

History of IMS-Ahmedabad Chapter (IMSA)

As recollected by Dr. Satyendra M. Bhandari

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With the presence of meteorology stalwarts like Prof. K. R. Ramanathan and Prof. P. R. Pisharoty at PRL, Ahmedabad, meteorological and atmospheric research took roots in Ahmedabad as early as 1960s. Subsequently, the initiation of a group for undertaking remote sensing of the Earth's atmosphere from space under the guidance of Prof. Pisharoty and Prof. P. D. Bhavsar at SAC (ISRO), and subsequent establishment of a climate research division at PRL under Prof. R. N. Keshavamurthy, led to nucleation of a substantial number of researchers in the field of meteorology and related atmospheric and oceanic sciences. A need was felt to create an appropriate professional platform to popularize these subjects and share information about new developments in these areas amongst the public. The endeavor led to formation of the Ahmedabad Chapter of IMS during Feb. 1980- almost exactly 37 years ago.

A number of scientists – Dr. P. R. Pisharoty, Prof. P. D. Bhavsar, Dr. T. A. Hariharan, Prof. O. P. N. Calla, Dr. M. S. Narayanan, Dr. P. C. Pandey, Dr. P. S. Desai, Dr. P. N. Pathak, Dr. V. K Agrawal, Dr. B. H. Subbaraya, Dr. T. N. Keshavamurthy and others took the initiative to form the Ahmedabad Chapter and define its activities in line with the Constitution of IMS. The Chapter began functioning with the requisite number of members and with an initial ad-Hoc and later on elected Executive Committees to give shape to its activities. Prof. OPN Calla was first to Register for IMS Life Membership from Ahmedabad.

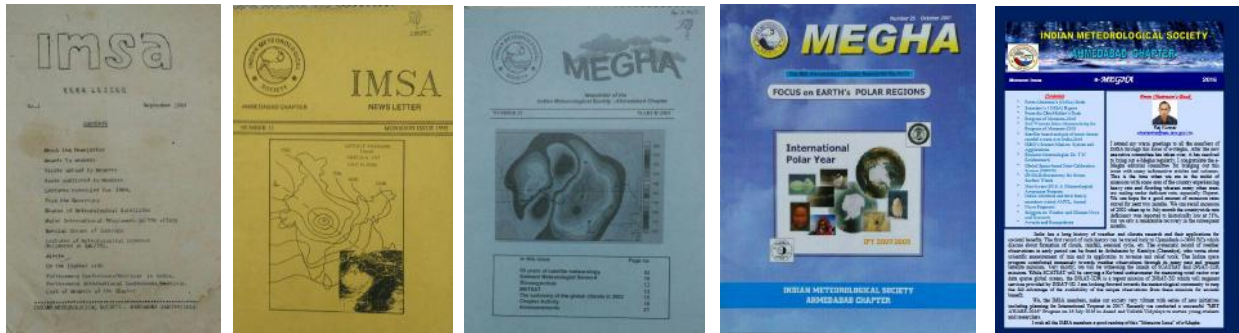
The Chapter began undertaking a variety of activities like arranging seminars about aspects of weather and climate e.g. on analyzing the post-facto performance of SW Monsoon , celebrating World Met. Day, arranging Quiz and Painting Competitions for Children on specific themes, visits to IMD Centre at Ahmedabad and to Agriculture Univ. at Anand for increasing awareness of meteorological and agro-meteorological instruments and observations etc.

Due to its variety of innovative ideas and activities over the years, Ahmedabad Chapter came into limelight and was considered the most active Chapters of IMS for quite a long time. It also had the honor of being the largest Chapter of IMS with maximum number of members. It became popularly known and called as "IMSA" – Indian Meteorological Society – Ahmedabad.

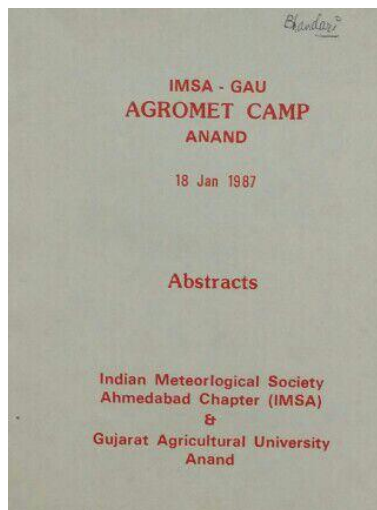
Some of the highlights of activities of IMSA that brought it into prominence and made it popular at the national level were: -

Publication of an **IMSA Newsletter** (from Sept. 1984) for exchange of information among its members. Over the years and decades, the initial cyclostyled version of the Newsletter

