

Metro's cycle sharing system off to a promising start

From doctors to IT professionals, many have begun to use the cycles from stations

SUNITHA SEKAR
CHENNAI

Months after it began, Chennai Metro Rail's bicycle sharing scheme is off to a good start with many commuters beginning to ride cycles from stations.

From doctors to IT professionals, many have begun to use the cycles from Chennai Metro Rail stations. Santhosh Shinde, a 41-year-old food importer who resides at Koyambedu, says that he takes the Metro Rail everyday from his residence to Shenoy Nagar to play badminton. "After I get off at Shenoy Nagar, I cycle to the badminton court and then leave it back at the station and return home through Metro. Since it is free and the cycles are of great quality, I enjoy riding them," he says.

Sakthi Mithran, a doctor and resident of Shenoy Nagar, says he found it convenient cycling to the hospital. "They should have these racks in all stations so that people can pick it up in any station and leave it in another. I primarily cycle to work since it is good for health and eco-friendly too," he says.

But commuters say the system can get better with aggressive promotion. M. Manikandan, a professor at Anna University who often takes the Metro to Vadapala-

Pedalling all the way

The CMRL's bicycle sharing scheme has received a good response from the travelling public



ATHI'S BICYCLE CLUB

- No of cycles: 25
- Number of racks - 3
- Total number of registered members - 122
- Total number of bicycle usage logs - 313

- No. of stations: 6
Anna Nagar East, Thirumangalam, Ashok Nagar, Nehru Park, Shenoy Nagar and Vadapalani

- To hire a bi-cycle SMS rake-code<space>bicycle-ID to 9645511155

- To return a bicycle - rake code<space>bicycle-ID to 9746361166

- No membership fees or deposit

- 100 hours free usage per month

- Bicycle has to be returned within 24 hours

ZOOMCAR'S PEDL

- Number of cycles: 50

- No of stations: 3
Thirumangalam, Anna Nagar Tower and Anna Nagar East

- Fare: ₹1 /half hr with zero security deposit.

- Commuters have to log on to 'pedl.in' website and make a booking by scanning the QR code on the cycle

CHENNAI METRO RAIL'S CYCLES

- No. of cycles: 45

- No. of stations: 4
Ekkattuthangal, Nehru Park, Thirumangalam and Anna Nagar Tower metro stations

- The commuter has to pay a refundable deposit of ₹3,000



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GITAKRISHNAN RAMADURAI
Professor, IIT Madras

ni, says there are still people who enquire about how to use them. "If they promote an initiative aggressively, more people will benefit," he adds. Initially, Chennai Metro Rail purchased cycles and installed them in a few stations like Ekkattuthangal, Nehru Park, Thirumangalam

and Anna Nagar Tower. Subsequently, Athi's Bicycle Club brought in their cycles at six stations and recently Zoomcar's PEDL has joined the bandwagon.

M.S. Athirup, founder, Athi's Bicycle Club, says, "The response has been great so far; we started with three stations and expanded to three more now. Our cycles are free of cost for commuters so we can introduce in other stations only if we get sponsors. We survive on branding and advertisements from corporates".

But commuters say park-

ing spaces need to be created across the city or otherwise they would be forced to travel to the stations to return them negating the purpose to a large extent.

GitaKrishnan Ramadurai, professor at IIT Madras, says, there should be shared cycle parking spaces in every half km of the city if this initiative has to be successful. "GPS tracking system will help the companies to know where the cycle has been parked. This alone isn't enough; we need to have bicycle lanes so that commuters can safely ride."