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Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda

Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Preparation of first volume of Iranian Geographical Names Gazetteers¹

Prepared by : Iranian Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names, ational Cartographic Center, P.O. BOX 13185-1684, Azadi Sq., Tehran, Iran. Tel: +98 (21) 66071019, Fax; +98(21) 66071000, E-mail: geonames@ncc.org.ir, <http://geonames.ncc.org.ir>

¹ Dr. Mehran Maghsoudi (University of Tehran, maghsoud@ut.ac.ir)

In the name of God

Preparation of first volume of Iranian Geographical Names Gazetteers

The gathering and registering of toponymic and other geographic information in Iran comes back to many years. Preparation of gazetteer has been one of the most important activities in this respect. Geographical information related to names of cities and other settlements have been referred in Naser Khosro's itinerary (Iranian scholar and geographer 1003 – 1088 AD) and even before that.

The first Iran's gazetteer in like manner of modern versions was compiled in 1877. Since then, more than 20 gazetteers have been printed in Iran.

Initiating 1:25000 coverage maps production in Iran in 1990, a good opportunity was provided to gather and register the geographical names. During process of map production, the geographical names with their official or local pronunciations were collected. Geonames were transcribed according to standard methods approved by Iranian Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names (ICSGN). Creation of National Transcription System was one of the most important acts of ICSGN on the standardization of geographical names. Consequently, the Iranian National Geographical Names Data Base (INGNDB) was established and was accessible for users via web network.

Forming the Publications and Gazetteers workgroup, preparation of a volume of Gazetteer was begun for an extent of one block maps in scale of 1:25000. The selected block is located in central part of Iran that is called Kashan. This volume of gazetteer has been provided as a pilot project.

The basic difference between this gazetteer and other Iranian published gazetteers is that previous gazetteers were included only the names of villages, rivers and mountains in separate volumes. However, in new gazetteer, names of more manmade and natural features have been gathered and registered. Of course, more than 100 types of features in 1:25000 maps have been considered.

In Kashan's Gazetteer, features have been categorized in five main classes as:

- Vegetation
- Administrative divisions (administrative area and centers)
- Transportation and Hydrography features
- Public places
- Hypsography

Fields of information in this gazetteer are:

- Geographical name (in Persian)
- Transcription
- Latin name
- Other names
- Coordinates
- Administrative division
- Map sheet number (a Map ID in a series of base maps)
- Feature type

Iranian National Geographical Names Database is data source of this gazetteer. Geographical names data have been gathered in 1:25000 maps line of production. Data have been collected and registered by experts of geonames in the field using aerial photos and filling the Names Cards.

This gazetteer is divided into five sections and each of them belongs to one feature class.

Because of plain and desert conditions of Kashan's region, some parameters such as low population density, low diversity of land usages and finally little topographic features led to reducing geonames data. In this gazetteer, 1961 geographical names have been totally registered, including 277 names of population centers, 61 names of administrative area, 1123 names of hypsographic features (mountain, valley), 377 names of hydrographical features (river, flood way, spring, Qanat), and 123 names of other features (hotel, inn, monument, shrine, and etc).

This volume of geographical names gazetteer has been submitted by Publications and Gazetteers workgroup as a sample, other volumes will be provided after ICSGN approval.