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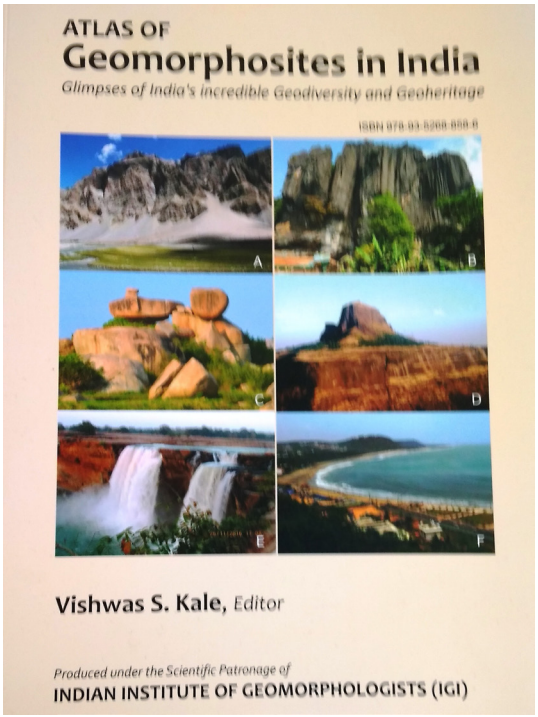
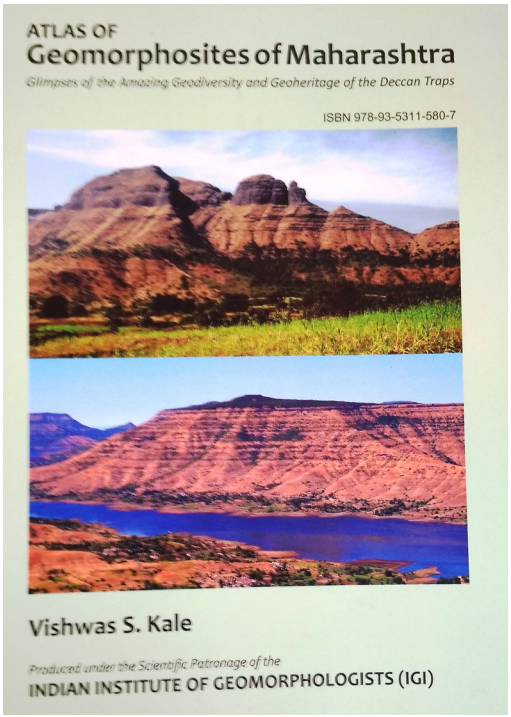
Book Review - 1

'The atlas of Geomorphosites in India' and 'The atlas of Geomorphosites of Maharashtra' By Vishwas S. Kale, Indian Institute of Geomorphologists (IGI)
Pages 132 and 76 respectively, ISBN: 978-93-5268-858-6 and 978-93-5311-580-7 resp.





India is a storehouse of fascinating landforms and landscapes. Due to varied Geography, Geomorphology, Geology, tectonic history, climatic variability and a long coastline there is a great geodiversity all over the country. Although the subcontinent's outstanding geodiversity and extraordinary geoheritage is very well recognized all over the world a detailed inventory of all geomorphosites and geoheritage sites is still not available. The Himalaya, the Indian Peninsula and the Deccan Traps have a special place in Earth's history. These outstanding landscapes, along with other prominent terrains and landforms have special conservation value that needs to be recognized and conserved as geoheritage.

Many geomorphosites in India have great potential to attract tourists. Geotourism with a focus on landscape and geology is growing rapidly all over the world. Geotourism in India can be promoted by the information about geomorphosites. Such information can also be used in geosciences education and research.

Two volumes titled 'The atlas of Geomorphosites in India' and 'The atlas of Geomorphosites of Maharashtra' edited by Vishwas S. Kale and produced under the scientific patronage of Indian Institute of Geomorphologists (IGI) are designed to provide a glimpse of rich and fascinating geomorphic diversity of India and Maharashtra respectively. Both these volumes give a concise and crisp account of significant geosites in India in simple words and wonderful and informative diagrams, sketches, aerial perspective views and field photographs.

Some of the terms such as geosites, geomorphosites, geomorphoparks and geomorphodiversity are explained in both the volumes. The volumes no doubt stress the need for geomorphosite recognition, and also the concept of geomorphosite in the broader context of geosites and their relation with geodiversity.

The first volume on India opens with description of geomorphic provinces of India namely Indian peninsula, Himalayas and Indus-Ganga- Brahmaputra plains. After that a succinct account of geological and tectonic history of India is provided. The atlas includes description of geo sites on 36 description cards (31 geomorphosites and 5 geomorphoparks). A peer-reviewed national inventory of potential geomorphosites and their classification, mapping and assessment is prepared on the basis of a simple 10-digit geocoding system. This system adopted to classify and assess the geomorphosites is also briefly described in the volume. A list of another 26 interesting geosites in India is given on last page.

The second volume on Maharashtra dedicated to Prof. S.N. Rajaguru on the occasion of his 86th birthday, begins with the description of landscape of Maharashtra on the basis of three major geomorphic regions, Maharashtra plateau, Western Ghats and Konkan region. An interesting part of the atlas is the concise account of geological and geomorphic history of Maharashtra and the stratigraphy and types of Deccan traps flows. Similar to volume on India, an inventory of potential geomorphosites and their classification, mapping and assessment is prepared on the basis of a simple 10-digit geocoding system. The atlas includes description of 21 geomorphosites and 4 geomorphoparks. Geologic and geomorphic timescale of Deccan traps is also included on last page.

Maharashtra state has 720 km long coastline and 22000 sq.km. Coastal lowland. The rocky coast is endowed with number of sea cliffs, narrow pocket beaches, beautiful spits and bars, creeks, estuaries and numerous stunning small tidal inlets, many of which can fulfil the criteria for being an exclusive geomorphosite. There is no lack of adequate information about such sites on this coast. In the atlas, however, there are only two sites representing the coast. There are surely better geomorphosites than these on Konkan coast.

An important contribution of these books is that they provide a long awaited inventory of some of the major geomorphosites and geoheritage sites in India and Maharashtra on scientific basis.

Both the volumes give well investigated scientific and illustrated information on Geomorphosites in India and on the Deccan Trap area in a simple but lucid style and therefore are highly recommended.

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