Report on the celebration of 'International GIS Day' by the Division of Geoinformatics on 16th November 2023.

The Division of Geoinformatics, School of Life Sciences, JSS AHER, celebrated International GIS Day on the 16th of November, 2023. Every year the event is organized under the Division of Geoinformatics to acknowledge the contributions of GIS across all domains and social spheres. The theme for this year's GIS Day was 'Celebrating GIS Professionals' to emphasize the crucial role they play in the various sectors of development.

To commemorate GIS Day, the Division of Geoinformatics organized various events spanning throughout the day for the students of the School of Life Sciences. The events were designed to be inclusive and engaging for the students coming from the varied disciplines of the School of Life Sciences. This engagement was used as an opportunity by the Division to enlighten the participating students about the interdisciplinary nature of Geoinformatics.

A total of 4 events were organized − GeoBuzzer, cARTography, Dora the Explorer, and GeOpinion War. The events saw active participation from the students as 87 students participated in all the events combined. The inaugural ceremony was carried out by Ms. Soundarya (MSc Geoinformatics, 2nd Year), as she highlighted the role of GIS in our daily lives. The day began with 'GeoBuzzer' which was hailed as our Quiz Competition. 11 pairs of students participated in the qualifiers while only 6 made it to the Main rounds. The topics ranged from the small wonders of the micro-world to the current events of our macro-world. Eventually, with a great margin, Mr Niranjan Shastri and Mr Dinesh Ram from the Division of Psychology won the competition as Ms Marjana and Mr. Akshay Sebastian from MSc Cognitive Neuroscience were the runner-ups.

 While 12 students were testing their wit at GeoBuzzer, 4 students were setting free their artistic expressions at the poster-making competition of 'cARTography'. The theme for this event was 'GIS at your Fingertips.' The theme was chosen to let the artists express what they envision GIS to be. The posters were graded on their design, creativity, and visual appeal. Mr. Mahesh , faculty, Division of Geoinformatics graded and guided the participants on their work and understanding of GIS. Ms. Yukta from MSc Molecular Biology won the competition while Ms. Elcharisma S from MSc Medical Physics came in second.

During the second half, we witnessed 'Dora the Explorer' and 'GeOpinion War.' 'Dora the Explorer' saw a total of 11 teams with 5 team members each in the qualifiers. Only 6 teams made it to the final round of treasure hunting. This event was organized to ignite excitement and a sense of navigation and interpretation amongst the participants. The 2-hour long event was concluded when Ms. Anamika Saika, Ms. Sreejita, Ms. Ambika, Ms. Thanushree, and Ms. Tsomo (all from BSc Psychology) found Dora's Purple bag. While Ms. Qansa, Ms. Sarina, Ms. Emaaz, Ms. Neha, and Ms. Shawana came in second.

The last event of the day was 'GeOpinion War'. In this debate competition, the participants were set out to conclude the legitimacy of Artificial Intelligence as the topic of the event was 'Is AI advancing society or hindering human progress' A total of 6 participants put forth their views for and against (3 each respectively) the notion. The highlight of the event was the realization that while AI brings with it the hope for a more technologically advanced future, the cultural knowledge and roots of the human origin need to go hand in hand. Dr. Sumana from the Department of Microbiology, our esteemed judge for this event graded the participants on 4 criterions – Organization and Clarity, Use of Argument, Use of Examples and Facts, Presentation Style. An hour-long debate concluded with Mr. Yogesh and Mr. Nitish coming out victorious for and against the notion respectively. While Mr. Dinesh and Mr. Niranjan came in second for and against the notion respectively.

The day was concluded as Vote of Thanks and Prize distribution for all the winners and runner ups was organized in GIS Lab. Dr. Sumana and Mr. Mahesh were our guests for the final event of prize distribution. Ms. Kruteeka (MSc Geoinformatics, 2nd Year), thanked all the participants and volunteers in the department for their active participation and sportive spirit. Before concluding the event, Dr. Sumana inspired students from all the departments to participate and learn more of the limitless nature of GIS. She also encouraged the students from the Division of Geoinformatics to pursue a career in this vast field as the nature of our work is significant to mankind. She suggested we do our work diligently and welcome students from all disciplines to our department to this event every year to better educate them about the nature of our subject. The day was concluded as cash prizes were handed over to all the winners and runner ups of the day.

The Division of Geoinformatics was honoured to organize GIS Day this year as it was an opportunity for us to welcome the talents from other disciplines while we shared our vision on the future of GIS. The event not only showcased the talents of our participants but also

excavated the talents of students within the Division of Geoinformatics. It taught the students the importance of co-operation and collaboration, organization of a big event, and lastly the skill of proper communication. All in all, it was a successful event for the Division of Geoinformatics, as we wish to carry the baton forward.

THE DIVISION OF GEOINFORMATICS