

Report on GeoMap Society webinar held on 11 Sep 2020

MAPS & GIS APPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By Maj Gen Dr R.Siva Kumar, President IIC,Technologies, Hyderabad

GeoMap Society has newly initiated the, "*Discussion Forum*" using the Webinar platform. The forum will enable, 'Presentation & Discussion' by eminent persons in academic, geospatial industry, government, practitioners and policy makers. The initiation to this activity has come from Prof I V Muralikrishna. The maiden event was supported by Centre for Applied Research (CARG), Indian National Cartographic Association (INCA), Hyderabad Chapter & Innovation, Co-Innovation Research in Geoinformatics (ICORG),Hyderabad. The first talk in the series was delivered by Maj Gen Dr R Siva Kumar on, 'Maps & GIS Applications for National Development on 11 September, 2020. A copy of the flyer is attached (fig 1)

Dr V.Raghava Swamy informed all that † GeoMap Society (GEMS) is included in the list of 60 Associations under the umbrella of list of Geographical Institutions in India. This is by virtue of participating & presenting the activities of GeoMap Society during the National Online Meet held from 4-7, September 2020. The Pan India meet was organised by The Indian Geographical Society (IGS), Chennai. .The copy of the certificate of appreciation presented by the IGS is enclosed (Figure 2)

Mr G S Kumar informed that GeoMap Society (GEMS) along with several professionals has been actively engaging in pursuing many programs,since 1990. He said, impact of its programs is slow but is steadily moving forward. He said,-the very recent announcement on the changes in Land Bills (2020) is an important initiative taken by the Governments of Telangana & AP. He said, hopefully, this will be the topic for presentation in the next month's (October) webinar of the society. He informed that GEMS took a decision to hold webinars every month, on second Friday at 6pm.

Salient points from presentation by Maj Gen Dr R.Siva Kumar, are :

- Survey & scientific mapping started in India long back.
- 1:50,000 scale topographic mapping of whole country with vast area, huge population, lakhs of villages, cultivable land, land use practices has been a huge task. Thematic mapping of waste lands & estimations from satellite data was carried by then, NRSA (Dr DP Rao & team) .. is in itself an achievement. Both these efforts have emerged for building a Decision Support Systems (DSS)
- Despite it,we have not been able to develop to make a proper use of the GIS ready data
- We missed out on using Crowd sourcing, Asset mapping, Location Based Services (LBS) etc. in developing Digital India.

- 9 pillars of Digital India have been identified by the govt. E-governance is a number 4 pillar. Karnataka has made a good progress in adopting digital technology.
- Jack Dangermond founder president of ESRI stressed on better transparency, citizen services and use of GIS in land records.
- Number of maps on different scales indicates the huge magnitude of task in preparing them. There are 5060 maps on 1:50,000 scale; 19,343 maps on 1:25,000 and 1,32,000 maps on 1:25,000 scale.
- Issues like datum, projection, interoperability, accuracy, content, policies, meta data are some of the bottle-necks in effective use and positioning of GIS technology for mapping.
- We have several policies like National Map Policy, Remote Sensing Data Policy, Data sharing policy. We need to rationalise all of them
- Under the web map, open map series is available in digital form for public use.
- Bhuvan Portal – Indian Remote Sensing data is rich and can be used for many applications. We produced maps in regional languages also. We also made digital maps for land records and Municipal use. Delhi's large scale GIS data under DSSDI was generated, but could not be utilised to the extent it should have been. Maps at half metre contours, cadastral maps, and other useful maps have been made as pilots. We need to move beyond pilot studies and generate a Pan India data base on a very large horizon.
- Years back, 7 specified organisations were permitted to digitise Sol maps. Another organisation wanted to be included in the list. Government refused. They approached the Minister. He overruled the official stand and the organisation was given permission. This is an example of political will.
- He supported the, use of GIS mandatory for all area related projects in the country.
- With entry of Drone technology for mapping, there is a need to adapt ourselves

Prof IV Muralikrishna, who organised the meet, mentioned about wide ranging use of GIS. He stressed on *"integration of datasets"*. This being the first webinar participation by members of society and many professionals is very encouraging. Thanks to Dr Nagaraja for enabling INCA as partner to this webinar. Interested members can visit the web portal, *"geopediasociety.com"* for Maps Today magazine of GEMS.

