

Metro rush hour commuters double

Airport Metro Sees Highest Footfall During Evening Hours

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Chennai: The number of commuters boarding metro trains during peak hours has doubled to nearly 12,000 passengers in the last two weeks after the opening of six new underground metro stations. Among the 26 stations now open, airport metro witnesses maximum footfall in the evening hours.

The overall average ridership has increased by 80%, with 55,000 people using metro trains daily.

At airport alone, an average 1,960 passengers board trains in the evening busy



CROWDED: Though the patronage is improving, Chennai Metro Rail (CMRL) is yet reach the estimated ridership, which is more than 5 lakh a day for the 35km line currently operational

hours. About 735 commuters travel from the station in the morning between 8am and 10am. It is followed by Thirumangalam with an average peak hour ridership of 2,000. Koyambedu and Vadapalani caters to an average 1,520 followed by CMBT at 1,500. Transit hubs Central and

Alandur witnesses about 1,300 to 1,400 passengers during the busiest hours of the day.

Peak hours for metro rail is between 8am and 10.30am to 5pm and 8.30pm. An additional five metro trains is operated to cater to the peak hour rush apart from 30

other trains. "We operate trains for every five minutes during peak hours. It will be increased to 2.5 minutes if our ridership goes up further," a metro rail official said.

Though the patronage is improving, Chennai Metro Rail (CMRL) is yet reach its estimated ridership, which is more than 5 lakhs a day for the 35km line currently operational. Metro rail projected 7.76 lakh commuters for the 45km phase-1 line.

At airport metro, metro rail officials said one of the reasons for the peak hour rise is the high number of flight arrivals at the domestic terminal and the easy access for air passengers to the metro station.

Commuters can now easily walk to the station from the domestic and international terminals through a walkalator which was recently opened. "Earlier we were forced to get out of the airport

and either wait for a buggy or walk to the station. Using the travelator is now quite convenient," said M Shankar, a regular commuter.

Metro rail officials observed that officer-goers and college students top the list of commuters using metro rail service during the peak hours. While Thirumangalam metro station caters to surrounding localities like Mogappair and Anna Nagar West, Koyambedu and Vadapalani are close to colleges, cinema theatres and shopping malls besides residential localities.

Despite a lack of easy access to the station, Central metro witnesses one of the maximum footfalls during the busiest hours of the day. Officials say, it was not just because of the increased frequency of trains but also due to the direct service which connects Central with Egmore, CMBT and airport.