

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh announces major expansion of Automatic Weather Stations; India Meteorological Department (IMD) to install 50 AWS each in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Pune in 2026

India Meteorological Department celebrates 151st Foundation Day with focus on technology, accuracy, and resilience

Government prioritising data-driven, city-specific weather forecasting for public safety and urban planning, says Dr Jitendra Singh

Forecast accuracy improves by over 40–50 per cent; cyclone track prediction sees major gains: Dr Jitendra Singh

Government to establish "Centres of Excellence" and new Regional Meteorological Centres to expand IMD's reach

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 15 JAN 2026 5:50PM by PIB Delhi

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today announced a significant expansion of India's urban weather observation infrastructure, with the deployment of 200 Automatic Weather Stations across four major metropolitan cities.

Addressing senior officers, meteorology experts and stakeholders, the Minister said that 50 Automatic Weather Stations each will be installed in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Pune during the year 2026, marking a decisive step towards strengthening hyper-local, real-time weather forecasting and disaster preparedness, particularly in densely populated urban regions.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that a dense network of Automatic Weather Stations will provide granular and high-resolution spatial data, enabling more accurate prediction of sudden downpours, thunderstorms, extreme heat events, and rapid pressure changes. He emphasised that such data-driven forecasting is critical not only for disaster risk reduction but also for informed decision-making in sectors such as agriculture, aviation, urban planning, and public safety.

The announcement was made during the 151st Foundation Day celebrations of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), a landmark occasion marking over one and a half centuries of the organisation's dedicated service to the nation. Reflecting on the significance of the occasion, the Minister recalled that on the same date last year, IMD had celebrated its 150th anniversary in the presence of the Prime Minister at Bharat Mandapam. He said the encouragement and appreciation extended by the Prime Minister at that event acted as a major morale booster for the organisation, doubling both the energy and pace of IMD's work, as reflected in the numerous new initiatives and technological advancements undertaken over the past year.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that IMD's journey is uniquely aligned with the historical and administrative evolution of India itself, spanning the pre-Independence era to modern times. From its early beginnings in the Northeast to Kolkata, then Shimla, Pune and finally New Delhi, the organisation has continuously adapted to the changing needs of the nation while embracing emerging technologies and scientific capabilities.

Highlighting the transformation in India's weather forecasting capabilities, the Minister said forecast accuracy has improved by more than 40 to 50 per cent compared to earlier decades. Cyclone track prediction accuracy has increased by nearly 35 to 40 per cent, while errors in monthly and seasonal forecasts have reduced sharply from around 7.5 per cent to nearly 2.5 per cent. He attributed these improvements to sustained investment, technological freedom, and institutional support over the last decade.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the launch of Mission Mausam by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi represents a clear declaration of intent and priority by the Government towards advanced meteorological science and climate services. He added that when the Prime Minister articulates such initiatives from major national platforms, it sends a strong signal about the government's long-term commitment to scientific capacity building and public welfare.

The Minister also highlighted India's growing role as a regional leader in meteorological services, noting that India now provides disaster-related weather information and satellite-based support to neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka. He said that these efforts have strengthened regional cooperation and underscored India's responsibility as a trusted partner in disaster management across South Asia.

Detailing IMD's infrastructure expansion, Dr Jitendra Singh said the number of weather radars has nearly tripled over the past decade, now covering close to 87 per cent of the country's geographical area. He pointed to the expansion of Doppler Weather Radars, solar radiation monitoring networks, aerosol monitoring systems, micro radiometers, and rainfall monitoring schemes that now extend down to the district and block levels. He also highlighted the development of highly localised forecasts, including ultra-short-range predictions that allow citizens to make informed decisions within timeframes as precise as three hours.

The Minister emphasised that IMD's increasing credibility and public trust are reflected in the unprecedented demand for its services. Recalling a recent instance when heavy public traffic temporarily overwhelmed IMD's digital platforms following a seismic event, he said the episode, while challenging, was also a testament to the confidence people place in IMD. He added that steps are already underway to further upgrade digital infrastructure to meet growing public expectations.

Dr Jitendra Singh also highlighted IMD's alignment with the government's green energy priorities, noting that the department's headquarters was among the first to transition fully to solar energy following the launch of national electricity schemes. This transition, he said, has resulted in substantial savings in electricity expenditure while also contributing surplus power back to the national grid.

The 151st Foundation Day event was attended by Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr M Ravichandran, Director General of Meteorology, IMD, Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, along with senior officials, scientists, and members of the IMD family. The Minister congratulated award recipients and commended the leadership for ensuring inclusive recognition across all sections of the organisation, fostering a culture of excellence and dedication.

As part of the programme, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated multiple key facilities at the IMD campus, including a Model Observatory, a 3D-Printed Automatic Weather Station, and an Agro-Automatic Weather Station. These facilities reflect India's growing emphasis on indigenously developed, cost-effective and modular meteorological technologies designed to enhance data quality and operational efficiency.

The Minister also inspected various advanced meteorological instruments and automated monitoring systems installed across the IMD campus. Scientists briefed him on the functioning of radiation monitoring equipment, portable observation systems and sensor-based installations that collectively contribute to real-time data acquisition for forecasting, climate research, and disaster management. Dr Jitendra Singh appreciated the technical depth and practical relevance of these systems, noting their critical role in strengthening India's climate resilience.

Concluding his address, the Minister said the government is actively working on proposals to establish Centres of Excellence and additional Regional Meteorological Centres across the country to further expand IMD's reach and capacity. He expressed confidence that as IMD moves into its 152nd year, its credibility, accuracy, and public trust will continue to grow, reinforcing its position as a cornerstone of India's disaster preparedness and climate service framework.





NKR/AK

(रिलीज़ आईडी: 2214967) आगंतुक पटल : 58