Metro rail’s daily footfall crosses 1 lakh

On April 26, metro rail’s daily ridership crossed one lakh for the first time. A look at the monthly figures

Chennai: More than 1 lakh people took metro trains in April, the highest ever since it began operations in June 2015. Last month was also the first time the daily ridership crossed one lakh. On April 28, two days before the ridership went over 1 lakh, 1.05 lakh took metro trains.

Two months after the last leg of Phase I from Washermenpet to Adayar MS Swaminathan Road was opened, metro rail’s monthly patronage has jumped by 26%. Officials said it was because the newly opened stretch was the missing, and shortest, link between Central Railway Station and airport. Otherwise commuters were forced to take a circuitous route from Central Metro via Poondaimalai High Road, Koyambedu and Anna Cauvery Bridge to reach the airport. Commuters spent more time and money travelling on this route.

"It used to take nearly an hour to travel from the station to the airport. Now, we save almost 30 minutes and the fare is Rs 80," said M Subhadra, an IT employee.

In January, the monthly patronage touched 1 lakh. The last leg was inaugurated on February 10. Though stations like Thousand Lights and LIC had poor access to the facility with only two entry points like CTC, metro rail received good response in February, recording a 28% hike in ridership. "It was also because nearly 7.3 lakh people took the free ride in the first few days after the inauguration of the station," a metro rail official said.

On Thursday around 9,000 people took metro trains. The highest so far this month was on May 4 when 11,827 people travelled. A metro rail official said patronage would steadily grow as the service gained momentum and gained momentum.

When the first service between Alandur and Koyambedu was inaugurated in June 2015, metro rail hardly had any ridership of 3,000 to 5,000. "It has grown up since the service linked airport, CMTT and Central. We hope it will grow even as we extend the feeder services," an official said.