

Need for a dynamic geospatial policy



Geospatial data plays a vital role in the decision-making process across a range of industries. Therefore, accessing, sharing and using the geospatial data forms the essence of the geospatial infrastructure.

Whether it is Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), Satellite Remote Sensing or Geographic Information System (GIS), the three most widely used geospatial technologies in all sectors in India, with the need for higher positioning accuracy and precision grows the adaptability of geospatial technology is growing leaps and bounds.

However, with the rapidly growing industry, there are few constraints as well. The most crucial being setting up standards for the geospatial data. “Not all geospatial data is threat to national security. It is, in fact, a part of a robust system that can empower citizens to counter such threats,” points out Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Director, National Institute of Advanced Studies and Distinguished Scientist, Ministry of Earth Sciences, India, at the GeoSmart India 2019.

This drives us to the fact that there is a dire need for an effective National Geospatial Strategy in India to

sustain the growth of the ecosystem. There is an increasing need to use, share, access, and disseminate geospatial data while supporting national needs. “With this we can make India from developing to developed,” says Dr. Nayak.

What industry can do?

With an explosion of data being generated from various sources like sensors, mobiles, satellites, drones (especially when we have a wide range of small drones), the data is instantly subjected to national security, the need to segregate data based on civilian needs and defense purposes has become imperative. The data which can be used as an enabler for economic growth, is limited to mere national scrutiny. “There is a need to make sure that those ‘who matter’ should be informed rightly about data generation. The key is to show the right perspective in the right way,” says A. S. Kiran Kumar, Former Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization.

Giving more insight on this, Dr. Nayak says we need to focus on education and capacity building for better ecosystem. “More professional courses should be introduced in universities and jobs should be created,” adds Lt. General Girish Kumar, VSM, Surveyor General, Survey of India.

Fusing real and digital worlds to provide dynamic information for better decision making is the necessity of the hour. Giving a new dimension, Pramod Kaushik, President, Hexagon India says, “Incubating new start-ups and more partnerships with government is required.” He further says technologies should be upscaled rather than relying on business deals.

Making a difference

In the era of fast-changing technologies, the need for a dynamic geospatial policy and strategy to enable the use of data for solutions in the country has become imperative.

“Unless you are agile and quick on feet, a single geospatial strategy is difficult to bring in,” adds Kumar.

Integrated and participatory national ecosystem will result in an innovative and entrepreneurial geospatial ecosystem for socio-economic development.

Geospatial policies should have global relevance but have a competent national relevance to transform India from a developing to a developed country.