

**Development Dilemmas: A Political Ecology of the Future from What is Happening in Tinsukia District, Assam**

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**Abstract:**

Tinsukia district in eastern Assam hosts every element within the field of political ecology. Some of the oldest tea plantations, coal mines, and oil rigs in Asia, jostle for space with biodiversity hotspots, wildlife corridors, and communities that are dependent on land for their livelihoods. This density of actors has led to the acceleration of threats and hazards to both human and non-human life. Drawing on data from a recent essay that I had co-authored with geologist Sarat Phukan, I argue that these conditions amplify historical inequalities and cast a material shadow over the present, so that contemporary crisis – such as the Baghjan blowout and the bitter debates about conservation of wildlife corridors – can be understood as legacies of a particularly violent past characterised by colonisation, extraction, and exploitation.