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Reports: Divisions of the Group of Experts**

Report of the Asia South-East Division

Submitted by the Asia South-East Division**

Summary

Indonesia was selected as the new Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names for the Asia South-East Division during the sixth divisional meeting, held in Manila on 26 March 2018. The Chair's tenure will be for a period of four years, from April 2018 to April 2022. The Asia South-East Division, in accordance with the adoption of resolution X/5, now comprises 12 member countries, namely, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. At present, the activities of the Division include the establishment of its website, organized by Indonesia.

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** Prepared by the Asia South-East Division

Divisional Activities

Meetings

The 6th Divisional Meeting was held in Manila, Phillipines on 26 March 2018. Delegates from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participated in the meeting.

The next Divisional Meeting will be held as a side event meeting during the 1st session of UNGEGN meeting, 29 April - 3 May 2019 in New York

Chairmanship

During the 6th Divisional Meeting in Manila, Phillipines member countries elected Indonesia as the new Chairman from April 2018 to April 2022.

The Chairmanship of UNGEGN ASE Division shall be for a period of four (4) years. Previous chairmanships were the Phillipines from 2014 to 2018 and Malaysia from 2010 to 2014.

ASE Division Website and Newsletter

Indonesia is currently organizing the website and newsletter of ASE Division. All member countries are expected to support the Division's newsletter by sending articles which shares each country's initiative and geographical names related activities.

Regional Generic Terms

The compilation of Regional Generic Terms is still ongoing. This is a divisional pilot project which aims to compile a glossary of generic terms used in South-East Asia region.

Summary of Country Report during 6th Divisional Meeting

Cambodia

The Geography Department (GD) under the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC) of Cambodia presented the historical background of its gazetteer. The Geographic Names Division of the US Army Topographic Command published the Gazetteer of the Kingdom of Cambodia in 1971 and 2002. The 1971 edition was based on 1:50,000 topographic maps while the 2002 edition published by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) was derived from 1:250,000 JOG maps. Most geographic names in these gazetteers represent local spelling that were Romanized from Khmer script.

When the Geography Department (GD) of the Kingdom of Cambodia was established in 1991 in order to produce, manage and publish topographic maps and geographic-based data for the Kingdom, it has since published 1st and 2nd Edition of the Gazetteers, in 1995 and 1996, respectively. The first edition, the Gazetteer of Cambodian villages in two (2) volumes, contains names in Khmer and Romanized form and have reference to place names existing until December 31, 1994. The second edition does not contain a lot of changes in the Khmer system but the Romanized form was based on transcription system instead of transliteration.

The current status of standardization of geographical names are: (a) development of a standard Geographic Code System (GCS) for all villages, communes, districts and provinces which is not official yet but widely used for data production and sharing among geographic information system (GIS) users; as of 31 March 2012, the Kingdom has 1 capital, 24 provinces, 198 cities/districts, 1,646 communes and 14,096 villages; (b) establishment of the National Commission on Geographical Names (NCGN) in August 2000 which comprises 13 ministries and mandated to review documentations, research and study meaning and writing in Khmer and its translation into its Romanized form, approve Romanized translation, and distribute and update geographical names of Cambodia; (c) approval by NCGN of 24 names of city/provinces in Cambodia using the old writing system; (d) use of transcription method rather than transliteration, in the Romanization system as applied in the second edition published by GD; for detailed differences, see UNGEGN Technical Reference Manual for the Standardization of Geographical Names, pages 29-34); and (e) development of topographic databases at scales 1:100,000 for the whole country, 1:25,000, 1:10,000 and 1:5,000 in select areas, which contains geographical names for each feature.

At present, GD is working on a nationwide inventory of geographical features, data build-up of the national topographic database and updating the transcription Romanization System in UN.

Indonesia

The Geospatial Information Agency (BIG) has replaced the National Team of Standardization of Topographic Names as the New Geographical Names Authority of Indonesia. This is in reference to the dissolution of the said National Team as reported during the 30th Session and 11th Conference in New York on August 2017.

The roadmap of BIG in connection with geographical names in Indonesia has conducted standardization of island names in 2006 to 2008, administrative region names in 2009 to 2011 for

thirty-three (33) provinces, natural geographical names in 2012 – 2014 also for thirty-three (33) provinces, man-made place names in 2015 to 2017, remaining islands names from 2015 to present and names of cultural heritage objects for 2018 until 2020.

In 2017, BIG conducted several national activities in connection with the standardization of geographical names: (a) verified geographical names of man-made objects for twenty-two (22) provinces, as a continuation of its 2016 program; (b) submitted the updated Gazetteer of Indonesian Islands with a total number of 16,056 islands; (c) improved the app called SAKTI (*Sistem Akuisisi data Toponim Indonesia*) since its development in 2016 which created the WebGIS in order to manage data through the app; (d) coordinated with the Ministry of Marine Affairs for toponym data synchronization; (e) coordinated with twenty (2) ministries and agencies to provide Maps of Republic Indonesia which have updated Indonesian Maritime Borders; (f) conducted island names survey and verification in East Java Province through the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries which resulted in ninety-three (93) verified island names; and (g) published Map of Indonesian Local Languages with the Ministry of Education and Culture.

