

Liberalised Guidelines for Geo-spatial Data

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In news : Recently, Government announced liberalised guidelines for geo-spatial data

What is geospatial data?

Geospatial data (also known as “spatial data”) is used to describe data that represents features or objects on the Earth’s surface. Whether it’s man-made or natural, if it has to do with a specific location on the globe, it’s geospatial.

The word geospatial is used to indicate data that has a geographic component to it. This means that the records in a dataset have locational information tied to them such as geographic data in the form of coordinates, address, city, or ZIP code. GIS data is a form of geospatial data.

Other definitions

- **Positional data:** Latitude, longitude and elevation/depth of a point or its x, y & z co-ordinates in the territory of the Republic of India.
- **Attribute data:** Any data that when associated with Positional Data gives any additional meaning to it.
- **Geospatial Data:** Positional data with or without attribute data tagged, whether in the form of images, videos, vector, voxel and/or raster datasets or any other type of geospatial dataset in digitized or non-digitized form or web-services.
- **Map:** Symbolic representation of real-world objects, regions or themes on a given scale which was generally published in paper form but now also available as web-map-service.
- **Geospatial Technology:** Any technology including but not

limited to Aerial / UAV Photogrammetry, Aerial / UAV LIDAR, drones, Radar Interferometry, street view or by other means of ground survey, satellite based remote sensing techniques, AI, underwater mapping, and others.

Need

The next generation of technologies will use hyper-resolution maps. Availability of comprehensive, highly accurate, granular and constantly updated representation of Geospatial Data will significantly benefit diverse sectors of the economy and will significantly boost innovation in the country and greatly enhance the preparedness of the country for emergency response

The availability of data and modern mapping technologies to Indian companies is also crucial for achieving the vision of AtmaNirbharBharat and a five trillion-dollar economy.

Key updates

Following are the highlights of recent announce made by the government:

- To realise India's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and the goal of a 5 trillion-dollar economy, the regulations that apply to geospatial data and maps henceforth stand radically liberalised.
- The Department of Science and Technology has announced sweeping changes to India's mapping policy, specifically for Indian companies.
- What is readily available globally does not need to be restricted in India and therefore geospatial data that used to be restricted will now be freely available in India.
- Furthermore, our corporations and innovators are no longer subject to restrictions nor do they require prior

approvals before they collect, generate, prepare, disseminate, store, publish, update digital Geospatial Data and Maps within the territory of India.

- With the advent of publicly available geospatial services, a lot of Geospatial Data that used to be in restricted zone are freely and commonly available now and some of the policies/guidelines that used to regulate such information have been rendered obsolete and redundant
- For Indian entities, there would be complete deregulation with no prior approvals, security clearances, licenses, etc. for acquisition and production of geospatial data and geospatial data services including maps

Which geospatial data will be made accessible?

- All geospatial data produced using public funds, except classified geospatial data collected by security/law enforcement agencies, will be made accessible for scientific, economic and developmental purposes to all Indian Entities and without any restrictions on their use.
- Government agencies and others need to collaborate and work towards open linked geospatial data

Who will be benefitted?

Stakeholders benefited will include practically every segment of society, from industry to academia to government departments

Significance of the decision

- By liberalizing the geo-spatial guidelines, the government has taken a historic decision that will lead to a One Lakh Crore Rupees Geo-Spatial economy
- It is a historic decision to completely deregulate Geospatial Map-making and unshackle the Geospatial

sector in India for the first time. The decision is an extension of a series of visionary reforms undertaken in the Space sector.

- Government's announcement heralds the unlocking of geo-mapping from restrictive use to wider use in the interest of nation building and creating an AtmaNirbhar Bharat.
- As per the experts, stimulating and empowering Indian industry and Surveying Agencies without diluting security concerns.
- Atmanirbharta in Geospatial products and solutions, will be a one lakh crore business by 2030 plus economic impact through development