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# Survey of India

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**Why is in news?** Survey of India to be arbiter as govt. privatises map making

The Survey of India (SoI), **India's 250-year-old map maker**, while **no longer having a monopoly on making high-resolution maps**, will remain the arbiter of maps that deal with State boundaries and national borders.

It will also maintain and provide reference stations that are vital to cartographers to prepare higher resolution maps.

The Centre officially released the **National Geospatial Policy of India** that **allows any private agency to make high-resolution maps**.

Before this, the SoI made various categories of maps that, while available for nominal charges, were relatively hard to access.

Moreover, maps made for "civilian purposes" were coarser than the "defence series maps" that were more detailed but only accessible to the Defence Ministry.

## Survey of India:

Survey of India, The National Survey and Mapping Organization of the country under the Department of Science & Technology, is the **OLDEST SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT OF THE GOVT. OF INDIA**.

In its assigned role as the nation's Principal Mapping Agency, Survey of India bears a special responsibility to ensure that the country's domain is explored and mapped suitably, provide base maps for expeditious and integrated development and ensure that all resources contribute with their full measure to the progress, prosperity and security of our country now and for generations to come.

The history of the Survey of India dates back to the 18th Century. Forerunners of army of the East India Company and Surveyors had an onerous task of exploring the unknown.

Faced with the requirement of digital topographical data, the department has created **three Digital Centers** during late eighties to **generate Digital Topographical Data Base** for the entire country for use in various planning processes and creation of geographic information system.

Its specialized Directorates such as Geodetic and Research Branch, and Indian Institute of Surveying & Mapping (erstwhile Survey Training Institute) have been further strengthened to meet the growing requirement of user community.

The department is also assisting in many scientific programs of the Nation related to the field of geo-physics, remote sensing and digital data transfers.

Survey of India being the **National Mapping Agency** bears the responsibility to ensure that the country's domain is explored and mapped suitably, provide base maps for expeditious and integrated development.

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In the year 2005, the Union Cabinet approved the **National Map Policy 2005** (NMP-2005), which mandates Survey of India for producing, maintaining and disseminating the topographic map database of the whole country, which is foundation of all spatial data.

SOI has been mandated to take a leadership role in liberalizing access of spatial data to user groups without jeopardizing national security.

The mandate includes :-

To provide, maintain and allow access and make available the National Topographic Database (NTDB) conforming to national standards. (Through Geospatial services, Web Services, Web Portals, Mobile Application and dissemination of Printed / Digital maps ).

To promote the use of geospatial knowledge and intelligence through partnerships and other mechanisms by all sections of the society and work towards a knowledge-based society. (Through Capacity Building of officers and staff of SoI, Central/State Government organizations, private candidates and trainees from other countries).