

# Have an odd-hr flight or train? Take a metro

## Services Now From 4.30am To 11pm After Trial Runs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** Beginning Saturday, metro trains will be available from 4.30am to 11pm as Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is extending operations after months of running trials. A train will be available every 30 minutes from 4.30am to 6am and from 10pm to 11pm, while the existing schedule will be followed between 6am and 10pm. The extension of services will benefit early birds, morning joggers, late shift workers and commuters heading to railway stations or the airport to catch late night and early trains/ flights.

"We have arranged sufficient security and staff required to operate services from 4.30am. We expect the extension of services to attract and benefit more commuters," a metro rail official said.

At present, metro trains are available from 6am to 10pm. In the new schedule, the first train from Washermenpet, Airport, Chennai Central and St Thomas Mount will depart at 4.30am and the last train at 11pm.



**LOOKING TO UP PATRONAGE:** Trains will be available every 30 minutes during the extended hours

During peak hours — 8am to 11am and from 5pm to 8pm — trains will be available every five minutes across both the corridors from Washermenpet to Airport and from Chennai Central to St Thomas Mount. Every alternate train would be a direct service from Chennai Central to Airport.

During non-peak hours, trains will be operated every seven minutes. The new extended timings will be followed from Monday to Saturday. On Sundays, the existing timetable will be followed with services from 7.58am to 10pm, officials said.

CMRL has been conducting trial runs for the past six months, operating trains from 4.30am to 11pm, while the actual operational hours continued to be from 6am to 10pm. The trials were done to synchroni-

se operations, duty hours of staff members, requirement of additional manpower at stations and daily maintenance of trains after operational hours. "We have been making station controllers and staff who work on shifts to begin their duty at 4.30am to check for smooth daily operations," an official said. "We also had to check if our daily maintenance of trains was feasible within the reduced time left after the extension".

Metro rail was also working to make security arrangements to cover the extended hours. At present, outsourced private security personnel and state police guard metro stations in the city. "Based on the response, we will increase the frequency in the early morning hours," an official said.

File photo