

Cycle-sharing system takes off

Available at 25 locations in Anna Nagar, Marina beach

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI**

The Chennai Corporation on Wednesday launched a cycle-sharing system, in public-private partnership (PPP) mode, at 25 locations in Anna Nagar and along Marina beach, with user charges of ₹5 for the first hour and ₹9 for every additional 30 minutes. The civic body will soon expand the SmartBike cycle-sharing system to 400 locations across all 15 zones of the city.

The charge for a one-day pass is ₹49. The system will initially cover six locations along Marina beach, such as Anna Square bus stop and Labour statue. In Anna Nagar, the system has been launched in locations such as Anna Nagar Tower Metro station, Kandasamy College, TNHB flats, Valliammal School, Anna Nagar West Bus Depot and Shenoy Nagar Metro station.

“The cycle-sharing system has been launched in Chennai with 250 cycles across 25 stations in Anna Nagar and Marina. The system was initiated under the government of India’s Smart



Cycles lined up in Anna Nagar for hire. ■ K. PICHUMANI

City Mission,” said an official.

SmartBike Mobility chairman D.V. Manohar said cycling had to be aggressively promoted to reduce pollution. SmartBike MD Dharmin Dontamsetti said the system would bridge the gap created by other means of transport.

‘Healthy alternative’

“The introduction of the system looks to provide residents with affordable, healthy, and sustainable mobility alternatives to meet travel demands. In many Indian cities, cycling is most

often neglected under the assumption that it is no longer a popular mode of transportation. However, cycling makes for almost a tenth of urban trips, which is as many as the car, said Aswathy Dilip of ITDP.

“Chennai must encourage this almost invisible transport mode and give cyclists their due. This pilot is a great start to an important form of last-mile connectivity,” she noted.

Expanding the system to achieve the targeted 5,000 cycles across the city would ensure even greater usage and success.