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Mobile phone as your guide

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BANGALORE: Online maps are a good tool for searching for a place of interest. But what does a person do when he is lost on the road in the city, unable to find his bearings? The Internet may be a good starting point for a search, but users often complain about the redundancy and inaccuracies in online maps. Try our maps installed on mobile phones, says MapmyIndia, a company that launched its GPS-based (Global Positioning System) navigational aid, INav, on Monday in Bangalore.

Using a digital cartographic database built over 14 years, the company offers navigational software mounted on mobile phones to literally guide a user to his destination. MapmyIndia currently offers maps with countrywide coverage showing the loca-

- **INav, a GPS-based navigational aid, launched**
- **Maps on location of 55,000 towns and villages available**

tion of 55,000 towns and villages. It also provides "street-level navigation" in 18 major Indian cities, including Bangalore. The maps also show almost three lakh "points of interest" — locations of ATMs, banks, restaurants, healthcare facilities, government offices, religious sites, tourist attractions and transportation facilities such as airports, bus terminals, petrol stations and railway stations.

Demonstrating the capability of the software on a mobile device, Rohan Verma, Director MapmyIndia, said

the user only needs to provide the starting and destination points. The device then takes over, providing voice prompts about which turn to take where. "If a user misses a turn, it even reworks the detour that needs to be taken," he said. Rohan Verma said maps on mobiles is the "next biggest wave to hit mobile users." "Like the camera on the mobile phone, GPS capability will soon be the norm for all phones," he said.

The iNav for mobiles comes in two basic flavours. The iNav Loaded requires the maps to be loaded on the mobile phones and involve a one-time fee. The All-India version costs Rs. 4,490 while maps for a single state costs Rs. 1,190. The iNav Connect, akin to a prepaid mobile connection, costs Rs. 249 for a month's use. The package with a six-month validity costs Rs. 1,190.