the anomalies in census headcounts of Nagaland's population, and Agrawal and Kumar (2014), who examine the anomalies in household sample surveys conducted in Nagaland. Unlike Agrawal and Kumar (2012, 2013), who deal only with horizontal inter-community/district conflicts, this paper deals with vertical conflicts between states and the Union Government in addition to the conflicts between states and between districts.³ This paper is also related to the literature on map-making and border disputes rooted in colonial history (Cederlof, 2014, Suykens, 2013, Alesina, et al. 2006, Anderson, 2006, Englebert, et al. 2002, Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996).

Inter-jurisdictional competition over market regulation, taxation, and standards has received a lot of attention in the literature (see, for instance, Salmon, 1987, Cheshire and Gordon, 1998, Wilson, 1999, Gerber, 2002, and Blumenthal, 2004). The possible conflict of interest between national governments and international bodies with regard to statistics has also received some attention in the literature. For instance, Michalski and Stoltz (2013) examine strategic misreporting of macroeconomic statistics by countries to attract investors. Wade (2012) examines the political economy of changes in China's declared national income statistics and the refusal of the Chinese Government until the 2000s to participate in the price surveys conducted under World Bank's International Comparison Programme. However, intra-governmental statistical conflict, which is the primary concern of this paper, has received insufficient scholarly attention in economics.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 of this paper introduces the background of the cartographic confusion, followed by a discussion on its consequences in Section 3. Section 4 discusses the political economy of contested maps. In Section 5, the cartographic conflict is recast as a conflict over units of measurement, followed by Section 6, which highlights competitive developmentalism unleashed by the cartographic conflict. Section 7 offers concluding remarks.

2. The mess

Census reports from the 1950s and 1960s provide three different estimates of the area of the present state of Nagaland in 1951: 16,451.60 or 16,451.70 sq km (6,352 sq miles), 16,487.9 sq

3 The Indian Government has tried to restrict the possibility of inter-state and centre-state statistical-demographic competition/conflict by mandating that the 1971 Census population shall be used to apportion parliamentary seats and federal funding across states. However, this does not entirely eliminate the scope for centre-state statistical conflicts within the Union. For instance, Goa allegedly manipulated statistics to bolster its claim to statehood (The Indian Express, 2013). Also, it is commonplace for state governments to contest unpalatable statistics released by the National Crime Records Bureau (Hindustan Times, 2013). Moreover, the aforesaid provision does not limit intra-state competition between districts and communities for favourable delimitation.

km (6,366 sq miles), and 16,397.21 sq km (6,331 sq miles) (Table 1).⁴ As per the 1961 Census, the area of the state was 16,488 sq km.⁵ However, the 1971 Census, the first census conducted after the formation of Nagaland state, suggests that the area was 16,527 sq km. While the difference between 1961 and 1971 was attributed to 'computational techniques' (GoI, 1973: 23, 40), it is not clear if the 1967 Boundary Agreement between India and Myanmar affected the state's area. Subsequent censuses from 1981 onwards, report the area as 16,579 sq km.⁶

Each of these estimates of area has had a long afterlife insofar as it was used even decades after being superseded in official records.⁷ The state government continued to use the 1961 figure as late as 1979. For instance, as per the *1979 Nagaland Basic Facts* (Government of Nagaland, 1979: 1, 7), the state's area was 16,487.9 sq km (viz. the 1961 Census figure). However, according to *Nagaland 1980 Basic Facts*, the area was 16,572 sq km and 16,572.9 sq km (Government of Nagaland, 1980: 1, 12), which are close to the area reported in the 1981 Census. Until 1989, the biennial *State of Forest Reports* reported the area of Nagaland as 16,530 sq km (GoI, nd1: 19) and revised the figure to 16,579 sq km only in 1991 (GoI, nd2: 24).⁸ Likewise, until recently, the Geological Survey of India (2011: 2) used the 1971 estimate (16,527 sq km) of Nagaland's area.

Nagaland's territorial dispute with Assam has added to the cartographic confusion. Decades of occupation and counter-occupation have transformed large parts of the reserved forests on the Assam side of the Assam-Nagaland border into a patchwork of densely populated Assamese and Naga villages administered by the respective states. These villages cannot be separated into mutually exclusive zones, which makes it difficult to account for them while estimating the area of the two states.

4 GoI (1956: 3, 55, 63) reports two different figures for the area of the erstwhile Naga Hills District (i.e., Kohima and Mokokchung districts) in 1951, one from the Surveyor General of India and the other from the Assam Survey Department. The area reported in the 1961 Census corresponds to the Assam Survey Department's figures reported in the 1951 Census. It is not clear how the discrepancy was resolved. Similarly, the 1961 Census reports two figures, one from the Surveyor General and the other from the District Commissioners, but the difference is insignificant and accounted for entirely by rounding-off in the Surveyor General's data.

5 The Naga Hills District of Assam was merged with the Tuensang Frontier Division (erstwhile Naga Tribal Areas) of the North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1957 to create the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area (NHTA), which was later granted statehood as Nagaland in 1963 (GoI, 1966: 31). The NHTA was divided into Kohima, Mokokchung, and Tuensang districts, whose boundaries were drawn so as to leave each tribal group, as far as possible, under a single district. As a result, some Konyak villages to the north and north-east of Mokokchung and Sangtam villages to the south-east of Mokokchung were transferred to Tuensang. Likewise Sumi/Sema villages on the western border of Tuensang were transferred to Mokokchung (i.e., the present Zunheboto district) (GoI, 1966: 31). (Even after this reorganisation Sumi-dominated Sitmi circle and Seyochung circle that has a substantial Sumi population were left behind in the then Tuensang district.) Asuto, Aghunato, and Hosephu, which were earlier part of Aghunato circle, and parts or whole of Satoi circles of Zunheboto must have originally belonged to the then Tuensang district (cf. maps in GoI, 1954 and GoI, 1966, also see Sema, 2016). Likewise, parts or whole of Nagnimora and Wakching circles of Mon (von Haimendorf, 1962), Namsang and Tamlu circles of Longleng (von Haimendorf, 1962), and Chare and Longkhim circles of Tuensang (GoI, 1966: 31) must have originally belonged to the then Mokokchung district. For want of adequate information (see, for instance, GoI, 1966: 32 that notes the lack of data), we have not been able to correct the figures reported in Table 1 for the exchange of territory between the then Mokokchung and Tuensang.

6 Interestingly, in a speech delivered on August 15, 1970, Nagaland's Chief Minister noted that Nagaland had 'an area of 6400 Sq. miles or, about 11,000 [sq] kilometres [6400 Sq. miles = 16575.92 Sq. km]' (Sema, 1984: 7), which is close to the 1981 estimate.

7 The use of erroneous area statistics in the academia, media, and civil society needs a separate discussion. For want of space, we have restricted ourselves to official sources.

8 The report (GoI, nd2: 15) attributes the 'increase of 43 sq. kms. of forest cover in 1991 assessment' in the state to 'correction in the geographical area.' Incidentally, there are wide differences between the estimates of Nagaland's forest cover published by different departments of the government, but this issue is beyond the scope of our paper.

The Nagaland Government has conducted at least four censuses in the disputed territory—1981 (GoI, 1984a, also Bhattacharyya, 1994: 55-56), 1991 (GoI, 1996: 22-24), 2001 (GoI, 2005a: 24), and 2011 (GoI, 2013a, also Interview with government officials in Sarupathar, Assam on June 05, 2013 and Kohima, Nagaland on June 25, 2013). While the maps of Nagaland issued by the Directorate of Census Operations, Kohima and the Registrar General of India as part of administrative atlases do not include any of the disputed territory (Map 1) many maps published by the state government include parts of the disputed territory within Nagaland (Maps 2-5). The disputed territory included in the latter maps shows the entire area - including Assamese villages administered by the Assam Government - to be under the administrative jurisdiction of the Nagaland Government. However, the census conducted by the Nagaland Government was restricted to Naga villages and did not include the Assamese villages of that area.

The cartographic confusion along the state's boundary is matched by confusion within. In 1961, the census covered 5,356.1 sq km in Tuensang. However, in later censuses the district's area increased to 5,466 sq km and then to 6,014 sq km even though no new areas were added to it (Table 1). The areas of other districts also changed during 1961-1981. Kohima's area first increased and then decreased, while that of Mokokchung followed the reverse trend. At the end of this period, Kohima's area decreased and that of Mokokchung increased, whereas Tuensang registered a substantial increase in its area at the end of the 1961-81 period (Figure 2). What is more intriguing is that the areas of Kohima and Zunheboto remain unchanged despite the transfer of Pughoboto and Ghathashi circles from the former to the latter in 1986 (Figure 1). The *General Population Tables* (India) for the 1991 Census adjust the population, but not the area, of the districts (Kohima, Mokokchung, Mon, Tuensang, Wokha and Zunheboto) affected by territorial changes in the 1980s (GoI, 1994: 345).

The problem is not restricted to the apportionment of the state's area between districts. In some cases, the circle/sub-district boundaries have changed without any exchange of territory. The boundary of Peren shifted northward *into* Dimapur between 1981 and 1991 despite the transfer of a village *from* Peren to Dimapur and no transfer of territory between Kohima and Dimapur (Map 6). The confusion over boundaries of districts has also affected the electoral constituency maps. For instance, the boundaries of Ghaspani II Assembly of Dimapur adjoining Peren vary across maps (see areas highlighted using rectangles in Map 4). Several other constituencies suffer from a similar problem.

We have so far discussed the cartographic mess within the state of Nagaland. Similar discrepancies exist in maps of other parts of the country published from New Delhi as the census publications have not adopted standard norms for dealing with territorial disputes. In some cases, the census explicitly identifies the area under dispute. The best example of this transparent style is seen in case of the dispute between Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh about which the census informs us that: 'Disputed area of 10 sq. kms. (i.e. 7 sq. Kms. in Madhya Pradesh State and 3 Sq. Kms. in Chhattisgarh) is neither included in Madhya Pradesh State nor in Chhattisgarh State' (GoI, 2011a: 65). Likewise,

we are clearly told that '13 square km. disputed area between Pondicherry and Andhra Pradesh is neither included in Pondicherry nor in Andhra Pradesh' (GoI, 2008: 25). On the other hand, the census reports are vague and evasive in the case of the Assam-Nagaland border dispute.

The general neglect of the North Eastern states is, however, not the only reason why the boundary disputes between Assam and its successor states have not been adequately identified. Even the non-controversial boundaries in the Hindi heartland – between Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh and their successor states – remain unsettled more than 10 years after the formation of new states. *Administrative Atlas of India, 2011* notes that the state governments have not yet verified the boundaries (GoI, 2011d: ii). Also, while Assam has disputes with all its successor states, the maps circulated by the ministries of the Union Government note the disputed nature of boundaries only between Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya. The maps do not carry any comparable note for the Assam-Nagaland boundary. For instance, maps published as part of *Administrative Atlas of India, 2011* (GoI, 2011d: ii) and those issued by Indian Railways (GoI, nd4) note the following: 'The inter-state boundaries between Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya shown on this map are as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act 1971, but have yet to be verified.'⁹

3. Consequences

Nagaland exercises administrative control over at least 594.4 sq km of Assam's territory, mostly in Golaghat district in the vicinity of Dimapur (Table 1).¹⁰ This area is not added to Nagaland's area in government publications, even though its population is added to the state's population. This discrepancy inflates the population density. The population density of Dimapur (Nagaland) for 2011 drops by 38.24 (3.58) per cent from 408.64 (119.33) to 295.59 (115.21) persons per sq km if we use the corrected area - that adds the area of the disputed territory under Nagaland's administration to the existing official estimate of the state's area. Census reports issued from Assam consistently maintain that the area of Golaghat is 3,502 sq km (GoI, 1996: 22, GoI, 2008: 22, GoI, 2013a), even as the Assam Government's own estimates indicate loss of as much as 362.94 sq km of that district to Nagaland. The Assam Government admits that the Nagaland Government claims Assamese territory in Sarupathar in Golaghat district 'to be under their jurisdiction and administrative control' and adds that 'as per the Survey of India maps these 62 villages [located in

⁹ A similar confusion can be seen in case of territories under the shadow of international disputes. The census maps clearly indicate that the census does not have information regarding the Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (shaded in grey) and the part of Jammu and Kashmir transferred by Pakistan to China. The territory under China's control is not shaded in grey, the colour that signifies 'Data Not Available' (GoI, 2011d: 13). However, the General Notes to Provisional Population Totals (GoI, 2011b: x) suggest that 'For working out density of India and the State of Jammu & Kashmir, the entire area and population of those portions of Jammu & Kashmir which are under illegal occupation of Pakistan and China have not been taken into account.'

