

Metro benefits from traffic chaos, sees record ridership

CHENNAI: The Deepavali rush in the city at least turned favourable for the Chennai Metro Rail (CMRL) as it witnessed a record 1.64 lakh passengers using it on Friday, with officials expecting a further increase in patronage on Saturday.

A CMRL official said that on Friday, the Metro recorded an all-time high passenger footfall of 1,64,913, bettering the previous best of 1,39,324 witnessed on Thursday.

“In the last two days, totally 3,04,237 passengers travelled in the Metro,” the official said.

The official said that many people had opted taking the Metro in order to avoid the traffic chaos in the city from the operation of special buses to various parts of the State for Deepavali festival. “The Metro particularly comes handy for those passengers heading to CMBT, the airport and

MGR Central to catch their buses, flights and trains,” the official said, adding that the footfall was high at the Central, Koyambedu, CMBT, Ashok Nagar, Airport and Alandur stations in the past few days.

The official also said that they were expecting increased patronage on Saturday, a day ahead of Deepavali.

Meanwhile, the official said that the offer of 50% discount to commuters on all Sundays and public holidays in a bid to boost ridership, would commence from Deepavali. For a commuter using the smart card, the minimum fare would be as low as Rs 4 and the maximum be Rs 27. With token issuance, the minimum and maximum fares will be Rs 5 and Rs 30 respectively.

“We hope to increase the ridership on Sunday from the current 50,000-60,000 to the normal weekday average of over one lakh,” the official said.