

Fire breaks out at Madurai shopping mall

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MADURAI: A major fire broke out on the ninth floor of Super Saravana Stores, a shopping mall on Melur Main Road, Uthangudi, in Madurai city on Wednesday evening.

No loss of life was reported, but three employees complained of suffocation due to smoke inhalation for some time and were taken to a nearby

private hospital for treatment. It took around four hours for fire and rescue services personnel to bring the flames under control.

It was around 4:30 pm that smoke was suddenly seen emerging from the ninth floor of the building which houses the food court. As the smoke spread across floors, shoppers and employees rushed to get out. Fire and rescue services personnel reached the spot and tried to bring the fire under control, and also searched for anyone who may have been inside the building.

District collector Dr S Aneesh Sekhar and corporation commissioner Simranjeet Singh Kahlon and other officials visited the spot. The glass windows of the building were broken to let out the smoke. A cloud of smoke hung around in Mattuthavani and surrounding areas.

Water tankers deployed by Madurai corporation to replenish water supply to douse the flames had to make around 50 trips. Drones were also used to search and survey the spot. Police are investigating the exact cause of the fire.

The extent of damage was also not known. Shoppers and employees of the mall were left stranded outside the building as they left their vehicles and items such as house keys and other personal items inside while rushing out. Subsequently, there was traffic congestion on Melur Main Road.

It may be recalled that a case is pending in Madras high court seeking to address the alleged public nuisance following the opening of Super Saravana Stores in Madurai. Advocate Henri Tiphagne who filed the petition had stated that the building is still under construction and there are no emergency stairs in the building.

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