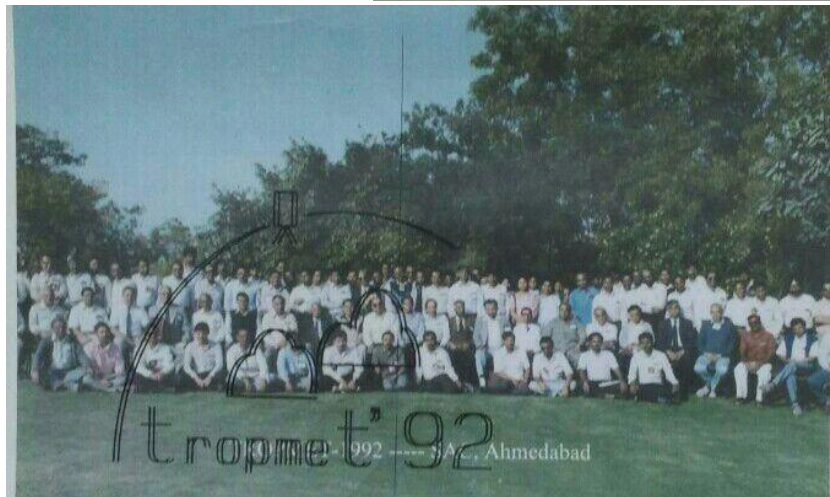
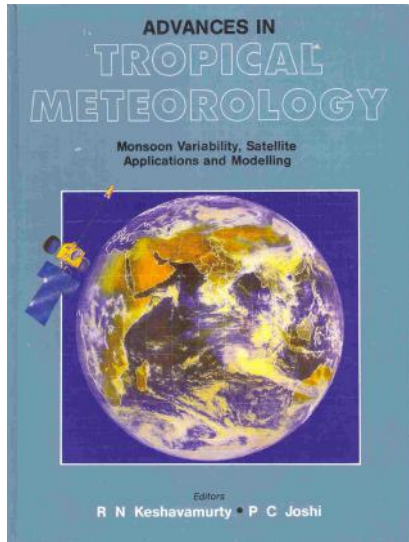
morphed into a stylish colorful magazine with many themed special issues highlighting different topics. Later in its journey, the newsletter was christened MEGHA and now it is published in its e-version known as e-Megha.



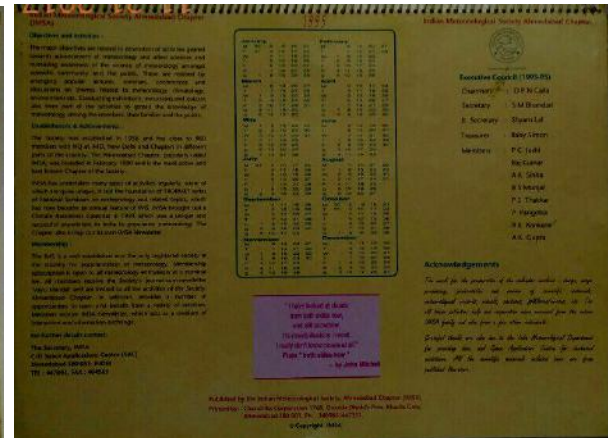
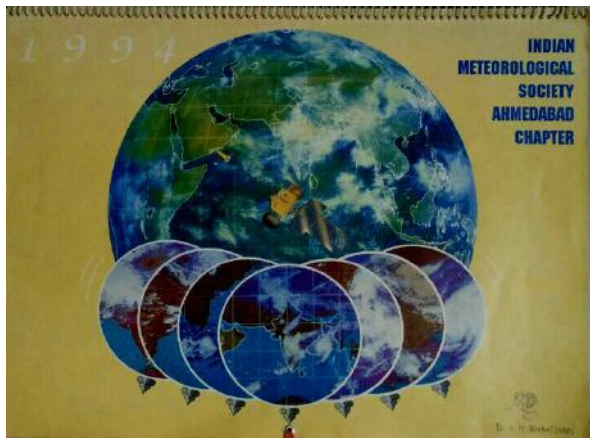
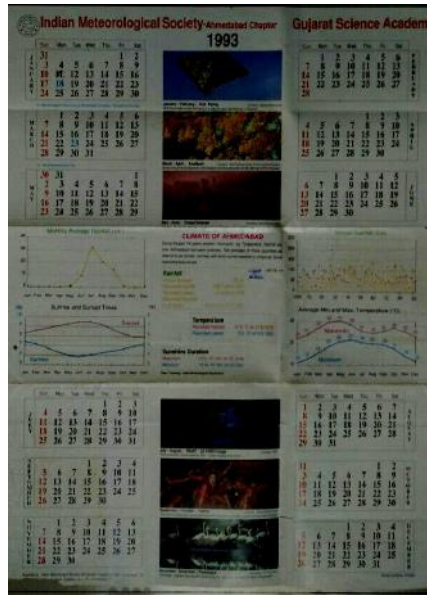
IMSA organized one of the first of its educational trip out of Ahmedabad for its members in collaboration with Gujarat Agriculture Univ., Anand as the “**AGROMET Camp**” during Jan. 1987. A short Abstracts booklet was prepared for the occasion.