¹⁰ Some sources suggest that the Nagaland Government has extended its administration over a larger area: 662.4 sq km (Hazarika, 2011, who cites a 2007 official source; also see The Indian Express 2007, which quotes an identical figure) or 1,667.70 sq km (Gohain, 2007: 3281, who cites a 2006 official source). Gohain claims that 840 sq km has been "encroached" in Golaghat alone, which cannot be true because this almost equals the district's total forest area (841.61 sq km) only parts of which are controlled by Nagaland.

the disputed territory presently under the administration of Nagaland] are located well inside the boundary of Assam' (*ibid*).¹¹ So, in response to Nagaland's claim of administrative control, Assam tries to build a legal case, while indirectly admitting lack of administrative presence in the Naga villages in the disputed territory by saying that it could not conduct census in the area due to 'strong resistance by the villagers' (GoI, 1996: 22, GoI, 2008: 22).

Assam has not reduced the area of Golaghat district in its records because that might weaken its case in the Supreme Court, apart from triggering political controversy within the state. In any case, the impact of reduction in area will not lead to any marked change in the population density of Assam. This is because the census records of Assam understate the population of the disputed villages under the control of the Government of Nagaland (GoI, 2005a: 24) and the population of the disputed territory under Nagaland's administration is less than half a per cent of Assam's overall population.

There is also considerable confusion regarding the boundaries of Nagaland's circles in the disputed area. The maps of Dimapur in the *District Census Handbook* and the *Administrative Atlas of India* published after the 2011 Census differ from each other (Maps 5 and 1). Nagaland has established and expanded its administration in the disputed area in contravention to the expectation of maintenance of status quo as the dispute is pending in the Supreme Court (*State of Assam vs. Union of India & Ors, Original Suit 2 of 1988*). Nagaland nominally maintains status quo by arbitrarily apportioning the northeastern part of Dimapur's *map* among four circles - Niuland, Nihoku, Kuhoboto and Aquqhnaqua. However, on the ground, only the first two lie partly within the official boundary of the state. In the *Administrative Atlas of India 2011*, the note to Nagaland's map indicates that the boundaries of 'newly created' circles Aquqhnaqua (Dimapur) and Merangmen (Mokokchung) 'could not be drawn due to technical difficulty' (GoI, 2011d: 39).

The cartographic manoeuvring discussed in the preceding paragraph has also affected the map of Tseminyu circle (divided later into Tseminyu and Tsogin) of Kohima district. In earlier maps (1971 and 1981 Censuses), Tseminyu shared a border with Assam. However, later maps (1991-2011 Censuses) show that Tseminyu no longer touched the inter-state boundary because new circles of Dimapur separate it from Assam. This change of boundary has taken place without the transfer of any territory from Tseminyu to Dimapur (cf. Map 7d and Map 7e). The change in Tseminyu's boundaries seems to have happened between the publication of *General Population Tables* for 1981 Census in 1984 (GoI, 1985) and *Survey Report on Village: Tseminyu* in 1988 (GoI, 1988). Several other circle boundaries suffer from similar problems (recall, for instance, the discussion on Peren in Section 2).

11 The number of Naga villages in the disputed territory adjoining Dimapur has almost doubled in the meantime.

A different kind of cartographic confusion is seen on the Assam side of the border where the demarcation of reserved forests in the districts along Nagaland border does not agree with the ground reality. In Golaghat, we found that large parts of the reserved forests marked on maps (Map 8) do not exist on ground. The Assam Government's officials argue that even under normal circumstances the de-reservation of forest land is a complicated process. In the present case, they cannot de-reserve the concerned forest areas for an additional reason – the matter is sub judice and the court (as well as Nagaland) expects Assam to maintain status quo.

4. Political economy of contested maps

The Nagas claim that (i) first the British and then the Indian Government partitioned their “traditional” or “historical” territory among India (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland) and Myanmar¹² and (ii) the British encroached upon their territory along the foothills for timber, tea, and building railway tracks. These claims have a long history that is reflected in several memoranda, resolutions, and agreements: Naga Club's 1929 Memorandum to the Simon Commission, 1947 Nine Point Agreement (sixth point), 1960 Sixteen Point Agreement (twelfth and thirteenth points),¹³ and Nagaland State Legislative Assembly resolutions (1964, 1970, 1994 and 2003) (NSUD 1996, Rio 2012: 91). Also, the Yehzabo (Constitution) of the Naga National Council, the parent organisation of contemporary Naga insurgent groups, claims that Nagaland consists of ‘all the territories inhabited by the indigenous Naga Tribes’ (NSUD, 1996). The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), a splinter of the Naga National Council, claims sovereignty ‘over every inch of Nagaland whatever it may be and admit of no other existence whatever’ (Hazarika, 1995: Appendix J, also see Kumar 2005, Koijam 2001). Moreover, since the mid-1960s, every ceasefire between the government and insurgents has been rocked by wildly different interpretations of its territorial scope. The expression ‘Greater Nagaland’ came into vogue in the late 1980s (Hazarika, 1995: 243), when the NSCN called for the unification of the Naga-inhabited regions of India and Myanmar.¹⁴

This thumbnail history masks the fact that the irredentist project often doubles up as a pressure valve to avoid internal implosion within the Naga society that is bitterly divided over who is a Naga

12 Some of the maps published by the Nagaland Government carry the following note: ‘This map is without prejudice to the claims of Nagaland for re-drawing the Assam-Nagaland boundary on the basis of historical and traditional factor [sic]’ (Maps 2-3).

13 Some of the maps published by the Nagaland Government note that the boundaries ‘are subject to revision as provided in the 1960 Delhi Agreement’ (Maps 2-3).

14 Among many others, Radhabinod Koijam, a former Chief Minister of Manipur, has noted the irony of Greater Nagaland that includes ‘120000 sq km . . . with a population of 35 lakhs,’ even though ‘Nagaland has an area of only 16,579 sq. km with a population of about 16 lakhs’ (Koijam, 2001). In recent times, the Manipur Valley has responded violently to any suggestion that its northern and western hills are covered by ceasefire, let alone be part of Greater Nagaland. A detailed examination of the map of Greater Nagaland circulated by the partisans of independence (Map 10) and the rationale behind the Naga claim on these areas are beyond the scope of this paper. It would suffice to note that the aforesaid map includes the whole of Nagaland, a number of districts of Manipur (Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhul), and parts of districts of Assam (Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Jorhat, Karbi Anglong, North Cachar Hills/Dima Hasao, Sibsagar and Tinsukia) and Arunachal Pradesh (Changlang, Dibang Valley, Lohit, Longding and Tirap). The Myanmarese part of Greater Nagaland includes territory on both sides of the Chindwin River. The claim on the territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Myanmar is largely driven by shared history and ethnic identity, whereas irredentism on the Assam side is explained by economic and political factors.

and what are his territorial entitlements.¹⁵ We are reminded of a prescient observation of the Ura Mail's editor late Charlie Kevichusa in this regard. Writing in 1985 on the dispute among Nagas on the Dzukou Valley along the Nagaland-Manipur border, which has flared up recently, he observed: 'There can be no dispute on the claims of the Nagas over Dzukou valley. The question on territorial jurisdiction comes only in respect of which Nagas and which villages' (Kevichusa, 1985: 81-82).

The history of Nagaland's area statistics and maps, which has its roots in its boundary disputes, is, in fact, a history of Naga people. It begins in the Ahom period when the hills and the plains were separated by an ecological boundary, which was porous to sociocultural exchange and migration and sensitive to the balance of power between the hills and the plains, and the degree of forest cover along the foothills. Neither side claimed absolute/exclusive ownership over the gray area along the boundary. The British imposed razor sharp legal/administrative boundaries and also froze the ethnic identities of the people divided by these boundaries. This halted economic exchange and disrupted political and sociocultural ties. Hereafter, the Nagas who relocated to the plains and Assamese who moved into the hills retained their "original" identity irrespective of how long they stayed there. Unsurprisingly, after the formation of Nagaland in 1963, the Naga settlers in the disputed territory are seen as "outsiders" occupying Assamese land, whereas earlier they would have been assimilated in the plains society.

These boundaries furthered British economic interests, divided the hills and plains, and left the economically unviable hill/tribal areas outside direct British rule.¹⁶ The boundaries were meant to serve the interests of the colonial state, rather than settle competing historical claims over disputed territories. As a result, these boundaries changed across the colonial period depending on administrative expediency. Unfortunately, now-a-days vested interests conveniently choose the colonial boundary that best supports their claim and unilaterally bestow sanctity to it as the traditional/historical boundary. This partly explains the divergence between the positions of Assam and Nagaland.

Over the years, growing population and ecological crises that are pushing people from both the hills of Nagaland as well as the plains and tea gardens of Assam towards the extremely fertile and relatively sparsely populated inter-state border; the settlement of surrendered Naga insurgents in

15 While non-government debates are beyond the scope of this paper, it bears noting that inter-tribal conflicts over land and water resources have also contributed to the cartographic confusion. A number of our interviewees alleged that the neighbouring tribes have encroached upon their traditional territory leading to violence between tribes and even manipulation of government maps in some cases. A detailed treatment of inter-tribal conflicts is beyond the scope of this paper.

16 The Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations (1873), popularly known as Inner Line Regulations, was the most significant colonial initiative with regard to demarcation of the hill areas of North East, including the Naga Hills. Along with the Scheduled Districts Act (1874) and the Assam Frontier Tracts Regulation (1880), it 'permitted the exclusion of the territories under their purview from the codes of civil and criminal procedures, the rules on property legislation and transfer and any other laws considered unsuitable for them' (Sharma, 2005). The Regulations also mandated special permits for the subjects of British India willing to visit such areas in order to limit conflict between the hill tribes and outsiders and, by implication, the need for British intervention in the hills. The Regulations continue to apply to Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (Gol, 2013b). While the British changed the Inner Lines in Nagaland to suit their economic and political interests, the arrangement has, to our knowledge, not been changed after 1947.

disputed territories; the irredentist rhetoric of Naga insurgents; the maximalist bargaining position adopted by the Nagaland Government; and opportunistic politics on both sides of the border have repeatedly pushed Assam and Nagaland towards armed conflicts that have claimed hundreds of lives.

The cartographic fuzziness along the Assam-Nagaland border is tolerated, if not encouraged, by the Nagaland Government. Encouragement seems to be more likely as the state government has not yet authenticated the inter-state boundaries demarcated by the Survey of India (DNA, 2014, *The Telegraph*, 2014, *Nagaland Post*, 2015), without which proper maps cannot be generated. Moreover, the shapefile maintained by the state government include territory far beyond the existing official boundary (Map 9).¹⁷ However, the government was not always openly irredentist and initially in some cases it used to omit maps altogether from its publications to avoid endorsing the existing boundary. Consider, for instance, the following note in the Kohima district gazetteer: 'No map has been included in the publication as the Boundaries of Nagaland are subject to revision as provided for in the 1960 Delhi Agreement' (Government of Nagaland, 1970: xvi).

Presently, the Nagaland Government claims as much as 12,882 sq km of Assam's territory, which includes substantial territory far away from the foothills, of which it already controls at least 594 sq km (as of 2013) (Table 1). The Nagaland Government appears to be coordinating with the insurgents. The latter first terrorise and push back Assamese settlers and then the state government steps in to fill the administrative "vacuum" in the "traditional"/"historical" Naga territory. Gohain (2007) notes the following in this regard:

[T]he Sundaram Commission (1972-76) entrusted by the centre with the task of settling the boundary-issue made it clear that the more than 4,000 square miles of Assam's territory had been claimed without any basis by Nagaland . . . Today the Variava Commission appointed by the Supreme Court is looking into the dispute, but that has not deterred certain organised Naga groups, apparently with the connivance of the Nagaland government, from encroaching upon and occupying large chunks of Assam's territory . . . The modus operandi is sudden, un-suspected and unprovoked attack by armed gangs, reportedly including rebel Naga elements, who force people to flee abandoning their homesteads and farms, and then consolidate the possession by planting signboards of the Nagaland government overnight. Soon after government offices, schools and police stations are built . . . [followed by formation of] new administrative subdivisions on disputed territory. (Gohain, 2007: 3280, 3282; also see Suykens, 2013: 177-181, Prabhakara, 2012: 240, Borgohain and Borgohain, 2011: 38, Sreedhar Rao, 2002: 73-75).¹⁸

17 Prabhakara (2012: 174) refers to earlier official maps of Nagaland, which we have not seen, that 'did not demarcate the state's eastern and southern boundaries [with Myanmar and Manipur, respectively].'

18 See Means (1971) for an account sympathetic to the Naga perspective. Means observed that as early as the 1960s the influx of Assamese into reserved forest areas 'aroused intense hostility toward Assam' (Means, 1971: 1027, also 1015-1017). Means' (1971: 1016) observation on the clashes between the police forces of Assam and Nagaland bears mentioning as he suggests that the Nagas are the aggrieved party. He notes: 'On a number of occasions the border disputes have erupted into serious open

Naga irredentists claim territory in all states in Nagaland's neighbourhood, but only the Assam border has witnessed sustained violence. While the Manipur-Nagaland and Myanmar-Nagaland borders are not without their share of troubles, the irredentist pressure is most intense along the Assam border because "others" are "occupying" traditional Naga territory along the Assam-Nagaland border. On the other hand, Nagas inhabit both sides of Nagaland's borders with Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Myanmar, which perhaps reduces the urgency as "others" are not in possession of the territory. There is more to this than meets the eye though.

