

Thanks to traffic restrictions, Metro sees a spike in users

STAFF REPORTER
CHENNAI

With traffic restrictions in place on Friday owing to the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping, thousands took the Chennai Metro, with ridership touching 1.37 lakh – much higher than the regular weekday footfall of 1.10-1.15 lakh.

According to officials of the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL), people leaving and entering the city thronged the Chennai Airport station, notching up a footfall of about 10,100 people, as against the usual ridership of 8,000.

“The station was so crowded, that we found it quite tough to manage. The only hitch was that scanning got delayed, as each passenger had baggage. So the queue was long,” an official said.

Highest footfall

Thirumangalam Metro station saw the highest number of commuters, as nearly



The aircraft carrying the Chinese President taking off from Chennai airport.

■ B. VELANKANNI RAJ

10,400 used the station, against the regular 8,000.

The station that benefited the most from the traffic restrictions due to the VVIP visit was the LIC Metro station. Nearly 7,800 people used the station against the usual 2,000-2,500.

“We were surprised to see this kind of a jump in ridership. Since there are several offices on Anna Salai, many commuters were scared to take their vehicles out, and may have preferred the Metro. We hope this continues,

‘Code F’ aircraft land at city airport

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For the first time, ‘Code F’ aircraft landed at the Chennai airport. A ‘Code F’ aircraft is massive and can carry over 400 passengers. Two such aircraft came to the city airport – one carrying the Chinese delegation and the other, the President himself (a Boeing 747-800 Jumbo), said officials.

now that we have introduced last-mile connectivity like cabs at the many stations,” the official said.

At St. Thomas Mount and Alandur Metro stations, 5,800 and 7,200 people travelled respectively; the stations saw a spike of about 2,000-3,000 from the routine footfall.

“Many who would have taken the suburban St. Thomas Mount switched to Chennai Metro on Friday, and used either of the two stations,” he added.