During 1992 IMSA laid the trendsetting foundation of “**TROPMET**” Series of IMS National Symposia that eventually added an International wing/status “**INTROMET**” to it. One of the highlight of the **TROPMET-1992** was the prompt publication of its Proceedings by Tata-McGraw Hill. The symposium was attended by large number of participants from across the country. The systematic organization of the symposium, with an innovative logo and elaborate arrangements etc. received high appreciation and is still recalled by those who participated.



During 1993-1994, IMSA undertook the publication and wide distribution of well designed innovative **Weather Calendars** describing all aspects of Weather at Local and National Level. The 1994 IMSA Calendar received high acclaim as it effectively represented an 'Informative Indian Weather Book'.



Ahmedabad Chapter also arranged discussion and interactions on topics of relevance to students and farmers. Discussions were also arranged to analyse how the TV media should present weather information. A set of TV Programs for Doordarshan were also produced dealing with weather and climate and were also brought out as CDs. Articles by IMSA Members on meteorological and environmental topics have also frequently appeared in prominent Newspapers.

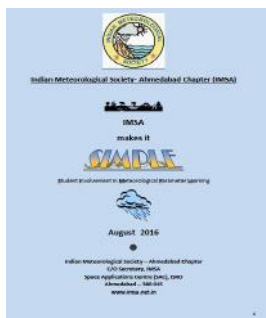
Besides celebration of World Meteorological Day, World Ozone Day and World Environment Day by arranging seminars and lectures by well known experts and visiting dignitaries, IMSA also set up **Prof. Satish Dhawan Lecture series** to honor the memory of Prof. Dhawan – the 1st ISRO Chairman and a well known aeronautical scientist. These well attended lectures are

thrown open to students and general public. These IMSA lectures were also brought out in printed form and distributed ahead of the events.

For long time IMSA also contributed and played significant role in **Gujarat Weather Watch** program of Gujarat Govt.

IMSA has taken interests in arranging Educational excursions for its members and families to nearby places of significance.

More Recently, IMSA has taken another interesting and innovative activity to involve school and college students and teachers in local level measurement of meteorological parameters by providing them with the basic level instruments and training. Ex. **SIMPLE and Met-Aware**.



Very recently, during Nov. 2017, on the occasion of 25th year of 1st TROPMET at Ahmedabad, IMSA organized and hosted the highly successful IMS - INTROMET Symposium at SAC, Ahmedabad. The Symposium was held during the Diamond Jubilee year of formation of IMS. **INTROMET – 2017** also paid tributes to the memory of Shri D. R. Sikka – a well known veteran monsoon meteorologist, who passed away during Mar. 2017.

Members of IMS from Ahmedabad Chapter have occupied important leading positions as Directors and Chairmen at National level institutions and have been received a variety of awards and recognitions. Publications of IMSA members have also been selected for IMS Awards over the years and decades. Members from Ahmedabad Chapter have made significant contributions to the IMS HQ activities by being elected as President, Vice-Presidents and Members of the National Executive and playing a crucial role in revision of the IMS Constitution. Members from Ahmedabad Chapter have also been elected Fellows of IMS. IMSA Members have also been on the Editorial Board of Vayumandal, the Bulletin cum Journal of IMS.

A number of leading scientists from Space Applications Centre (SAC-ISRO), Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) and India Met. Centre (IMD) at Ahmedabad, and Gujarat Agricultural Univ., Anand etc. have taken keen interest and have served as Members of the IMSA Executive and

the Editorial Board of IMSA Newsletter from time to time. Along with the members, they have all contributed the success of the growth and accomplishments of IMSA. The membership has grown from the initial dozen or so to Membership of IMS from Ahmedabad is spread over a large number of scientific institutes and organizations in and around Ahmedabad.

Development of an IMSA Website (www.imsa.net.in) has now become a reality.

All the above activities have continued and evolved to sustain the prominence of Ahmedabad Chapter i.e. IMSA keeping it in the forefront of IMS. IMSA also has synergistic cooperation with other related professional societies operating from SAC i.e. Indian Society of Remote Sensing – Ahmedabad Chapter and Indian Geomatics Society – Gujarat.

All along IMSA has enjoyed the institutional support from SAC(ISRO) and PRL and also from various state and central Govt. institutions to undertake its activities.

Caveat :

The above historical journey of IMSA is based on recollections of the author and it may not be fully comprehensive. Mention of number of activities and contributions may have been overlooked in spite of best attempts to give a reasonably complete historical picture. The author apologizes for any such oversights.

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Acknowledgements : (from IMSA side) !!!!!

IMSA places on record its grateful thanks to its members, council members and active contributions that have helped IMSA in its eventful journey. It also acknowledges the tremendous support received from all the various institutions and individuals for realizing its goals and conducting its activities. The constant support from IMS HQ is also acknowledged.

Most of the images and pictures used in the above write-up are from the personal archives of Dr. Satyendra Bhandari who has taken keen interest in summarizing the historical perspective. IMSA expresses its gratefulness to him.