

"World Meteorological Day" (Connecting the Dots- IAF)

(26.03.2023)

1. Following a more than three decades old rich tradition of celebration of the Day (23 March) every year (on the nearest Sunday) in Indian Air Force as a get together involving even all the veterans of the Meteorological Branch of the organisation, this year it was held today at Akash Mess, India Gate. Here is an attempt to connect the dots in the history of this esteemed branch.
2. The stalwarts Ajit Tyagi and Air Vice Marshal GP Sharma were the torch bearers. The youngest veteran was 98 year young Squadron Leader Ved Prakash (ex India Meteorological Department) of the Auxiliary Defence Reserve, who provided the real inspiration. He chose to climb 40 stairs to the lift to reach the venue. Another officer was 94 years - Group Captain VP Nigam.
3. Sharing a link of the images of get together: <https://we.tl/t-lrK8A5hfzD>
4. This year 2023, theme of the World Meteorological Organization of United Nations was "The Future of Weather, Climate and Water across Generations."
5. The meteorological branch of the Indian Air Force (IAF) is responsible for providing weather forecasting and related services to the IAF per-se, other arms of the Indian Armed Forces as well as the civil aviation operating from its airfields. It operates a network of weather stations across the country and uses a variety of tools and techniques to provide accurate weather forecast and other vital info.
6. Additionally, the branch also conducts research into meteorology and atmospheric sciences, and collaborates with other scientific organizations to develop new techniques and tools for weather forecasting, especially nowcasting and to improve understanding of weather phenomena.
7. The branch has a long and rich history, dating back to the early years of the IAF itself. The branch was first established in 1940, just a few years after the Indian Air Force was founded in 1932, by drawing officers and other cadres on deputation from the India Meteorological Department (IMD). It was perhaps called its air arm as IMD (A).
8. During World War II, the branch played a critical role in supporting air operations, and provided inputs to Allied forces, helping to plan and execute successful missions. Afterwards, the branch continued to grow and evolve. Formally the Directorate of Meteorology in IAF came into being in the year 1957. Since then, it has played a pivotal role in all wars, battles & LICs. When I got commissioned in July 1987, in the absence of modern inputs, our so-called human radar (meteorological sense - intuitive skills) got the answers in challenging weather situations.
9. Every year a couple of thousand aspirants from almost all MS streams apply for commissioning in the branch but a few are selected, on an average in single digit only. They play an advisory yet decisive role in the flying operations for Go / No Go in adverse weather.



