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Geography Chapter 4 Maps (Based on NCERT)

Overview

Map – A map is a representation or a drawing of the earth's surface or a part of it drawn on a flat surface according to a scale.

Atlas – When many maps are put together we get an Atlas. Atlases are of various sizes, measurements drawn on different scales.

They are of different types of maps. Some of them are described below.

Physical Maps

Maps showing natural features of the earth such as mountains, plateaus, plains, rivers, oceans etc. are called physical or relief maps.

Political Maps

Maps showing cities, towns and villages, and different countries and states of the world with their boundaries are called political maps.

Thematic Maps

Some maps focus on specific information; such as road maps, rainfall maps, maps showing distribution of forests, industries etc. are known as thematic maps.

There are three Components of Maps – distance, direction and symbol.

Distance

Scale is the ratio between the actual distance on the ground and the distance shown on the map. Scale is very important on any map. If you know the scale, you will be able to calculate the distance between any two places on a map. When large areas like continents or countries are to be shown on paper, then we use a small scale. It is called a small scale map. When a small area like your village or town is to be shown on paper, then we use a large scale that is 5 cm. It is called a large scale map.

Direction

There are four major directions, North, South, East and West. They are called cardinal points. Other four intermediate directions are north-east (NE), southeast (SE), south-west (SW) and north-west (NW). We can find out the

direction of a place with the help of a compass. It is an instrument used to find out main directions. Its magnetic needle always points towards north-south direction.

Symbols

It is the third important component of a map. It is not possible to draw on a map the actual shape and size of different features such as buildings, roads, etc. So, they are shown by using certain letters, shades, colours, pictures and lines. These symbols give a lot of information in a limited space. Maps have a universal language that can be understood by all. There is an international agreement regarding the use of these symbols. These are called conventional symbols.

Various colours are used for the same purpose. For example, generally blue is used for showing water bodies, brown for mountain, yellow for plateau and green is used for plains.

Sketch

A sketch is a drawing mainly based on memory and spot observation and not to scale. Sometimes a rough drawing is required of an area to tell where a particular place is located with respect to other places. Such a rough drawing is drawn without scale and is called a sketch map.

Plan

A plan is a drawing of a small area on a large scale. A large-scale map gives a lot of information, but there are certain things which we may sometimes want to know, for example the length and breadth of a room, which can't be shown in a map. At that time, we can refer drawings drawn to scale called a plan.