

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

REPORT- WORKSHOP ON STORY MAPS

The Department of Geography of Loreto College, Kolkata organized a **Virtual Workshop on STORY MAPS** on January 2, 2021.

The workshop was conducted by Dr. Shireen Hyrapiet, Professor of Geography, Houston Community College, Houston, Texas, U.S.A. The focal point of Dr. Hyrapiet's discourse was the art of Story Mapping using a software called ArcGIS. **ArcGIS is an online cloud based software** developed by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri), which enables users to create, share and collaborate maps and store geographical data and information within a database. The software makes visual representation of data simple and comprehensive through the myriad of features and tools it provides the users with. Users can interact with real time data and create their own exposition of the presented facts. Story Mapping is a technique whose popularity is on the rise as it uses visuals and narratives to convey ideas. Many institutions around the world have switched from the conventional methods of teaching to Story Mapping as the mode of instruction.

Under the guidance of Dr. Hyrapiet, the students were able to create their own ArcGIS account, thus allowing them direct access to the fascinating features of the platform. The above allowed the students to work on their own devices alongside Dr. Hyrapiet's live demonstrations of creating story maps and journals on the software. The platform of ArcGIS StoryMaps has been used to conduct the workshop, which is a story authoring web-based application that enables a user to share maps in the context of narrative texts and other multimedia content. Besides maps and narrative texts stories can include lists, images, videos, embedded items and other media. Stories can also be published and shared on public platform or groups. Story maps enlighten the reality of feature development, it also identifies holes in functionality or areas to focus on.

The workshop was an interactive and an engaging one and helped broaden the horizons of the budding geographers by introducing a highly sought-after and popular concept of Geography and spatial analysis. Dr. Hyrapiet's comprehensive and lucid explanation of concepts made every bit of this workshop worthwhile and rewarding. Through this workshop the students were able to imbibe a valuable and useful skill which will undoubtedly come of immense use now and in the future.

With the help of a Story Map, where every potential feature if already mapped out and prioritized, one can essentially cluster the highest priority features. There was an overwhelming response from the students as they had a first-hand exposure in creating Story Maps through the ArcGIS platform, which is highly beneficial for them in today's digital world.