The importance of the disputed plains territory along the Assam border for Nagaland's economy is the key to understanding the greater aggression along this border. Nagaland's terrain is almost entirely rocky (95 per cent) (Geological Survey of India, 2011: 2), with the elevation being highest in the east and south along the Myanmar and Manipur borders, respectively. The plains area of the state is mostly 'limited to Dimapur, Jalukie, and adjoining areas with Assam' accounting for only eight per cent of the total area (NBSE, 2013: 22). Parts of Tizit in Mon district lie in the plains. However, Dimapur that alone accounts for about two-thirds of the plains area is already overpopulated and its population density is about three times the state average.

Naga settlers leaving the hills need land in the plains. This has led to conflict along the entire length of the state's border with Assam, which is the *only* outlet for the growing population and internal migration. (The territory of Manipur and Myanmar adjoining Nagaland is equally, if not more, inhospitable than the hills of Nagaland.) Another source of conflict lies in Nagaland's sense of vulnerability as the bulk of the intra-state transport has to pass through the plains of Assam. Also, noteworthy is Nagaland's dependence upon the import of agricultural commodities from other states. Access to the fertile plains along the Assam border will help it achieve food security.

The irredentism is not restricted to census and maps. In the past there have been attempts to extend the reach of the Nagaland Board of Secondary Education (NBSE) to Manipur. In 2011, enumerators from Nagaland tried to carry out census in Assamese villages in the disputed territory. Moreover, the territories of the neighbouring states are nominally claimed as extensions of Nagaland. For instance, the northern parts of Manipur are referred to as 'Southern Nagaland,' while Naga inhabited parts of Myanmar adjoining India are referred to as 'Eastern Nagaland' or 'Eastern Naga Areas.' The latter is often a source of confusion as the eastern districts of Nagaland are also referred to as 'Eastern Nagaland.' In *Eastern Naga Students' Federation*, 'east' refers to Tuensang and its successor districts, whereas in *Eastern Naga Students' Association* it refers to Khamti, Myanmar.

clashes between the Nagaland Police and the Assam Police with the latter engaging in the destruction of Naga crops and houses in the reserved forests. The Nagaland Government has repeatedly asked the Indian Government to support its claims made in the "16 Point Agreement" for the recovery of the contiguous reserved forests, and for the consolidation of contiguous Naga areas, but it has received a non-committal response by New Delhi.' Others have also suggested that the blame partly lies with Assam, which tried to change the status quo in the 1970s (Borgohain and Borgohain, 2011: 39, Prabhakara, 2012: 51-52, 213-214, Suykens, 2013: 172).

5. Conflict over the units of measurement

We have highlighted the political economic dimension of the problem, which in itself is a good reason for not relying solely on legal and factual lenses to understand the ground reality. There is an additional reason why we need to go beyond “facts” in this case. The Greater Nagaland controversy does not merely contribute to the context or constraints within which the politics of maps and statistics unfolds in Nagaland. Rather it is itself an object of statistical dispute as it represents a spatial *unit of measurement* different from that adopted in government statistics. In other words, we can view the cartographic conflict as a conflict over the units of measurement. Urla (1993: 826-827) makes an interesting observation regarding a similar tension between the Basque administrative unit and the larger “traditional” Basque country:

the Basque government, armed at last with its own statistical data bank, has chosen to use this new administrative unit, the Basque Autonomous Community, rather than Euzkalherria [Basqueland], as the unit of analysis in all of its maps and statistical charts . . . [But] the “units of measurement” are never innocent or without consequence. What concerns them [the radicals], very simply, is that with political recognition may come a gradual acceptance of the Autonomous Community as the “natural” context for the discussion of Basque cultural issues.

For a similar reason the partisans of independence as well as the partisans of unification of Naga territories within India have been bitterly opposed to the Sixteen Point Agreement that led to the formation of the State of Nagaland. However, there is a crucial difference between the cases of Basque Autonomous Community and Nagaland. In the latter, even the provincial and union governments differ sharply regarding the unit of measurement, i.e., whether to measure, report, and discuss statistics for the area enclosed within the existing official boundaries of the state of Nagaland or include statistics from the adjoining areas claimed by/under the informal control of Nagaland. Maps published by the Nagaland Government show an area substantially larger than the maps of the Union Government, and different wings of the former publish different maps.

The Naga perspective on the dispute over the units of measurement clarifies the issues at stake. Charles Chasie notes that ‘in Naga parlance, particularly in “Naga Nationalist” terminology, it was always Naga Lands or Naga Land which included all Naga areas. Nagaland came into being only in 1963 with the inauguration of statehood within Indian Union’ (personal communication, November 26, 2014). Horam (1988: 10) observes that two imaginations clash at the borders of Nagaland: ‘The term “Nagaland” is controversial to both non-Nagas and Nagas. The rest of the Indians think that it does not sound “Indian”. On the other hand, to the Nagas living outside Nagaland the same is a “misnomer” because there is a sizeable Naga population living outside this present Nagaland proper.’ Yunuo (1974: 7) likewise argues that Nagaland can be broadly interpreted as ‘the land where the Nagas are between the Chindwin and the Brahmaputra’ or it can be narrowly interpreted as ‘legally constituted Nagaland by the Government of India.’ He further notes that ‘The loyal Nagas are working to get themselves united into one administrative unit in India while the underground

Nagas are for independence of whole Nagaland.' Unsurprisingly, every ceasefire between the government and insurgents since the 1960s has been rocked by differing interpretations of the cartographic correlate of 'Nagaland.' On the one hand, the government and majority communities of the neighbouring states of Nagaland insist that the ceasefire has to be limited to the present state of Nagaland. On the other, Naga insurgents and their partisans claim that 'Nagaland' signifies all areas inhabited by Nagas and claim immunity from arrest both within and outside the state of Nagaland.

The dispute over maps can, therefore, be viewed as a derivative of the dispute over the visualisation and imagination of the Naga nation (Anderson, 2006) and is to that extent not amenable to technical resolution.¹⁹ The solution of the problem depends upon the resolution of the dispute over Nagaland's place within the Union of India and the border dispute between Assam and Nagaland. It is contingent upon the political resolution of the larger questions – What is Nagaland and Who is a Naga. While answers to these questions are found, the people on the ground, who were encouraged to claim territory on behalf of their state and their community, have to live with the bloody consequences of the cartographic mess.

6. Competitive developmentalism

Nagaland's expansion into the disputed territories has led to the creation of a number of new villages and sub-districts along the border. Not only are new sub-districts being created in the disputed area, they are also being generously funded. For instance, roads in some parts of the disputed areas are much better than the roads of the political (Kohima) and commercial (Dimapur) capitals of the state, while in others schools have been sanctioned for very small populations. Assam has also been trying to expand its footprint in the disputed territory, but the territory under its control is more densely populated and poorly provisioned. In any case, the two governments indulge in what can be called competitive developmentalism along the disputed border.

Table 2 summarises the growth of villages in the disputed area between 1971 and 2011. During this period Dimapur recorded an unusually high rate of growth in the number of villages (429 per cent) compared to the state average (49 per cent) as well as the corresponding figure for Golaghat district of Assam (59 per cent). Moreover, both sides are issuing documents of residence, etc. to people, including alleged Bangladeshi immigrants, to build their support base in the area. On the one hand, Nagas often allege that undocumented (Bangladeshi) immigrants have benefitted from this competition. On the other, the Naga settlers employ the Assamese settlers and alleged Bangladeshi immigrants from the plains, who are familiar with wet cultivation and serve as a source of cheap,

19 Nagaland claims that the Union and Assam Governments have allegedly lost the original maps of Nagaland (The Times of India, 2008, Suykens, 2013: 184). However, the solution to the border dispute does not lie in finding the right map. As early as the late 1940s, Gopinath Bardoloi drew the attention of the Constituent Assembly to the fact that there was a serious difference of opinion on this matter between the Assamese and the Nagas (Lok Sabha, nd: 1070). The differences have only widened since then.

skilled, and disciplined agricultural labour. This is inevitable, because, though the Naga settlers control a larger and relatively sparsely populated territory in the disputed belt, they were exposed to settled cultivation only a few decades ago.

7. Concluding remarks

Empirical research in economics and, to a lesser extent, in other social sciences is largely dependent upon government statistics. It is generally assumed that governments are committed to collecting and disseminating correct statistics. As a result, the mutually constitutive relationship between politics, economy, and statistics, and the possibility of systematic manipulation of statistics driven by the structural features of the aforesaid relationship, has received insufficient attention within economics. For instance, most modern governments are multi-tiered, which could affect statistics insofar as different tiers might not have shared preferences over the quality of statistics. Our discussion highlighted this possibility using an example from India. We examined the multiplicity of conflicting maps of the State of Nagaland issued by different tiers and wings of the government and emphasised the lack of attention paid to a statistic as crucial as area.

The absence of a longstanding (indigenous) tradition of measuring territory, the fact that Naga Hills were not cadastrally surveyed because the colonial state did not collect land revenue from the people,²⁰ and the prevalence of different customary norms for boundary demarcation²¹ can only partly explain the flaws noted above. We argued that the cartographic mess is a manifestation of a deeper political problem that lends itself to a combination of political-geographic (people are challenging the colonial boundaries that divided communities in some places and, in others, corralled different communities within a jurisdiction)²² and political-economic (competition for resources and political power is driving people to fight for a favourable boundary) explanations. Increasingly, political-geographic arguments are being used to advance political-economic interests.

Multiple maps showing different boundaries are in circulation partly because of confusion between different wings of the Nagaland Government and partly because of the need to gradually formalise claim over the “encroached” area without direct confrontation with Assam and the Union Government. The multiple maps and fuzzy boundaries help the Nagaland Government to push the

20 Even otherwise Nagaland was insufficiently surveyed compared to other regions of British India. For instance, Gol (1966: 32) notes that ‘no survey had been conducted in Nagaland after 1901.’

21 An example of the difference is in order. A tribal leader claimed that his tribe’s boundary with Assam was traditionally identified by the grazing pattern of mithuns (*Bos frontalis*) and the availability of a particular variety of forest fruit (Interview with a Konyak leader, June 22, 2013, Dimapur). Such floral-faunal boundaries were indeed the norm in the pre-modern period across the world, which were later replaced by “scientific” boundaries by colonial powers. We are also reminded of the tale of Shangmiyang, the Tangkhul giant, ‘whose head rested on the Shiroi peak, while his feet reached Thoubal, the furthest point in the Imphal Valley below. His left hand could easily touch the river Chindwin in Burma [Myanmar] and his right hand, the river Brahmaputra, so many miles away on the other side’ (Bhattacharyya 2005: 168).

22 Englebert et al. (2002: 1094) trace to Clifford Geertz the idea that modern boundaries have caused suffocation (heterogeneous groups contained within a state) and dismemberment (partitioning of homogenous groups by borders). The debate has mostly focused on Africa, where a number of national and sub-national boundaries are straight lines, and is polarised between those who are appalled at the “artificiality” of these boundaries (Alesina, et al. 2006; Englebert, et al. 2002) and those who argue that the discourse of artificiality betrays ignorance of ground realities (Herbst, 2000; Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996).

limits in a manner that allows retraction, if required. However, this leads to many problems. First, from a methodological point of view, these multiple maps strike at root of the assumption that the state is committed to collecting and disseminating correct statistics. Second, this suggests that in a federal setup the Union Government and states may have divergent preferences over collection and interpretation of statistics. Third, statistics collected by different agencies of the state government are not comparable because they use different maps and, by implication, they collect information from different areas. Fourth, it is not unlikely that the national population total double counts the population of the disputed area. Both Assam and Nagaland conduct census in the disputed area and occasionally provide duplicate estimates in some cases. Fifth, flawed area statistics influence policy-making at the national level insofar as area statistics feed into, for instance, federal redistribution formulae (GoI, 2015: 94-95). Sixth, faulty area estimates affect the entire gamut of government statistics starting with population and population density. It is often forgotten that while population and area are the two most essential statistics about any jurisdiction, area is the more fundamental of the two because population is defined for a given area.

