

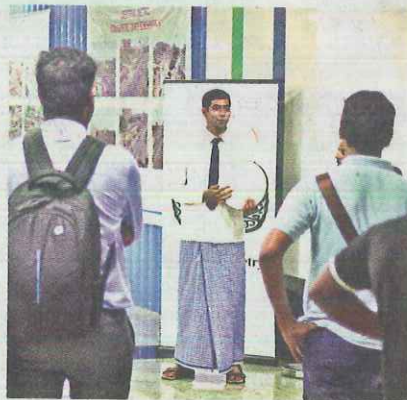
Poetry recital gets new 'platform' at Metro stations

■ GAUTAM SUNDER

CHENNAI: In an ambitious initiative to make poetry more accessible and to spread the art form among public spaces, the Chennai Metro Rail has once again collaborated with Prakriti Foundation to start a week-long project: #FindingIshvar.

Ishvar Krishnan is the young Tamil poet, who is the face of the programme and will be found reciting lines to passers-by and metro travellers throughout this week. Three spots have been identified across the city to host Ishvar based on their cultural relevance and footfall: Central Metro, Thirumangalam Metro and Vadapalani Metro. The first of these which took place at Central on Tuesday, witnessed a large number of people enjoying the rendition and wanting more.

"I'm a performance poet and it's really exciting for me to be part of this initiative. My poems are going to be a social com-



Ishvar Krishnan in action at Central Metro station on Tuesday

mentary with themes that listeners can resonate with; for example, the meaningless race we get up to be part of everyday," said Ishvar.

"Poetry is often considered to be a very

niche medium enjoyed by the same groups of people in a city like Chennai and this gives us an opportunity to see how much others outside enjoy this medium too," he added.

The 'surprise' element that audiences experience when they find Ishvar reciting his poetry is what they are most excited about as opposed to a usual performance when everyone comes in with a pre-conceived idea of the act in mind. "It's almost like a poetry flash mob, lasting for just around 15 minutes or so," said Ishvar.

The programme will eventually see poetry and visual art reach the walls of Chennai too, though that will take more time. For now, it's all about bringing down poetry for its supposed 'pedestal' and forging a community connect. "Everyday people listen to music and songs, and appreciate the poetry behind it too. So we are confident that this will be received well," said Ishvar.

Thirumangalam Metro and Vadapalani Metro will host the performances this week on June 1 and 2 respectively at 5.30 pm.