

## **Celebrating 150 Years of IMD: Advancing Early Warning and Climate Resilience**

*By All India Disaster Mitigation Institute*

On June 11, 2025, a special roundtable on “Celebrating 150 Years of IMD: Frontiers for Early Warning” was held to mark the 150th anniversary of the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Co-hosted by IMD and the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), the virtual roundtable brought together more than 100 participants, including weather scientists, disaster management experts, policymakers, and community representatives. The aim was to look back at IMD’s long journey and to explore new frontiers in early warning systems and climate resilience.

The roundtable began by honouring **Dr. M. Mohapatra**, Director General of Meteorology, who recently received the 2025 UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction. A special issue of *Southasiadisasters.net* on “Frontiers for Early Warning: Celebrating 150 Years of IMD” was also released, showcasing IMD’s historic role in protecting lives and livelihoods from weather hazards ([click here to download](#)).

Speakers highlighted how IMD has evolved from basic forecasts to advanced, real-time warnings. **Dr. Ranjan Kelkar**, a former Director General, pointed out how events like the 1999 Odisha Super Cyclone and the 2002 monsoon failure led to big improvements in India’s disaster response system. He called for a national position paper on how climate change is affecting tropical cyclones, especially in big cities.

**Dr. L.S. Rathore**, another former DG, spoke about five key areas of progress: improving weather observation systems, using artificial intelligence in forecasts, expanding hyper-local warnings, and ensuring that warnings reach people in simple language through digital tools.

**Dr. Uma Charan Mohanty** shared that IMD now produces city-level forecasts with a 500-meter resolution, which is already helping cities like Pune and Bhubaneswar prepare for extreme weather more effectively.

**Shri Rajendra Singh** from the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) stressed the need for strong coordination between IMD and disaster responders. He called for better links between early warning and early action.

AIDMI Director **Mr. Mihir R. Bhatt** added that local communities, especially small businesses and informal workers, need early warnings they can understand and act upon. He suggested using local languages, visual formats, and mobile apps to make forecasts more accessible. He also emphasised the importance of open weather data and grassroots training to build local resilience.

The roundtable ended with a call for stronger partnerships between IMD, NDMA, state governments, and communities. Key recommendations included expanding agro-weather services for farmers, improving cyclone planning for cities, and using mobile platforms to deliver multilingual forecasts.

As climate risks rise, IMD’s role is more important than ever. With inclusive, people-focused systems, India can lead the way in building a safer, more climate-ready future.