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Table 1: Area (in sq km) of districts of Nagaland

District	Year										
	1951 (1951)	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011†	2011††	2011	2011	2011
Source	Gol (1956: 3, 55) [Gol (1966: 42)] (Gol (1966: 50))	Gol (1966: 37) (1973: 26, 40)	Gol (1973: 26, 40)	Gol (1984b: 26-38)	Gol (1998: 46)	Gol (2005a: 59)	Gol (2012: 16, 34, 46, 64, 80, 92, 110, 130, 138, 150, 162)	Gol (2011c: xiv, 59)	Gol (nd3)	Gol (nd)	Govt of Assam (nd)
<i>Kohima (1971)</i>	6,171.94 (6,148.7)	6,148.7 (6,149)	7,209	6,067	6,067	6,067	6,065	5,937	6,067	6,067	6,067+354.55*
Kohima			7,209	4,041	4,041	3,114	1,472	1,268	1,463		
Dimapur						927	746	926	927		
Peren							1,833	1,726	1,651		
Phek				2,026	2,026	2,026	2,014	2,016	2,026		
<i>Mokokchung (1971)</i>	4,957.24 (4,983.1)	4,983.1 (4,983)	3,852	4,498	4,498	4,498	4,508	4,499	4,498	4,498	4,498+239.86*
Mokokchung			3,852	1,615	1,615	1,615	1,629	1,610	1,615		
Wokha				1,628	1,628	1,628	1,608	1,630	1,628		
Zunheboto				1,255	1,255	1,255	1,272	1,259	1,255		
<i>Tuensang (1971)</i>	5,322.43 (5,356.1)	5,356.1 (5356)	5,466	6,014	6,014	6,014	6,004	5,667	6,014	6,014	6,014+0.00*
Tuensang			5,466	4,228	4,228	4,228	2,132	2,187	2,536		
Kiphire							1,130	1,122	1,130		
Longleng							562	568	562		
Mon				1,786	1,786	1,786	2,180	1,791	1,786		
Total area	16,451.60 [16,451.7] [16,487.9]	16,487.9 (16,488)§	16,527	16,579	16,579	16,579	16,577†	16,103 (16,644†)	16,579	16,579	16,579+594.41 (= 17,173.41)

Notes: (i) Census reports area statistics only in sq miles in 1951, both in sq miles and sq km in 1961, and only in sq km since 1971. (ii) Kohima (1971), Mokokchung (1971), and Tuensang (1971) correspond to the districts at the time of formation of state, i.e., 1963, and the 1971 Census. The territories of other districts are as per the respective censuses. (iii) † The sum of the areas of the districts is 16,576.8 sq km, but Gol (2012: 1) reports that the area of the state was 16,579 sq km. (iv) †† Calculated using population density and population reported in Gol (2011c). If we add up the areas of individual districts, the area of the state (viz., 16,103 sq km) is about 3 per cent less than the 2001 area. The discrepancy can be possibly attributed to inaccurate distribution of area between Kohima and Tuensang and their successor districts. (v) ‡ The state's total area when calculated using the overall population and population density is 16,644 sq km, which is 0.4 per cent more than the 2001 area. The difference could possibly be attributed to rounding-off errors. (vi) * Refers to the correction in the 2011 area based on the Assam Government's estimate of the disputed territory under Nagaland's administration (Government of Assam, nd). Another estimate of the Assam Government of the "encroached" territory in the vicinity of Dimapur is 1.24 sq km more than the estimate used here. (vii) In 1951, as per the Surveyor General the area of the territories, which later formed the state of Nagaland, was 16,397.21 sq km (Gol, 1956: 55). The 1951 figures reported in the above table are based on the Assam Survey Department's estimates.

Table 2: Number of inhabited villages

Administrative unit	Villages		
	1971	2011	Growth
Nagaland	960	1,428	49
Kohima (1971)	346	556	61
<i>Dimapur</i>	43	226	426
Mokokchung (1971)	326	452	39
Tuensang (1971)	288	420	46
Assam	21,995	26,550	21
<i>Golaghat</i>	664	1,059	59
India	5,75,935	5,95,842	3

Notes: (i) 'Growth' is percentage change in number of villages between 1971 and 2011; (ii) Kohima (1971), Mokokchung (1971), and Tuensang (1971) correspond to the districts at the time of the 1971 Census; (iii) GoI (2011d) provides the number of villages including the uninhabited ones. We use the share of uninhabited villages in 2001 to adjust the figure reported for 2011.

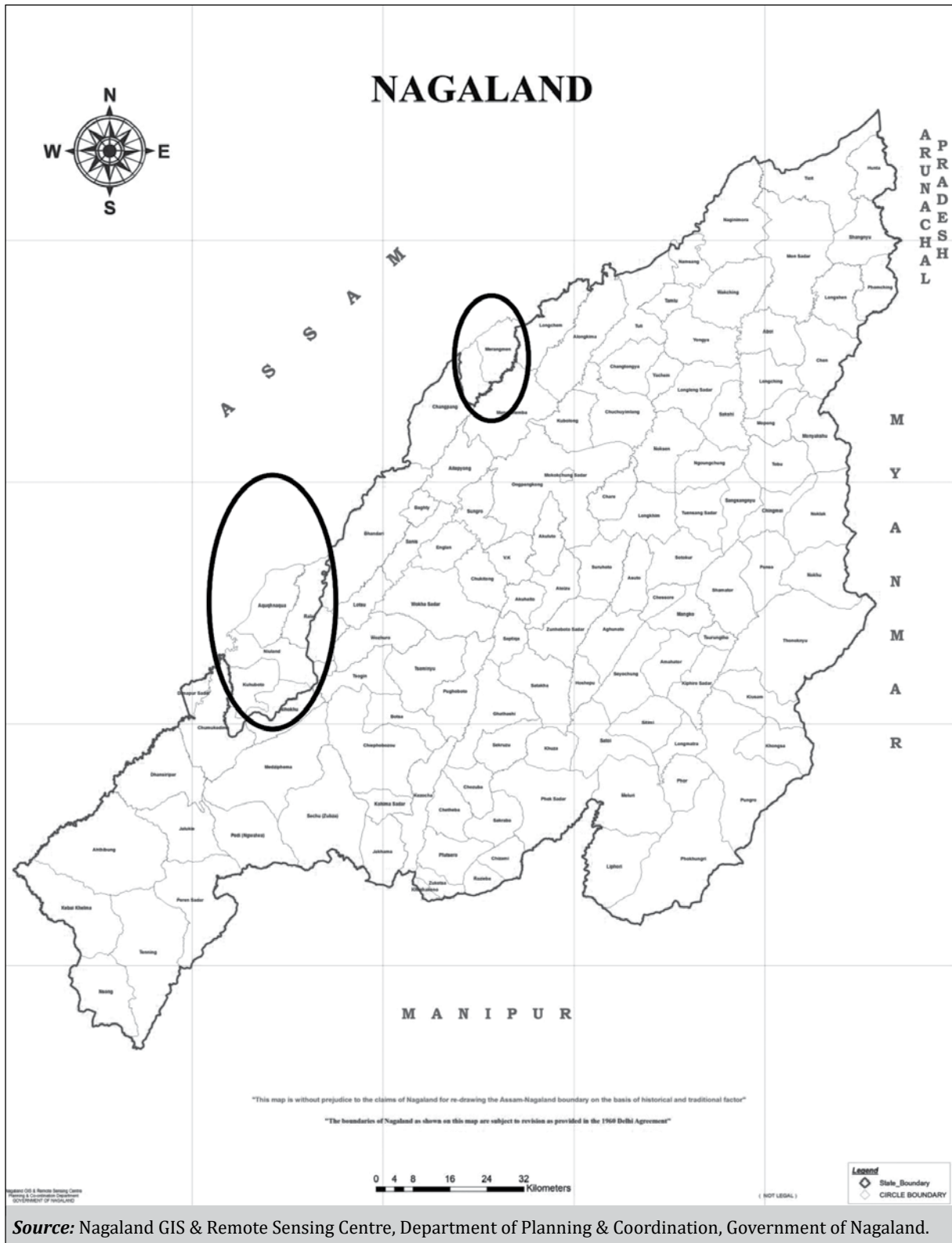
Sources: 1971 figures: GoI (1973) for Nagaland, its districts, and Dimapur; GoI (1985) for Assam; Chand and Puri (2013: 265) for India.

2011 figures: GoI (2012) for Nagaland and its districts; <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/censusdata2k11.aspx> for Assam; GoI (2011d), GoI (2012) and http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_data_finder/A_Series/Number_of_Village.htm for India

Map 1: Circles of Nagaland (2011)



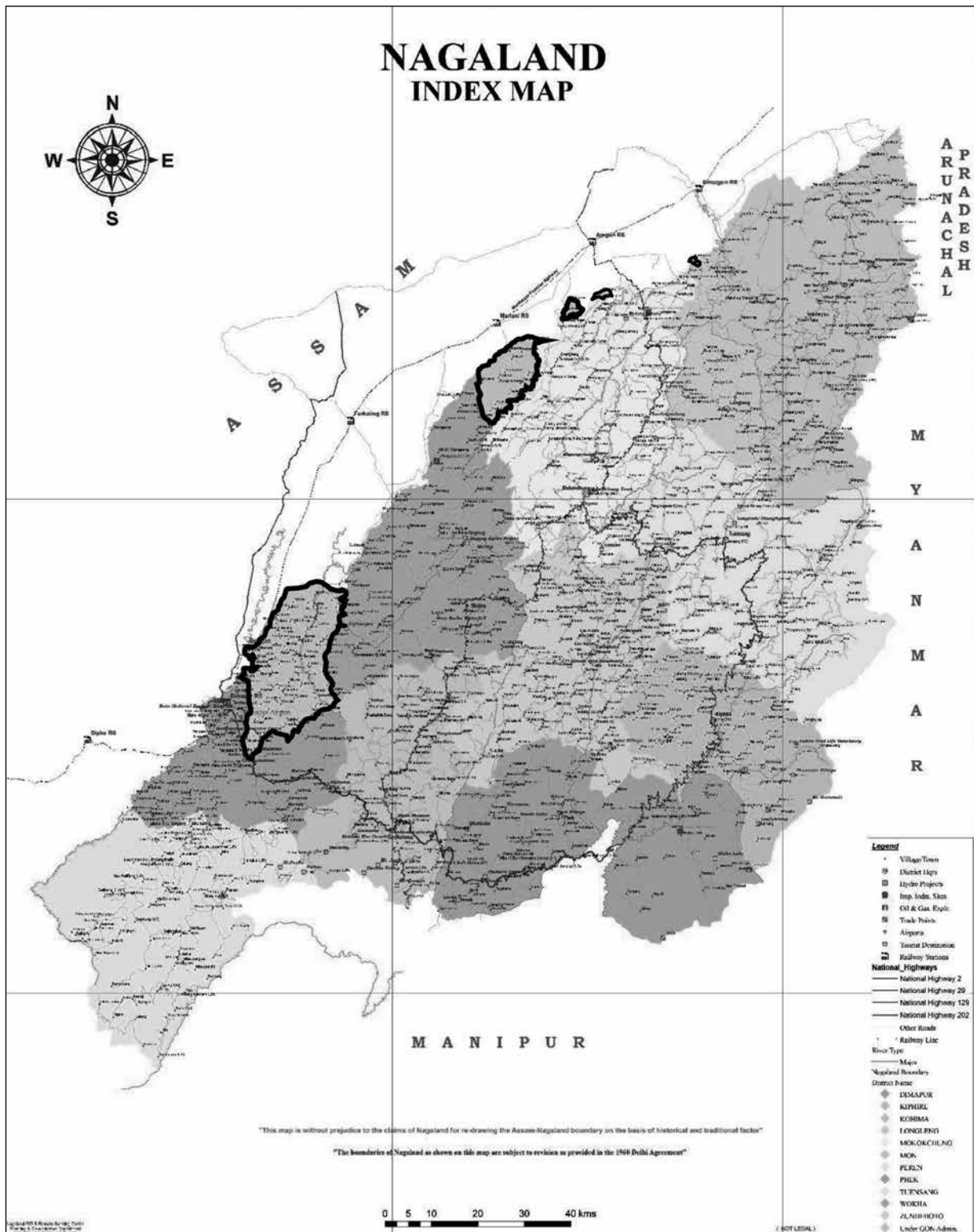
Map 2: Administrative circles map of Nagaland (including circles in the disputed territory)



Source: Nagaland GIS & Remote Sensing Centre, Department of Planning & Coordination, Government of Nagaland.

Note: In this and following maps, ovals or rectangles superimposed over the maps draw attention to discrepancies.

