



## REFCOLD to promote Indian refrigeration industry to the World

REFCOLD India will help Indian industry to be at par with global standards of cold chain industry.

**Pankaj Dharkar, Chairman, REFCOLD India**

REFCOLD INDIA 2018, India's first international exhibition and conference on cold chain, industrial refrigeration and reefer transportation, is being organised by the Indian Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ISHRAE) along with NurembergMesse India on November 22-24 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Here, in an interview with Cooling India, Chairman of REFCOLD India Pankaj Dharkar shares some first-hand information about the event. Excerpts:

### **What is the objective of REFCOLD India 2018?**

The objective of REFCOLD India 2018 is to bring Indian and international refrigeration industry under one roof to bring innovative technology in this field in India which is the need of the hour and due to which we can save a lot of wastage in food. REFCOLD, being organised by ISHRAE, is planned on the

footsteps of Indian Prime Minister initiative of doubling the farmer's income by 2020. We are getting tremendous responses from international and national refrigeration related associations and industry.

### **What are the trends in Indian cold chain segment? What is the penetration level of temperature controlled cold storage in India?**

India in terms of trends still follow the old technologies in cold chain segment and very few cold chains or cold storages are adapting international standards. But with the increase in demands of good quality fresh foods and frozen food products, there is a huge need in cold storages, cold chain and reefer transportation. So, at this juncture, REFCOLD India will help Indian industry to be at par with global standards of cold chain industry.

## What role can organised retailers play in building cold chains in India?

With the change in demands of Indian consumers, retailers play very important role in building chain in India as they are the one who will be end-users for cold storages and reefer transportation to make sure that the buyers are getting fresh product.

## What are the stumbling blocks faced during setting up of cold chain logistics infrastructure? How do you overcome these challenges?

The major stumbling block faced during the setup of cold chain logistic infrastructure is availability of less knowledge in terms of best practice and innovative technology. With REFCOLD India, we are trying to educate people by showcasing innovative technology and also conducting free workshops to educate about the best practices.

## India is one of the largest producers of agricultural products and one of the global leaders in the pharmaceutical sector. Yet, it is known to have fledging cold chain, which results in supply chain losses of food, pharma and other resources. So, what are the solutions?

For pharma cold chain, missing link is right quality and quantities of reefer van and lack of cold warehousing infrastructure ant ports and airports. At REFCOLD, a special session is being taken up by the IITR (Paris) ASHRAE / Global Cold Chain Alliance and UNEP. We are sure that the sessions will be an eye opener.

In regards to agricultural products, huge efforts are required at all levels and we need to have “Green Revolution” like success of Amul (White revolution). The key is development of small pack houses (cold storages) which are primarily developed using combination of solar or grid and using phase transfer materials which will bring down the storage cost and make it affordable to small farmers. Unless farmers store them near to place they are produced, the food loses will never come down. This supported by strong reefer transport growth is going to be key success of cold chain.

## Cold storages are dependent on steady supply of power. Apart from this, fuel constitutes a major portion of operating costs. So, what are the measures taken by the cold chain industry to make them

## energy efficient and superior?

Yes, fuel constitutes the major portion of operation cost but we have to educate people that the major issue faced by cold storages is the increase in temperature due to bad insulation which in return consumes more power to maintain a certain temperature. With good insulation they can help decreasing their powers bills. The other efficient way is multi-storage cold storages where the whole cold room can be divided using insulated panel and there are small units which are running independently. So, you have to run one you can use one. The use of phase transfer material, solar power, adoption of efficient condensers for heat rejection and use of more efficient compressors are the effective road map for bringing down the energy level.

## What are the technological innovations that you suggest to make the operations of cold chain logistics more efficient?

Use of solar, geothermal, phase transfer materials, high-quality insulation materials, and efficient transport systems will complement the future of growth in refrigeration and cold chain industry.

## What are the growth drivers for cold chain logistics? Which sector does generate the maximum demand?

The milk produce, agro produce, fish, meat, and pharmaceuticals are growth drivers for cold chain logistics. Currently milk produce is creating maximum demand.



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## What is your outlook for cold chain and refrigeration industry for 2018-19?

The growth in refrigeration and cold chain industry is surely going to cross over 20 per cent year-on-year for next 5 years. I do personally feel, we are in infant stage for usage of refrigeration industry. Surely there are huge work ahead for all associated in refrigeration and cold chain industry whether they are consultants, manufacturers, suppliers, or contractors – all are going to be extremely busy for the next 5-7 years. ■