For 2018, BIG has the following national plans and activities: (a) participation to the 1st Regional Training in Toponymy including Marine Toponymy held in Manila in which there were eighteen (18) participants from Indonesian government and academe; (b) evaluation study of the Faculty of Law in *Universitas Gadjah Mada* (UGM) on the form of regulation regarding geographical names to be a Presidential Regulation; (c) conduct of Toponymy Training for government officials from eighteen (18) provinces which will include newest version of SAKTI; (d) verification of man-made geographical names for three (3) provinces using SAKTI; (e) verification and standardization of tourism related names for another 3 provinces; (f) coordination with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to conduct island names verification in West Papua (Papua Barat) which will update the toponym database of Indonesia; (g) coordination meeting with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Hydro-Oceanography of Indonesian Navy about Sea, Strait and Bay Names to be submitted to the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO); and (h) creating of a website for the National Working Team on Standardization of Geographical Names in Indonesia which will provide progress of the National Working Team.

At present, Indonesia maintains the website, newsletter and regional map and gazetteer of the UNGEGN- Asia South East Division. The ASE website has a new look and address:

<http://asedivision-ungegn.org/>

and any contribution such as articles about toponym are welcome and may be submitted to the Division's email address : asedivision@gmail.com. The present glossary of Generic Terms of the Division has been filled by only five (5) countries namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines, which can be downloaded through this link:

http://asedivision-ungegn.org/ungegn_ase/index.php/Generic_Terms

Indonesia requested other countries to complete their Generic Terms as well. The current Regional Map and Gazetteer of ASE Division can be viewed at:

http://asedivision-ungegn.org/ungegn_ase/index.php/National_Gazetteers_Databases

Indonesia strongly recommended that each member country should check their country database and submit corrected copies to asedivision@gmail.com and generic terms as well to those who have not submitted. Indonesia suggested that a contact person should be appointed from each country in order to communicate their country's contributions.

Malaysia

The Malaysian National Committee on Geographical Names (MNCGN), established in 11 September 2002, presented their country report which covers all activities on geographical names and related matters from August 2017 to March 2018.

First, the Malaysian National Committee on Geographical Names (MNCGN) and the National Technical Committee on Geographical Names (NTCGN) conducted several meetings and workshops to address issues and disseminate information on guidelines in determining geographical names.

Second, the Working Group on Policy and Geographical Names Updating, administered by JUPEM, also conducted several meeting to address issues on policy and updating of geographical names, deliberated issues on the notification of geographical names of places in the government gazette, updated geographical names of ground features in large-scale town maps, and finalized the Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use which was written in English and Malay languages. This guideline was presented during the 11th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in New York 2017.

Third, the verification of the Malaysian Geographical Names Database (PDNG) using digital topographic database at scales 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 is almost complete while verification at scales 1:5,000 and 1:10,000 is ongoing. The database consists of local names, location, historical background, Arabic character, audio file and gazette notification which have authoritative records for government and public use. This can be accessed through the MyGeoName application:

<http://standard.mygeoportal.gov.my/geoname/>

Fourth, the geographical names website called “MyGeoname” in Malaysia was last updated on June 13, 2017. Through this website, all information related to geonaming activities can be accessed by all MNCGN members through the following link:

<http://www.jupem.gov.my/v1/my/mygeonames/utama/>

Guidelines for the Determination of Geographical Names, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), issues of geographical names and list of liaison officers of each agency are also available in this website.

Fifth, the Working Group on Islands and Geographical Entities, established in June 2006, summarized the following: there are 872 islands with names, 495 geographical entities with names and 202 islands/geographical entities without names. The Working Group published Volumes I, II and III compiling listing of islands and geographical names of twelve (12) States of Indonesia, while Volume IV which compiled geographical names for one (1) State, is still being reviewed by State Authorities. The Working Group is also in the process of preparing inland geographical entities in order to distinguish it from offshore geographical entities.

Sixth, JUEM also conducted workshops and briefing to disseminate information on guidelines in determining geographical names and in using the Geographical Names Database. This is a requirement to support the implementation of the MyGDI initiative, a Malaysian SDI being undertaken by MaCGDI.

Lastly, the Working Group on Policy and Geographical Names Updating prepared a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in Updating the Geographical Names Database for Urban Areas. This document shall serve as the main reference of all State Liaison Officers in updating and verifying geographical names. This SOP has been distributed to all concerned states under Phase III.

Philippines

The National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA), under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), presented the Philippine country report for geographical names activities. Recent activities include: (a) accomplishment of Phase 1 of the Philippine Islands Inventory Project which covered Province of Palawan as Pilot Project Area using Very High Resolution Satellite Images (VHRSI) at 0.30m resolution; (b) integration of geographical names in topographic map updating process and is being initiated in updating topographic maps at scale 1:50,000 and 1:250,000; (c) presided over the 4th ASE Division meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on October 17-20, 2016 and the 5th Division meeting held in New York on August 9, 2017; (d) attended the 30th UNGEGN Session and 11th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in New York; and (e) hosted the recently concluded 1st Regional Training in Toponymy including Marine Toponymy on March 19-24, 2018.