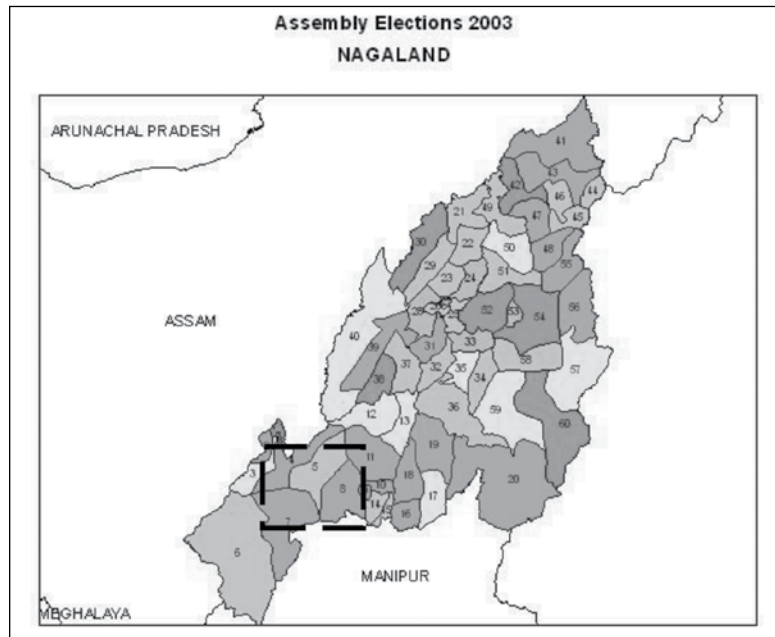
Map 3: Index map of Nagaland (including circles in the disputed territory)



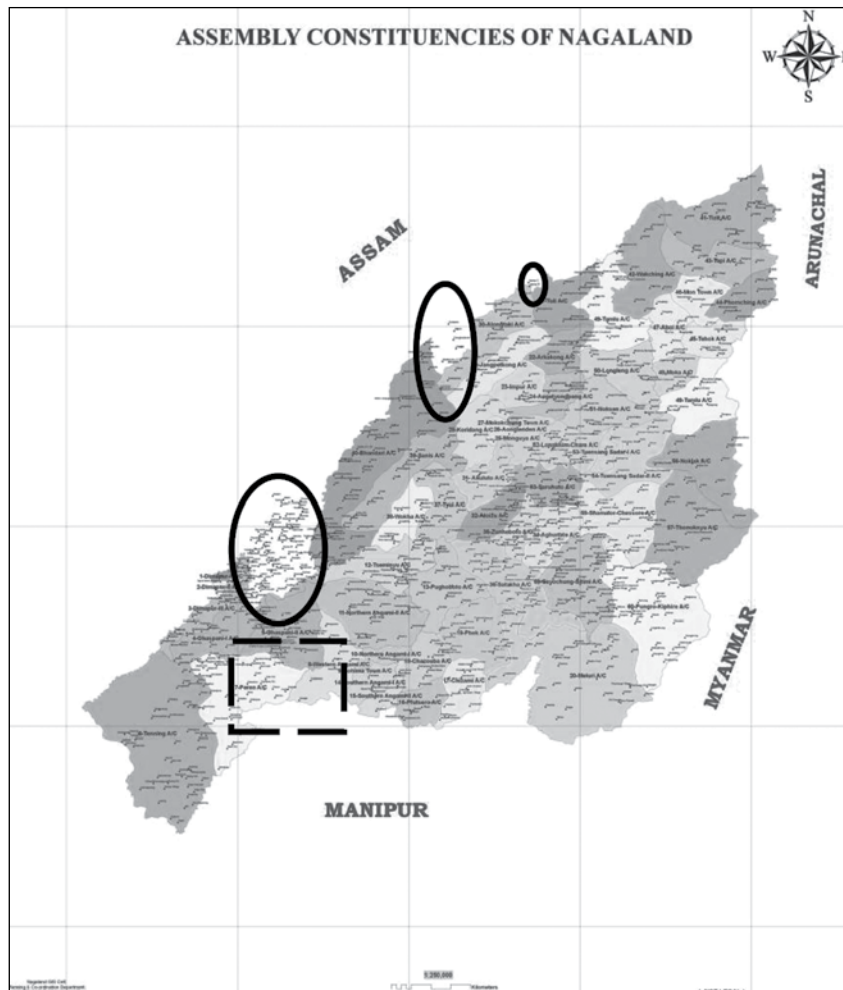
Source: Nagaland GIS & Remote Sensing Centre, Dept of Planning & Coordination, Government of Nagaland

Note: The areas shaded parrot green, indicated by ovals, lie in the disputed territory, which is referred to in the list of legends as territories 'Under GON [Government of Nagaland] Admin.'

Map 4: Assembly constituencies maps of Nagaland

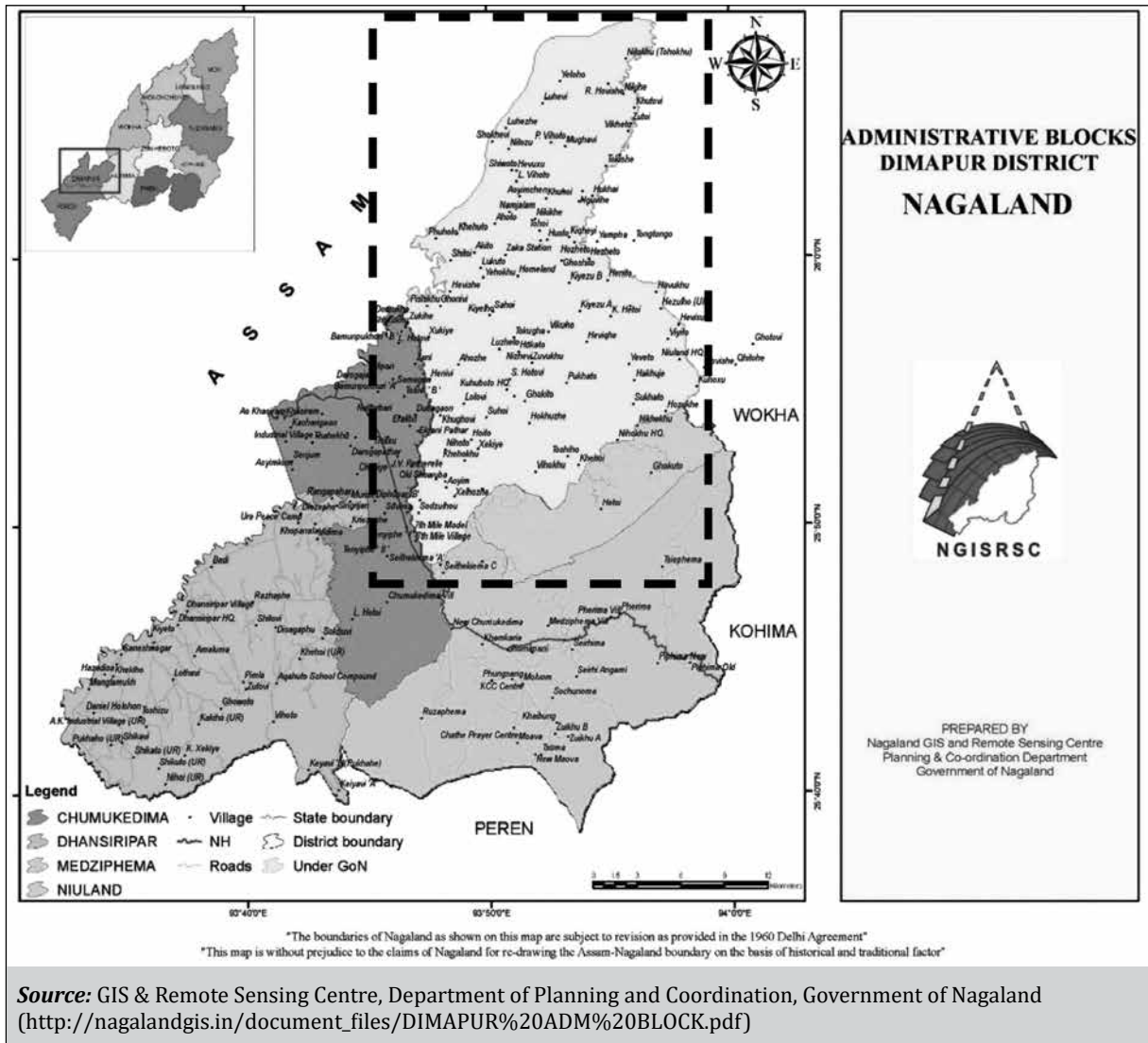


http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/election_maps/Results/AC/S17/S17_AC.jpg (last accessed July 27, 2016)



http://ceonagaland.nic.in/AC_Map.jpg (last accessed July 27, 2016)

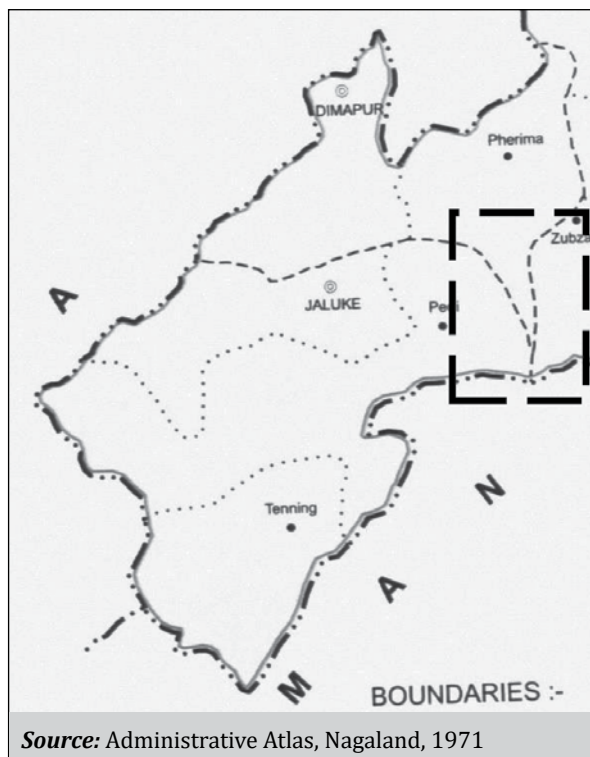
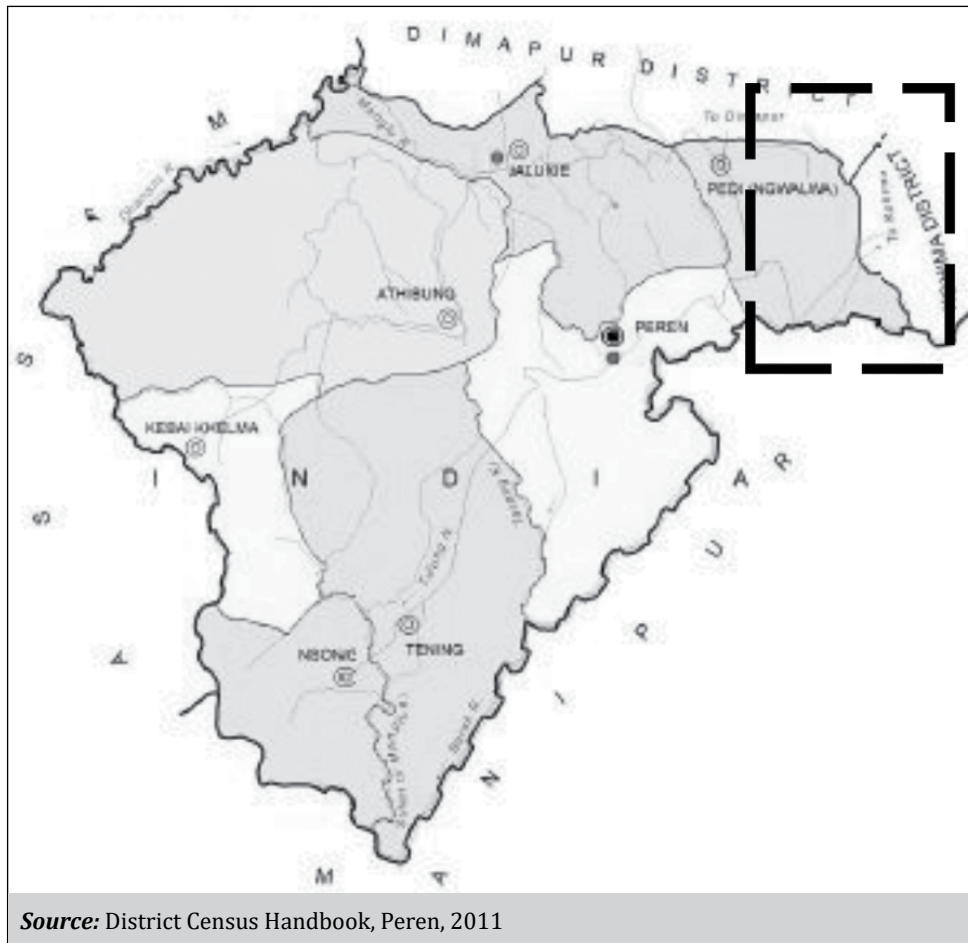
Map 5: Administrative blocks of Dimapur district



Source: GIS & Remote Sensing Centre, Department of Planning and Coordination, Government of Nagaland (http://nagalandgis.in/document_files/DIMAPUR%20ADM%20BLOCK.pdf)

