IITM Celebrates 65th Foundation Day, Highlights Major Advances in Weather and Climate Research

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The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, celebrated its 65th Foundation Day at Meghdoot Auditorium, marking over six decades of contributions to weather forecasting, climate research and atmospheric sciences.

The celebrations were graced by Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman, Chief Executive Officer, Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, as the Chief Guest, and Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Director, NIAS, former Secretary, MoES and Chairman, Research Advisory Committee (RAC), IITM, as the Guest of Honour.

A video message was delivered by Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Government of India, who could not attend the celebration due to unavoidable official commitments. In his message, he expressed his pleasure in being associated with IITM's 65th Foundation Day and highlighted the Institute's significant contributions since 1962 in advancing India's capabilities in weather prediction, climate science, atmospheric research and Earth system science. He also congratulated Director Dr. A. Suryachandra Rao, scientists, officers, staff, students, alumni and the entire IITM family on the occasion and extended his best wishes for the Institute's continued success.

Presenting the Institute's achievements and future roadmap, Dr. A. Suryachandra Rao, Director, IITM, highlighted several significant milestones:

Record research output: 302 research papers published in the past year, compared to 232 in the previous year, with publications in high-impact journals increasing from 73 to 122.

Advanced climate modelling: Development of IITM's next-generation Earth System Model (IITM-ESM v3) for improved climate projections under the international CMIP7 programme.

Expanded observations: Strengthening of India’s weather observation network, including a climate observatory in the Maldives.

Research infrastructure: Creation of a repository of nearly 3 petabytes of weather and climate data.

Innovation and entrepreneurship: Establishment of a dedicated incubation centre for weather and climate enterprises.

Scientific capacity building: Support for 93 PhD scholars and continued development of advanced research capabilities.

Looking ahead, he said IITM is focusing on AI/ML-based weather and climate prediction, satellite meteorology and the Bharat Climate Observation Network for long-term climate monitoring.

Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman, CEO, ANRF appreciated IITM’s contributions in developing valuable datasets and models, emphasising their immense potential for training AI models in the emerging era of Artificial Intelligence. He lauded IITM’s efforts in making these resources accessible to research institutions and the public, noting that such an open and competitive research ecosystem would propel IITM to even greater heights, well beyond its stature as an Institute of Eminence.

Padma Shri Dr Shailesh Nayak highlighted that IITM has long been recognised for its scientific excellence and noted that the institution has now transformed into an Institute of Eminence. He appreciated IITM’s continued growth and evolving contributions to the nation’s scientific and research landscape.

The programme also featured the declaration of IITM Awards for Outstanding Contributions, felicitation of former employees who have completed 75 years of age, and a Foundation Day Lecture on “Present and Future of Weather Modification” by Dr. Sarah A. Tessendorf, Head, Research Applications Laboratory (RAL), National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), USA, and Member, RAC, IITM. Four award lectures recognising excellence in research, modelling, observations and doctoral research were also organised. The formal proceedings concluded with presentations by the award recipients across four distinguished award categories.

The 65th Foundation Day provided an opportunity to reflect on IITM's scientific commitment, strengthening India’s weather and climate forecasting capabilities and translating research into solutions that benefit society.


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