Additionally, the Philippine Standard Geographic Code (PSGC), a systematic coding scheme of geographic areas (i.e. Local Government Units, LGUs) in the Philippines, was updated and the latest update as of September 2017 are the conversion of one (1) municipality into a city and creation of seven (7) barangays.

	September 2014	September 2017
No. of Regions	17	17
No. of Provinces	81	81
No. of Cities	144	145
No. of Municipalities	1,490	1,489
No. of Barangay	42,029	42,036

At present, there is an ongoing Phase II of the Philippine Islands Inventory Project which will have an updated inventory of islands with verified data and geographical names of fifty eight (58) coastal provinces. This will update the 1941 Census Atlas of the Philippines and the 1989 Philippine Gazetteer.

Future activities include (a) integration of geographical names into the Philippine Geoportal which serves as an online platform for collaboration, data sharing and access; the geographical names will have its own layer consisting of point data of significant features and recordings of geographical names already collected; and (b) generalization of a large scale map at scale 1:10,000 into a medium-scale map at scale 1:50,000 which will give substantial additional information to update the gazetteer.

Singapore

The Singapore Land Authority (SLA) presented that they already finished geographical names activities and they collected data from the air and on the ground. The most recent update is the recently finished 3D mapping of whole Singapore. They will provide a comprehensive report of this activity for the next divisional meeting.

Sri Lanka

The Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names (CSGN) is currently the geographical names board of Sri Lanka which commenced its work in March 2015 and will expire this December 2018. A proposal will be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers for the appointment of a permanent committee before the CSGN terminates this year. The CSGN comprising sixteen (16) ministries, is currently tasked to (a) define policies, principles and guidelines for standardization; (b) data collection from field and relevant sources, processing according to guidelines and verification with authorized organizations; (c) public awareness campaign for incorporation to standardization, as applicable; (d) publication of standardized names for official and public use; (e) introduction of a Romanization system for Sinhala language; and (f) identification of legislations as may be required for standardization.

Standardization of geographical names has two phases. Phase I which is almost complete, consists of data collection, processing, standardization, database creation and transliteration. Phase II consists of (a) publishing standardized names in the web, get public views and incorporate said comments as deemed applicable; and (b) publishing final names for official and public use before 2018 ends. The results revealed that about 30% of geographical names used by the public are not recorded in any relevant data sources including topographic maps and administrative reports and about 20% of geographical names available in relevant data sources have inconsistencies in terms of correctness, use, positioning or spellings, among others. These results emphasized the importance of standardizing geographical names in Sri Lanka.

At present, the following are the accomplishments of CSGN: (a) build-up of the topographic database derived from 1:10,000 scale which already completed 100% coverage, and a new version in progress; (b) conduct of field staff awareness program participated by staff of Secretary Divisions and local village level staff; and (c) prepared the Romanization system for Sinhala which was already submitted to the UNGEGN Working Committee on Romanization for their review.

Vietnam

The Department of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation of Viet Nam (DOSMVN) is commissioned by the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MONRE) to implement geographical names database management system as one of its functions.

Vietnam has fifty four (54) ethnic groups with different languages and even writing scripts. About 86% of Vietnamese population came from Kinh ethnicity. The official language is Vietnamese with the Roman alphabet as the official Vietnamese script.

DOSMVN already completed 54 out of 63 provinces in standardizing geographical names for land features based on 1:25,000 scale, while there is an ongoing project for standardizing names of marine features based on 1:1,000,000 scale. DOSMVN published a technical guideline for the

implementation of geographical names standardization in Vietnam which has the following principles: (a) target feature groups are administrative units, populated places, natural features, socio-economic elements and transportation routes; (b) standard names must be written correctly based on Vietnamese dictation; (c) remaining geographical names shall be approved by the government or jurisdiction department or stated on legal agreements between Vietnam and neighbouring countries; and (d) conversions of geographical names from ethnic languages to Vietnamese shall use components of consonant, vowel and diacritical marks to convert it to the closest pronunciation as the original ones. Based on this guideline, the procedure includes: (a) implementation for each province; (b) geographical names database creation consisting of populating attribute information for each data; (c) conduct of standardized geographical names dissemination through government official journals released as Ministry Circulars signed by MONRE; and (d) update geographical names database.

Resolutions during 6th Divisional Meeting

There were three (3) resolutions approved during the meeting, as follows:

1. Assign a contact person from each member country to update country data of the regional gazetteer and database;
2. Each member country should contribute in populating or densifying the regional database and gazetteer published in the Asia South East Division website hosted by Indonesia;
3. Each member country should check and verify their published country database and gazetteer in the Asia South East Division website;
4. Divisional meetings will be conducted every year.