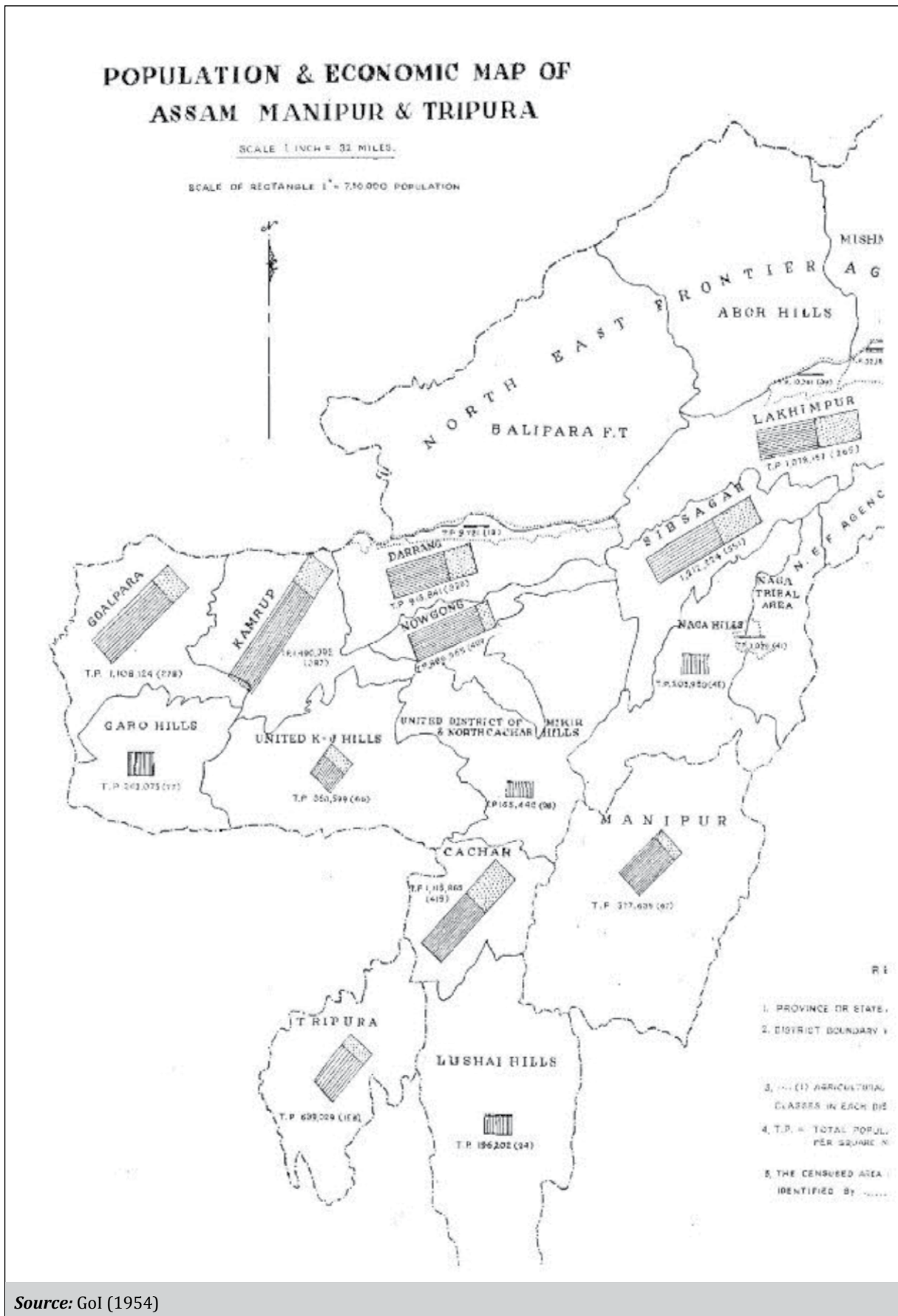
Note: The area of the district shown using light sky blue colour, enclosed within a rectangle, is not included in the state's map shown on the top left corner.

Map 6: Peren in 1971 and 2011



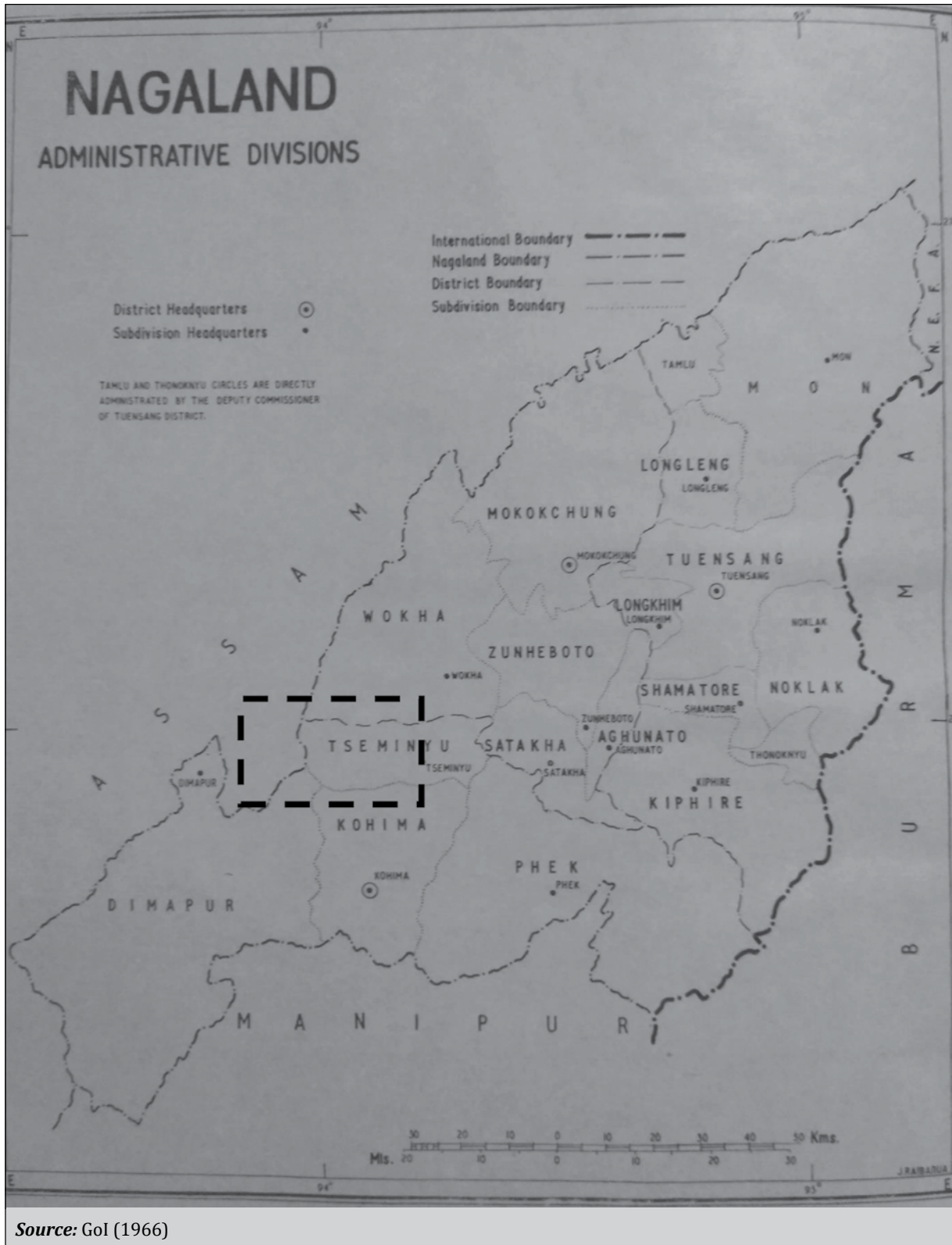
Note: The boundary of Peren shifted northward into Dimapur between 1981 and 1991 despite the transfer of a village from Peren to Dimapur and no transfer of territory between Kohima and Dimapur.

Map 7a: Map of the Naga Hills (1951)



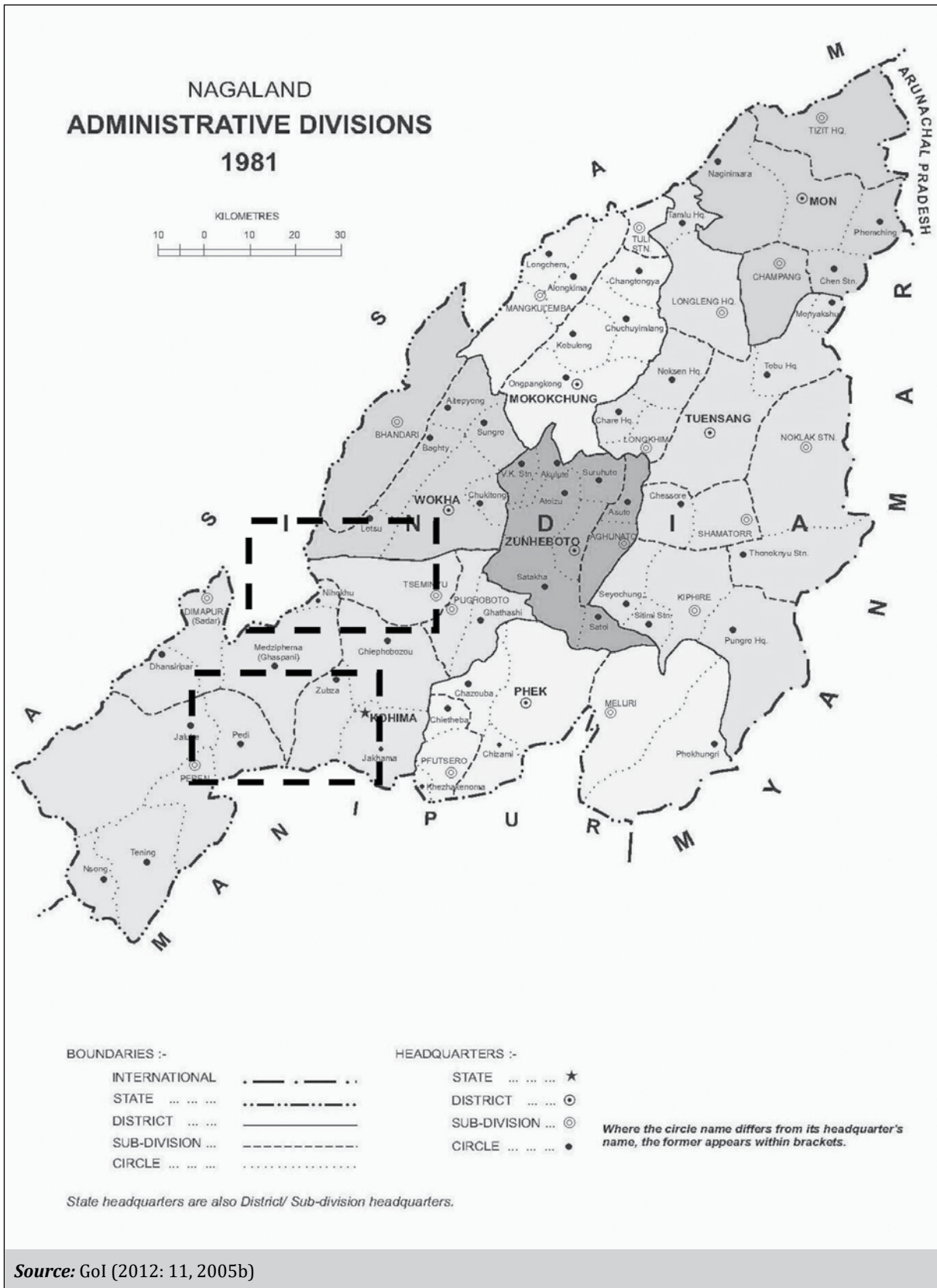
Source: GoI (1954)

Map 7b: Circle map of Nagaland (1961)

