

People deface city's swanky metro stations, pee and spit everywhere

10-Member Team To Catch Them In Act

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: With the commuters' growing acceptance of the metro as the future mode of public transport comes increasing instances of public nuisance — spitting, urinating, travelling drunk, defacing the walls of stations and trains. The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is facing the challenge of tackling these growing problems.

In the last three years since the operation began, CMRL has collected nearly ₹24,000 as fine from more than 100 commuters.

Metro rail officials said a

MAJOR OFFENCES

▶ **Spitting and urinating** within metro station premises



▶ **Causing nuisance or travelling drunk** in metro trains



▶ **Obstructing train operations** (eg suicide attempt)

▶ **Pasting posters and scribble** on station walls and trains



OBNOXIOUS ACTS



COMMUTERS FINED

Total number of commuters fined (Since operations began in June 2015) | **102**

Amount collected through fines | **₹23,850**

Punishment may include fine ranging between **₹50** and **₹5,000** and/or imprisonment from 1 month to life or death depending on the offence



majority of the amount was collected as fine for spitting and urinating inside metro rail station premises. "We have caught commuters spitting paan on the tiled floors, on the walls and on the steps in the ticketing and platform areas. Our staff have caught and fined commuters and non-commuters urinating in the parking lot and close to the walls of the stations," a CMRL official said.

A 10-member flying squad

has been assigned the job of catching errant passengers and penalising them for committing offences listed under the Metro Railways (Operations and Maintenance) Act 2002. Commuters are penalised a minimum of ₹250.

"In Central Metro alone, we collected ₹10,500 as fine for spitting in the station and urinating in the subways linking the station in the month of September," the official said. Cen-

tral Metro is an underground transit hub that has entrances to link Central Railway Station, Park suburban station, Park Town MRTS and Moore Market Complex. Pedestrians too use the subways that are linked to the entry points of the metro station to cross the busy Poonamallee High Road.

The CMRL team has also boarded and fined noisy drunk commuters though officials said such cases are quite

rare. The station staff also keep a check on people entering the station. They also stop vendors trying to sell stuff in trains. Two station staff members are deputed at the entrance of every station for the purpose.

Serious offences had also been recorded in the last few months. "A man tried to jump on the tracks in one of our stations but was stopped by our staff," said an official. Jumping on railway tracks is considered as obstruction of train operations that will invite severe punishment of fine of ₹5,000 or imprisonment up to 4 years or both.

Though fines mentioned under the metro rail act is anywhere between ₹50 and ₹5,000, metro rail officials said, "We collect around ₹250, as many commuters do not carry money. So, we end up collecting whatever amount they have on them," an official said.