

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE IEEMA CONCLAVE ON "ELECTRICAL FIRE SAFETY" AT
HOTEL ITC GRAND CHOLA , GUINDY, CHENNAI ON 30.11.2018 AT 10.00 AM**

Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam

Thiru. Sreegopal Kabra
Past President – IEEMA

Thiru. Sunil Misra
Director General – IEEMA

Thiru, Vikas Jalan
Chairman Southern Region
IEEMA

Thiru. Vipul Ray
Vice President - IEEMA

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

It gives me great happiness to be here today at the “Electrical Fire Safety Conclave“ being organized by the Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers Association. It is a matter of satisfaction & pride to know that the IEEMA which was founded in 1948 has been playing a crucial role in policy advocacy for its members for the last 7 decades.

This Electrical Fire Safety Conclave has been planned with the objective of creating mass awareness about preventing fires and mitigating their adverse effects. The Conclave I am told will focus on formulating a perspective which will serve as a guideline for all the stake holders, including planners and industry experts.

As you are aware, the Electricity Act, 2003, Electricity rules 2005 and the CEA (Measures relating to Safety and Electric Supply) regulations, 2010 have been designed to reduce / eliminate electrical accidents. The National Building Code has also dedicated a complete chapter on electrical safety of buildings for which the regulatory frame work is already in place.

In the Indian scenario, data shows that the majority of industrial disasters and commercial or household fires are a result of electrical short circuits. These electrical short circuits cause fires in the electrical appliances or electrical fittings, which rapidly spread through flames via the connecting electrical wires to the surrounding areas.

In that respect, electricity is often referred to as a “silent killer”, because it cannot be tasted, seen or heard.

We have known major fires taking place in Urban Areas and Mega cities. Then the question comes as to who has carried out the wiring/installation? Whether it was inspected and approved by Electrical Inspector? Whether the Installation was carried out by a Licensed Electrical Contractor and whether ISI marked material was used or not?

Close to 3 lakh people have lost their lives due to in fire accidents in India, between 2001 and 2014. Nearly, 40 to 45 percent of the electrical fires were due to Electrical Short Circuit. It is important to devise ways to avoid the outbreak of fire and also establish effective means to put out a fire before it becomes a conflagration.

During the last one decade there has been a vibrant growth in construction activities in India, especially in High Rise buildings. Thousands of High Rise buildings have already been constructed in metros and major cities in India, and thousands are under construction. Fire in high rise buildings becomes more dangerous and more difficult to tackle since the salvaging operations are far more complex. Early detection can help to avoid fatalities and heavy loss of property.

For this, the use of smoke detectors, fire alarms, and automatic sprinklers, should be encouraged, when designing high rise buildings.

Fire Safety Audit should be made mandatory and the audit work should be entrusted to Third Party Agencies, who have expertise in it.

In the case of a fire involving electrical apparatus, the first essential is to try and render the circuit dead which is possible if suitable circuit breaker is provided and in its absence by switching off the mains.

Where it is not possible to switch off the current the fire must be countered by the use of non-conducting extinguishing media. Along with carbon -dioxide, and other

agents, water mist from a suitable distance are used in the recent days to attack such fires.

Water mist suppression uses less water than traditional sprinkler system, which minimizes damage to property and critical assets. Nozzle design along with pre-determined pressure criteria, creates a mist of small water droplets. These smaller droplets in the form of fine mist absorb heat at a faster rate than larger droplets due to the higher surface - area - to - mass ratio. As a result, rapid absorption of heat occurs, causing temperature to drop while oxygen is displaced due to the expansion upon water evaporation.

Since, IEEMA is the apex association of manufacturers of electrical, industrial electronics and allied equipment in India, and since IEEMA members contribute to more than 90% of the power equipment installed in India, the association can play a major role in the area of fire prevention and fire safety.

The Fire and Rescue Service Department under the Tamil Nadu Government has been coping with the challenge by equipping itself with the latest gadgets and vehicles, specialized training of personnel, establishing new fire stations in vulnerable areas, etc.

The department is equipped with 9 Advanced Water Tenders of 4500 liters capacity, 6 Mini Water Tenders of 600 liters capacity and 8 Mini Water Tenders of 350 liters capacity based on water mist technology. Further the department has also been provided with 35 sets of portable water mist cum compressed Air foam systems mounted on motor bikes on either side which are extremely useful for fire-fighting in narrow lanes and congested areas.

Tamil Nadu is also the first state in the country to have sky lifts reaching upto 104 meters in height.

I understand that IEEMA organized its first edition of “Electrical Fire Safety Conclave” on 29th June 2018 in Mumbai. The conclave emphasized on various aspects of electrical risk management, improper maintenance and ignorance of the safety precautions, which leads to fire accidents. IEEMA has also signed a Memorandum of Association with Fire Safety Association of India to work together in the area of electrical fire safety.

The Special Efforts taken by IEEMA to organize this Conclave on ‘Electrical Fire Safety’ in Chennai deserve my appreciation and applause.

Let me conclude by giving a clarion call for manufacturing electrical and electronics equipment in India. Make in India a Swadeshi movement covering 25 sectors of the economy was launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister on 25 September 2014 to encourage companies to manufacture their products in India.

With a huge market, a large scientifically trained man power and conducive weather conditions India is an ideal destination for the manufacturing sector. The make in India initiative is designed to increase the share of the manufacturing sector from 16% to 25% in the nation’s GDP. The growth of the manufacturing sector will in turn result in a multiplication of employment opportunities leading to greater prosperity and growth. Such a development oriented cycle is possible with the right combination of investment, skill development and technological advancement through research.

Associations such as yours should tap the benefits of the “Make in India” Campaign. India is among the world’s youngest nations, with more than 50 crore people under the age of 25. With a burgeoning middle class and a large youthful population, India will certainly reap the benefits of the demographic dividend if associations such as yours take the lead in promoting goods manufactured in India.

I thank IEEMA for having given me this opportunity to address all of you on an important issue concerning the public namely electrical fire safety. I wish all the members of IEEMA and the audience success in all their endeavors.

Nandri Vanakkam

Jai Hind