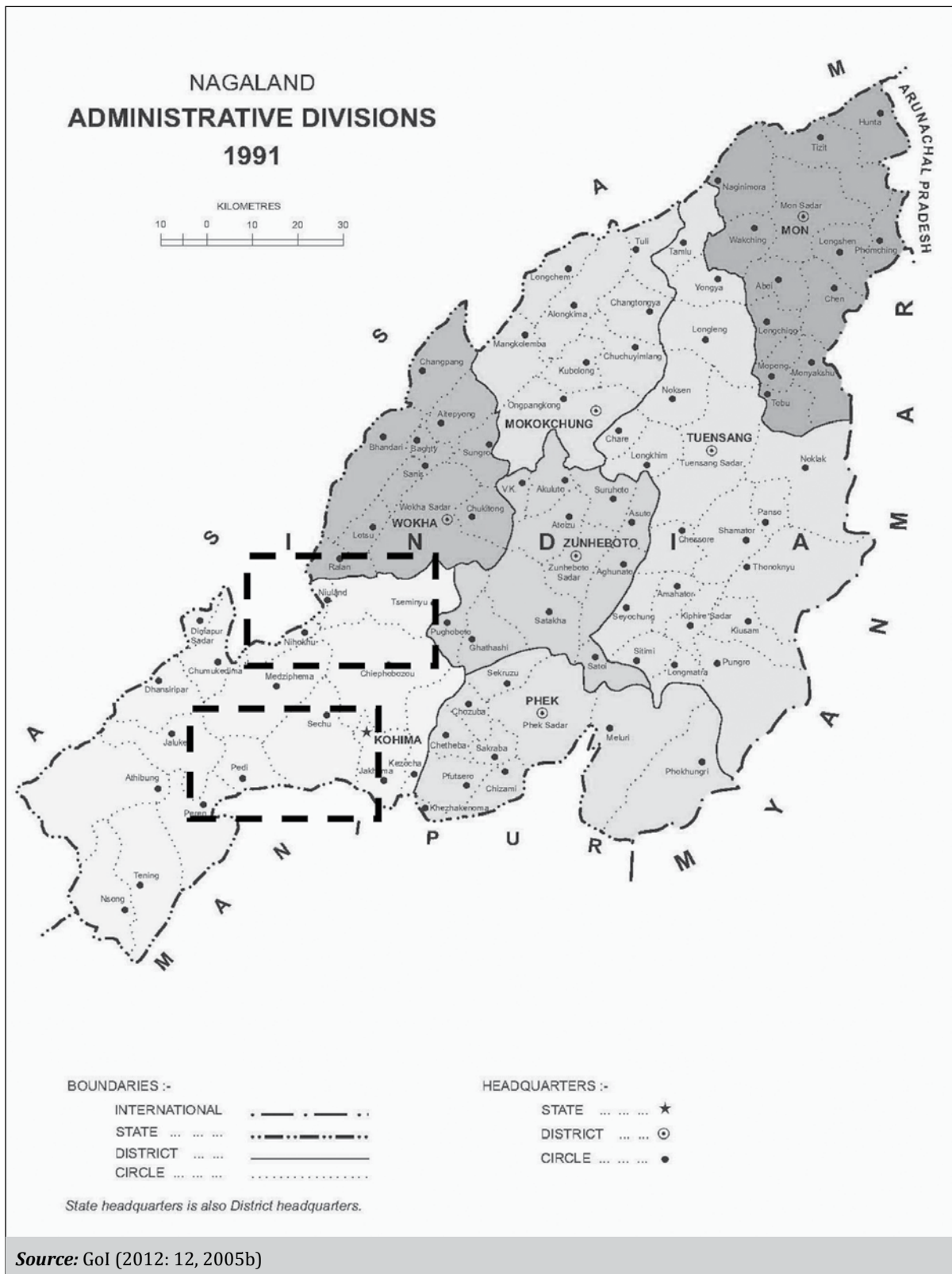


Source: GoI (1966)

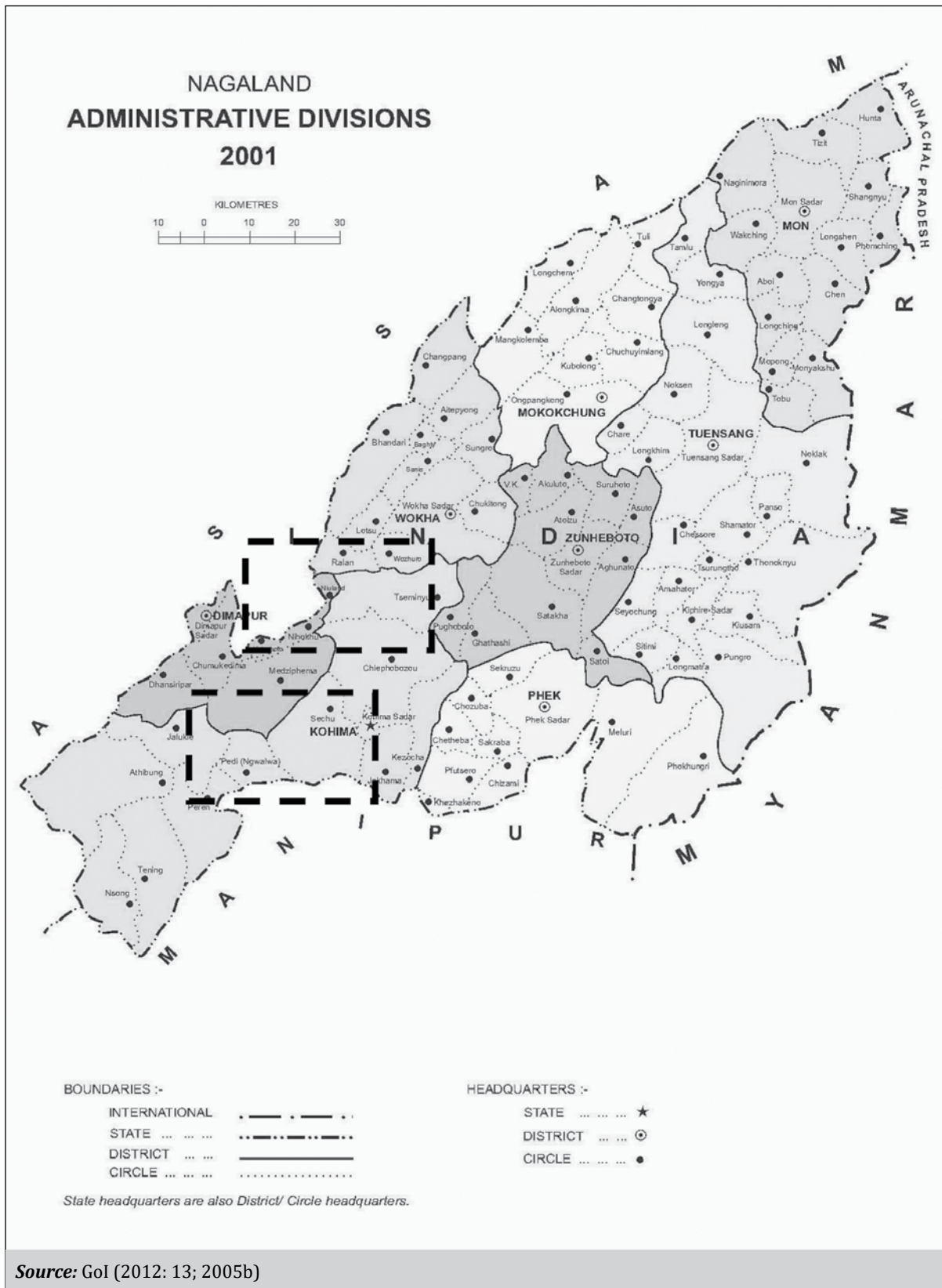
Map 7d: Circle map of Nagaland (1981)



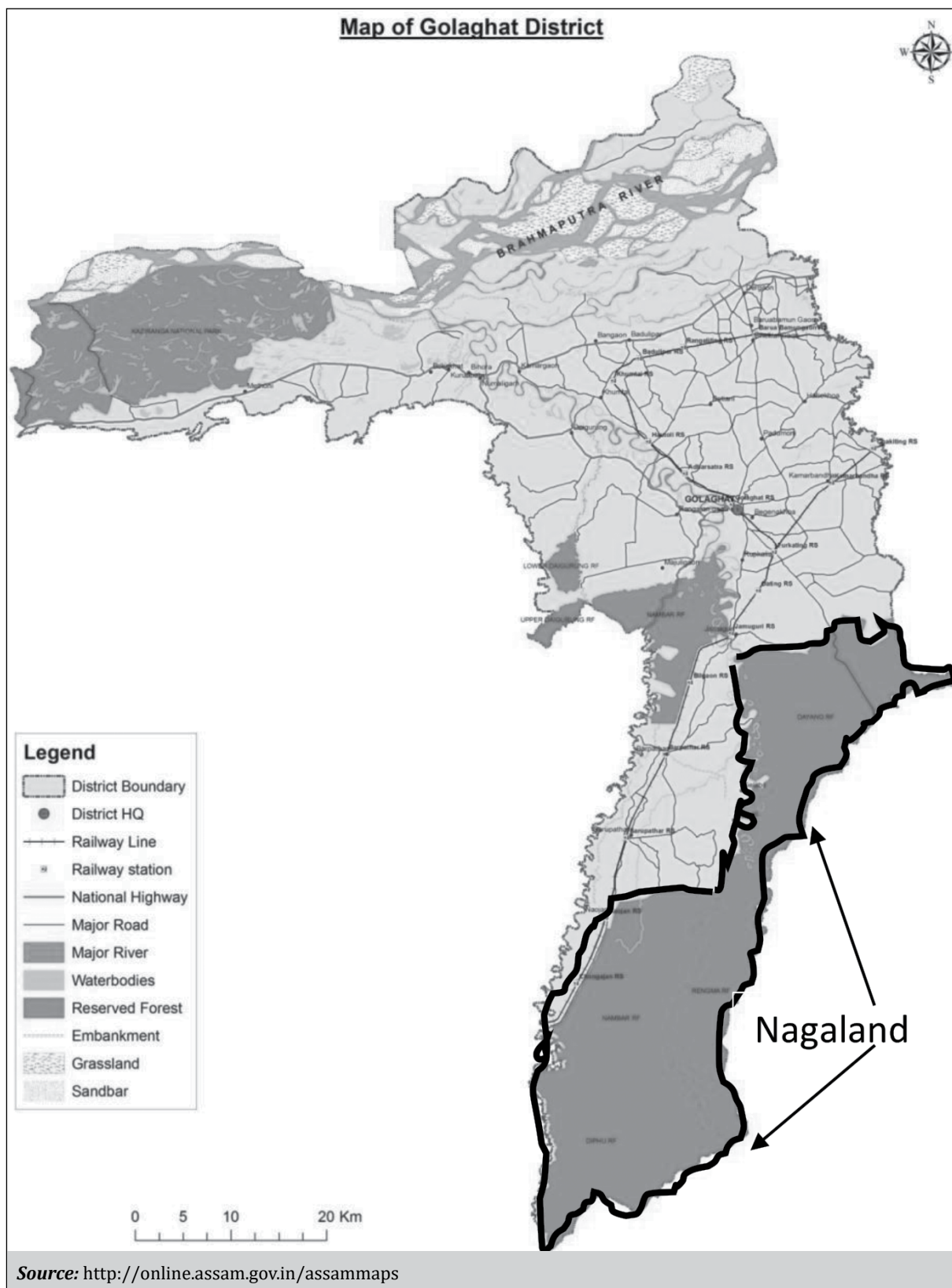
Map 7e: Circle map of Nagaland (1991)



Map 7f: Circle map of Nagaland (2001)

