CMRL to launch scooter rental service at its stations

Commuters Can Rent And Ride Scooters

Chennai: As train services have begun in the entire 46-km phase-I network, Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has stepped up efforts to provide last mile connectivity between its stations and neighbourhoods.

After tying up with share-auto, cab companies, and IT companies for several feeder services to offer rides to and from metro stations, the latest will be Vogo, a Bengaluru-based scooter rental service, which will be launched in the city on Monday.

The company, which operates in Bengaluru and Hyderabad, provides IoT-enabled scooters that commuters can rent, ride, and return. Commuters can rent a scooter for INR 10 per minute.

Users have to download the scooter rental app, upload their driving licence and origin and destination locations after logging in. They should enter an OTP sent to them in a key box in the scooter, then select a pickup point. The scooter could be dropped at another point before paying the rent. In Chennai, CMRL may provide pickup and drop points for commuters to rent a scooter in their stations.

After introducing bicycle rental services at its stations, CMRL hopes that two-wheeler rental will be the best bet to help people to reach their homes or offices from metro stations without bothering about traffic congestion.

"Given the traffic in our city, scooter may be one of the best options. The weather may not be suitable for two-wheeler rental, but it is a good option for short distances," said Shiva Chandra, an IT employee, who works in Ekmathangal.

After several complaints of a lack of first- and last-mile connectivity when services started for the first time on Kowaleshwara-Alandur stretch, CMRL began introducing a few modes of transport to help last-mile connectivity. This was expanded to include bicycles on rent, bikes, and electric scooters on rent, share auto and share taxi services, tie-ups with cab aggregators, air-conditioned vans and self-driving cars.

Though commuters have welcomed the efforts by CMRL to provide morning links from and to the stations, they feel the options given to them are not enough, as not all stations have all the share services. "We operated share-auto and taxi services on trial basis. We will soon be extending them to all the stations," an official said.

Share-auto and share-taxi service was launched in August 2018 across 19 stations and more than 1,700 people had used these feeder services in the first six months. Officials said ideas have been floated to extend this service to other stations including the newly opened 30-km stretch from Washermanpet to AG-DMS.