

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE 64TH RAILWAY WEEK CELEBRATIONS OF INTEGRAL
COACH FACTORY AT DR.AMBEDKAR ARANGAM, ICF, CHENNAI
ON 16.04.2019 AT 05.00 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Thiru. N.K. Gupta,
Principal Chief Electrical Engineer

Thiru. A.K. Kathpal,
Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer

Thiru. V.V. Reddy,
Principal Chief Material Manager

Thiru. R. Mohan Raja,
Principal Chief Personnel Officer

Thirumathi Usha Venugopal,
Principal Financial Advisor

Thiru. B.Rama Mohana Reddy,
Principal Chief Engineer

Dr. Debatosh Mitra,
Principal Chief Medical Officer

Thiru. S.K. Parhi,
Principal Chief Security Commissioner

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great happiness to be here today at the 64th Railway week celebrations organised at the Integral Coach Factory. As you are all aware, the Railway week is observed every year in commemoration of the historical commencement of the train service on 16th April between Boribandar and Thane 166 years ago. This fascinating train journey

revolutionized the transport sector in India and changed the way Indians went about their daily lives.

There is much about which the nation is proud of the Indian Railways.

The Indian Railways is the fourth largest railway network in the world and is probably the largest railway system in the world under a single management.

Railwaymen run more than 20,000 passenger trains daily, on both long-distance and suburban routes, from 7,349 stations across India. In the freight segment, there are more than 9,200 freight trains that run daily.

In the last fiscal year alone the Railways served as the means of transportation for about 826 crore passengers and 116 crore tonnes of freight were handled with an enviable operating ratio of 98.4% and an annual revenue of about 1.79 lakh crores. Hence there is no doubt that the Indian Railways is a proud asset of the Central Government and the nation.

The history of the evolution of the Indian Railways is an interesting one. Madras (now Chennai) was home to the first proposals for the Railways in India. The country's first train, Red Hills Railway was operated from Red Hills to the Chintadripet bridge of Madras city as early as 1837.

Thereafter the first passenger train, hauled by three steam locomotives Sahib, Sindh and Sultan was run with 400 people housed in 14 carriages on a broad gauge track between Bori Bunder (Mumbai) and Thane a distance of 34 kilometers on 16 April 1853.

In 1873 the Central railway station which has now been renamed as the Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G. Ramachandran Central railway station, was opened. After that one more junction of Indian Railways namely Secunderabad railway station was opened in 1874. In 1897, lighting in passenger coaches was introduced by many railway companies and on 3 February 1925, the first electric passenger train in India ran between Victoria Terminus and Kurla.

The organisation of Indian railways into regional zones began in 1951, when the Southern, Central and Western zones were created.

In 1988, the first Shatabdi Express was introduced between New Delhi and Jhansi; it was later extended to Bhopal. In February 2000, the Indian Railways website went online and on 3 August 2002, Indian Railways began online train reservations and ticketing.

Luxury trains were introduced in 1982, with the Palace on Wheels that was supported by Government of Rajasthan and Tourism department of India. The Palace on Wheels serves the Rajasthan circuit and its twin sister, the Golden Chariot serves the Karnataka and Goa circuits.

The train 18, now named as Vande Bharat Express was built by the Integral Coach Factory. It is capable of running at a speed of 160 km per hour and does not require an engine to run as it is self-propelled on electric traction. It can replace the existing intercity express trains and stands out for its striking features such as enhanced passenger comfort, Automatic doors Onboard Wi-Fi and infotainment, GPS-based passenger information system, Modular toilets with bio-vacuum system, improved couplers to lessen jerk impact and an emergency talk back system, etc.

With the success of Vande Bharat Express, the Indian Railways is contemplating to manufacture sleeper coaches with similar advanced features in the next two years.

The Mumbai–Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor is currently under construction. This corridor will see the operation of the first bullet train in India. The railways have also prepared a mega expansion plan, which includes doubling the freight capacity and adding new semi high speed trains in certain identified corridors with a cumulative length of about 6,000 km.

A policy decision has also been taken that the country's entire rail network will be electrified by 2022.

An unique feature of Indian Railways is the large number of in-house Production units which take care of the locomotive and rolling stock requirements. The Integral Coach Factory which was set up with Swiss collaboration in 1955 was the first production unit exclusively devoted to the production of coaches.

Today ICF is now capable of producing more than 3,000 coaches per year and manufactures about 600 varieties of passenger coaches. Many of the recent products from ICF such as air conditioned Electrical Multiple Units, and underslung Mainline Electrical Multiple Units, are being widely adopted all over the railways thus proving ICF's versatility.

The ICF has also exported more than 800 coaches to 17 countries and is presently fulfilling an order from Sri Lanka for the supply of 78 Diesel Electric Multiple Unit coaches.

I am informed that solar-powered trains are also being planned with the installation of one gigawatt of solar and 130 megawatts of wind

power plants, by 2022. India introduced the world's first solar-powered train and 50 coaches with rooftop solar farms in June 2017. Rooftop solar electricity is planned at stations to reduce long-term fuel costs and protect the environment.

All this augurs well for the coming years. With the Indian economy in a state of heightened activity the future holds great promise for the Indian Railways who have a highly committed cadre of officers and employees, specialized in various branches of engineering and in matters of accounting and commercial and traffic expertise. The Railway week serves as an occasion to honour officers of outstanding merit and performance and it is heartening to see that more than 200 employees have been recognized today at the ICF for their hard work and sincerity. I congratulate them and wish them well.

I extend my best wishes and greetings to the ICF for having decided to celebrate the Railway Week with gusto and enthusiasm. Events such as these serve to motivate the employees, enlighten the public about the benefits provided by the Railways for the common man and also widen interest about the organization in the minds of policy makers and entrepreneurs.

I am certain that the Indian Railways are poised for a quantum leap forward considering their skill in business and manufacturing and seen in the context of the Indian growth story that is now unraveling. May success greet the Railways and its employees at every step of the way leading them towards glory and achievement.

Nandri Vanakkam....

Jai Hind....