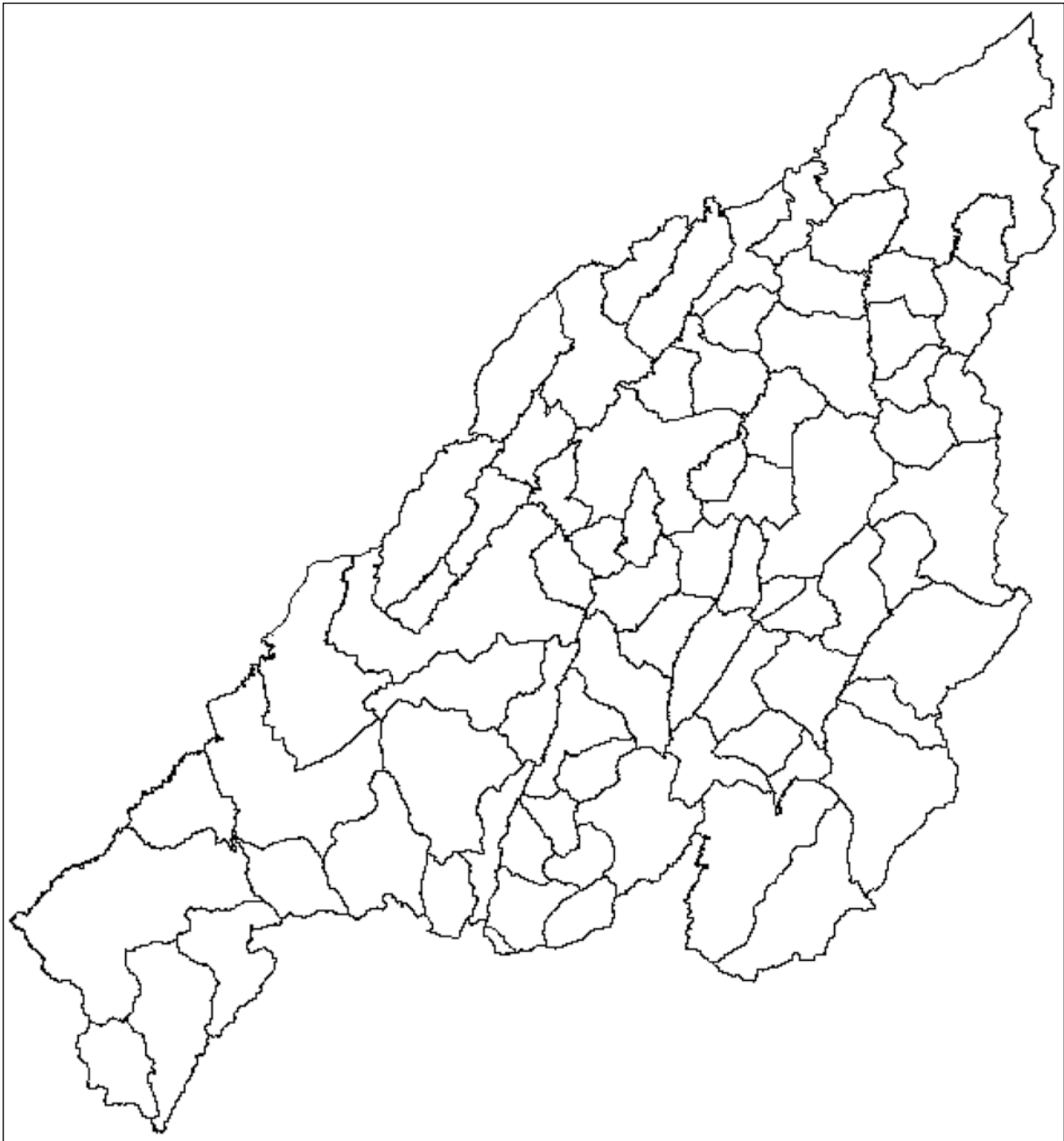


Map 8: Map of reserved forests in Golaghat district, Assam

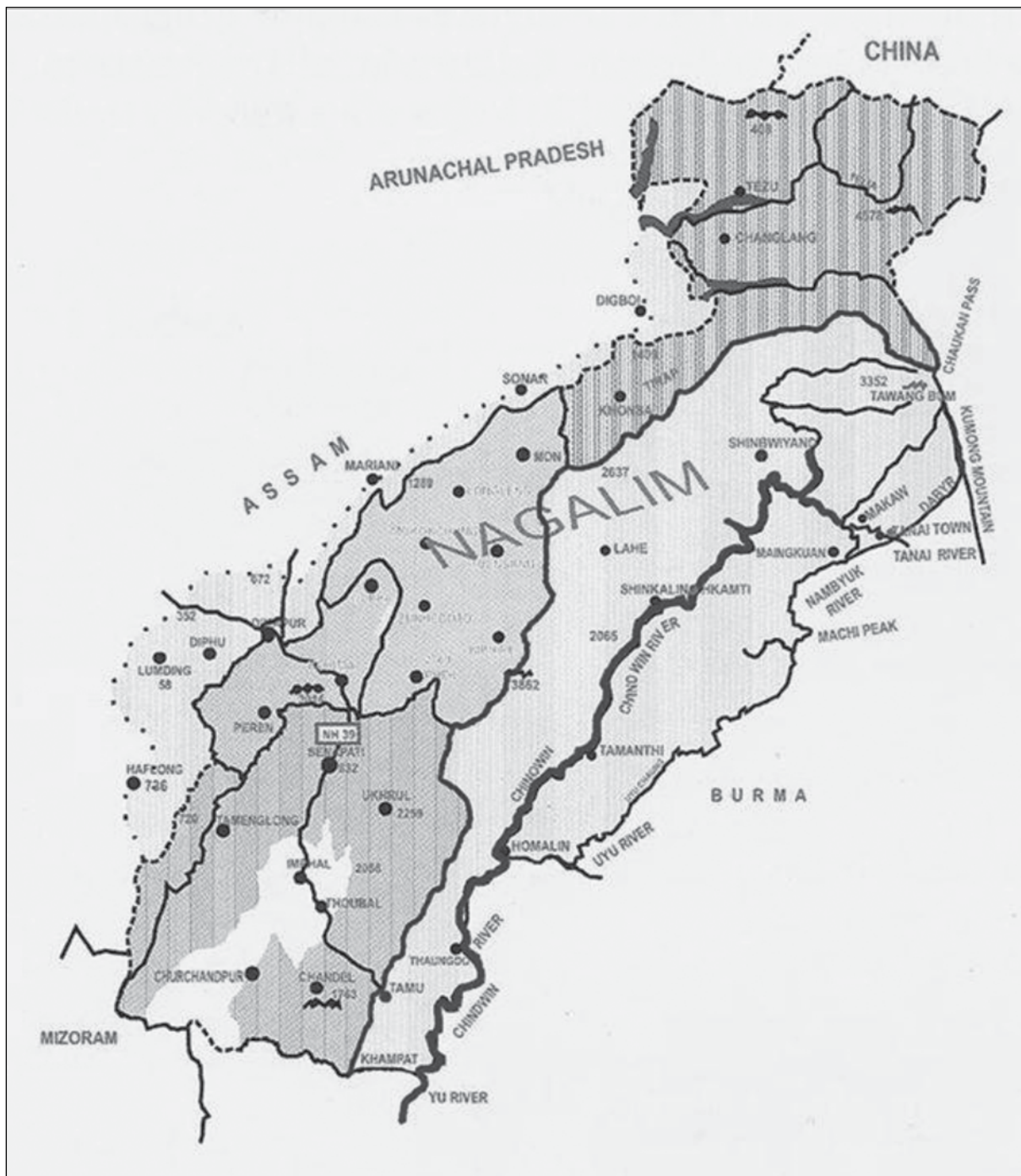


Note: The areas in dark green, including the one bordering Nagaland (outlined in black), indicate reserved forests.

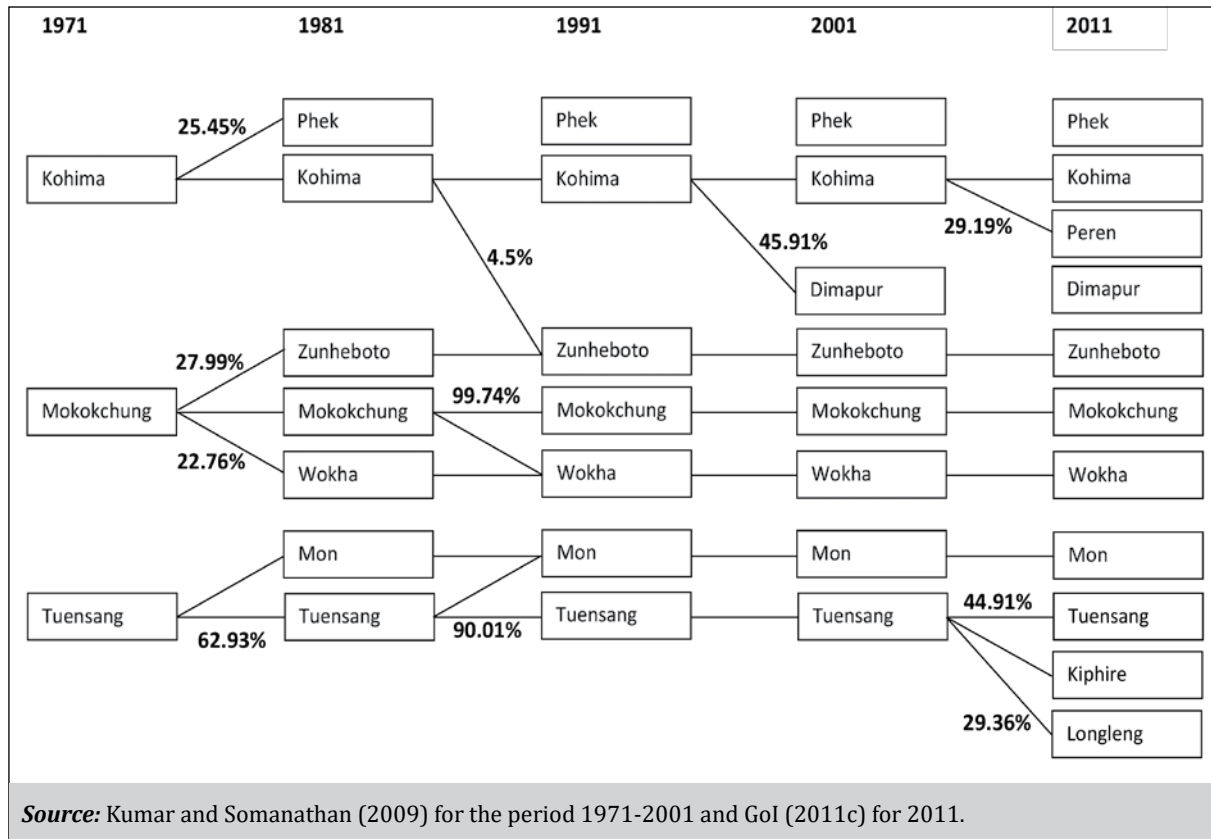
Map 9: Map of Nagaland generated using a government shapefile



Source: Shapefile obtained from GIS & Remote Sensing Centre, Department of Planning and Coordination, Government of Nagaland

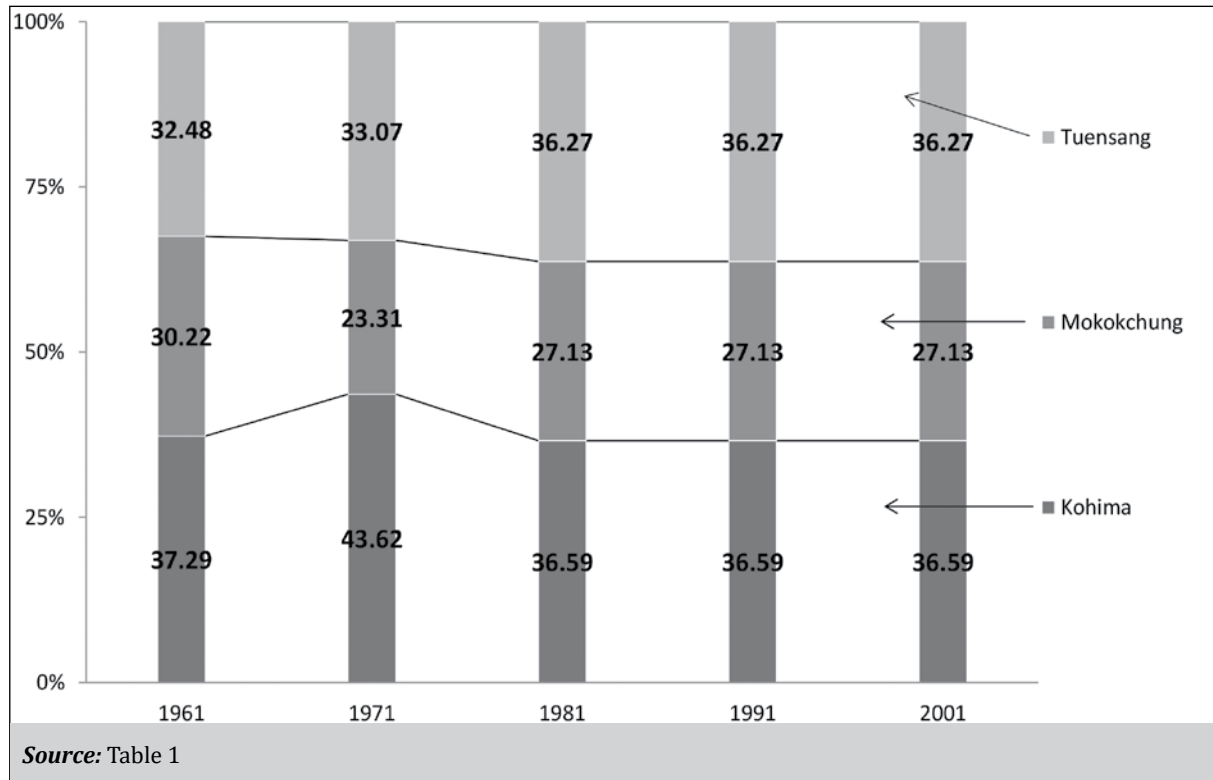
Map 10: Map of Nagalim/Greater Nagaland

Note: The above map appears as Figure IV in NSCN-IM (2010 [2007]: 6) where it is said to indicate 'the expressed will and natural rights of the Nagas to unify their homeland into one Naga National Political entity called, Nagalim.' This is one of the many maps of Greater Nagaland in circulation.

Figure 1: Evolution of districts, Nagaland, 1971-2011

Note: The numbers adjacent to arrows denote the population share of the administrative unit, corresponding to the preceding census year, of a parent district that was transferred to a new/existing district in the subsequent decade. Exact estimates of the area of territories transferred are not available.

Figure 2: Change in area of districts, Nagaland, 1961-2011



Note: The above figure tracks the changes in the area of the original three districts (including their successor districts) of Nagaland.

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About Azim Premji University

Azim Premji University was established in Karnataka by the Azim Premji University Act 2010 as a not-for-profit University and is recognized by The University Grants Commission (UGC) under Section 22F. The University has a clearly stated social purpose. As an institution, it exists to make significant contributions through education towards the building of a just, equitable, humane and sustainable society. This is an explicit commitment to the idea that education contributes to social change. The beginnings of the University are in the learning and experience of a decade of work in school education by the Azim Premji Foundation. The University is a part of the Foundation and integral to its vision. The University currently offers Postgraduate Programmes in Education, Development and Public Policy and Governance, Undergraduate Programmes in Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities, and a range of Continuing Education Programmes.

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