

Stay tuned: Soon, hop on metro, click on app, watch movie

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Chennai: You could soon hop on to a metro train, open an app and watch your favourite movie, song or TV show on your smartphone or laptop on the go.

Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is planning to launch an onboard entertainment system where commuters can log on to an app and choose from a wide range of content available in five languages free of cost. CMRL has floated tenders to select a company that can provide the video content and update it frequently to keep passengers entertained.

"It will be similar to in-flight entertainment but will have many more features. Once we launch it, we will perhaps be the first metro rail service in the country to have such a facility," said a CMRL official.

In the new system, servers with entertainment content will be installed in all metro stations, trains and the depot. Commuters will have to download and install an app on their mobile phone or laptop. When they enter a station or train, they can connect to the server through WiFi and start viewing the content. Officials said WiFi connectivity however, will work only on the app and cannot be used to browse the internet.

"During a 45-minute journey between Central metro station and the airport, commuters can easily get bored if there's no signal on their mobile phones. The new facility we have planned will keep them entertained," the official said.

The initiative comes at a time when CMRL is yet to provide mobile network connectivity on the underground section more than a year after the first line from Nehru Park to Thirumangalam was opened. At present, 13 undergro-

ENTERTAINMENT ON THE GO



▶ Walk in to a metro station and switch on mobile WiFi

▶ Download the app

▶ Select movies, songs or TV serials you want to watch on the go

▶ Content can be downloaded to watch offline

und stations along arterial Poonamallee High Road and Anna Salai are operational.

"When the trains are brought to the depot for maintenance, the servers will sync and the content will be updated. If the trains do not come to the depot, there is automatic syncing with servers in stations every time the train stops and the content gets updated," said an official. Besides watching movies or shows on the app, commuters can also download the content and watch it offline within a specific period.

CMRL wants to ensure the speed and connectivity between the server and phones are good enough for commuters to download an HD quality movie in 15 to 20 seconds.

It also plans to live-stream television channel content through the app. "If the contractor can provide content from all major TV channels, it will give commuters more options," a metro rail official said.