

Google Street View

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In news– **Google Street View is finally available for ten cities in India** and is expected to roll out in about 50 more cities by the end of 2022.

Google Street View in India-

- The 360-degree interactive panorama feature of Google Maps has been available in cities spread over 100 countries since 2007, but not so in India until now.
- In 2011, the Bangalore City Police stopped vehicles capturing images for Google Street View.
- Though there was no clarity on why exactly the policy stopped the capture of data, after that Google did not proceed with the product in India, **even as local companies like Wonobo and MapMyIndia came up with their own versions of immersive visual maps of some Indian cities.**
- **The National Geospatial Policy, 2021 lets Indian companies collect map data and license it to others.**
- After this, **Google has tied up with Tech Mahindra and Mumbai-based Genesys International to enable Street View for 10 Indian cities initially.**
- **This is the first time Google is working with partner data to enable this feature.** In India, the data will be collected and owned by these partners.
- **Street View in India is not allowed for restricted areas like government properties, defence establishments and military areas. This means in a place like Delhi, the cantonment area will be out of bounds for Street View.**

What is Google Street View-?

- **Google Street View is a technology featured in Google Maps and Google Earth that provides interactive panoramas from positions along many streets in the**

world.

- It was launched in 2007 in several cities in the United States, and has since expanded.
- It is **an immersive 360-degree view of a location captured using special cameras mounted on vehicles** or on backpacks by data collectors moving around the city streets.
- The images are then patched together to create a 360-degree view which users can swipe through to get a detailed view of the location.
- It is available to view on Android and iOS using the app, or as a web view.
- While **Google Maps gives users the ability to plot a route and see the satellite view of the same**, often this does not give a clear idea of the road conditions.
- **With Street View, users will be able to see exactly how a new destination looks like**, and even explore local businesses before going there.

Issues with Street View-

- Over the years a lot of **privacy** and other issues have been raised regarding Street View.
- A lot of these stem from **people's faces and other identifiable aspects, like car number plates and house numbers**, being captured by the camera and being misused in different ways.
- There have also been security concerns about this kind of views being available, **especially for sensitive locations.**
- Along with India, Google has had **issues with the local authorities** in countries like Austria, Australia and Germany, though it has come back in most of these locations.

The National Geospatial Policy, 2021-

- It is a **citizen-centric policy that liberalizes the**

geospatial sector and democratizes the datasets generated by use of public funds.

- The Policy spells out the vision, goals and also outlines the approach and strategy for holistic development of geospatial ecosystem in our country.
- **It aims to develop the Geospatial Infrastructures and also seeks to strengthen the national and sub-national arrangements** for generation and management of geospatial information.
- The Policy seeks to create, nurture and develop a geospatial ecosystem that would enable and encourage spatial thinking, add to geospatial knowledge, strengthen geospatial infrastructure, augment capacity building and promote effective use of Geospatial Data, Products, Services and Solutions (GDPSS) and boost geospatial entrepreneurship.
- **Geospatial Data Promotion and Development Committee (GDPDC) shall be the apex national authority** for formulating and implementing appropriate policies, strategies and programmes for promotion of activities related to collection, generation, preparation, dissemination, storage, publication, updating and/or digitization of Geospatial Data, along with associated Products, Solutions and Services.