

Smart watches to make Chennai Metro rides easier

Automatic gates will read info off chips embedded in wrist watches

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Standing in line for a ticket and cumbersome recharge processes for travel/trip cards may soon be a thing of the past for commuters of Chennai Metro Rail.

Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) and watch manufacturers Titan have come together to make watches that will allow commuters to just flash their wrist watches at the automatic ticketing gates

and walk into the trains.

According to CMRL officials, they have held discussions with Titan recently and are working to finalise the details of this project.

Prototypes ready

“These watches will have a chip inserted underneath the dial so the gates can detect the chip once a commuter shows it. A few prototypes have been



ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

shown as examples for both genders. But quite a few issues, like the options for

recharging the chips, need to be sorted out,” an official said. The exact details of the technology have also not been revealed.

The cost of these watches is likely to be in the range of ₹1,000-₹1,500, making them affordable to a larger section of people, another official said.

“A set of watches with a host of designs and models will be produced with the chip already inserted in it; it may be available in about six to eight months. But it is unlikely that a chip can be inserted in an existing watch

or new watch that a customer picks up,” another source said.

Other issues to be ironed out include the fact that the working of the chip should not be hampered by embellishments on the watch.

Another source said the glitches in the automatic entry system would need to be sorted out before the smart watch plan was rolled out. At present, besides the CMRL travel and trip cards, commuters can use SBI debit-cum-smart cards to swipe and pay at the stations.