

Metro takes safety measures, may cut down frequency



CLEAN-UP JOB: Metro rail has begun sanitising stations

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After cleaning and disinfecting two major metro stations last weekend, CMRL has started sanitizing all the 32 stations and trains on a daily basis to protect commuters from the novel coronavirus. Metro rail has also instructed its station staff to adopt precautionary measures and spread awareness among passengers.

“We give extra attention to cleaning contact points like handrails at the stations, elevators and escalators. We have been disinfecting all station premises,” a metro rail official said. Last weekend, CMRL began sanitizing the premises of Central and Airport stations that attract passengers from other cities.

It has started conducting monthly maintenance activities like fumigation in the trains on a daily basis apart from spraying disinfectants and manually cleaning the handrails with a chemical approved to be effective against corona virus strains.

The same chemical is used to sanitize trains on the mainline during maintenance, which happens after operational hours. “Maintenance activities like fumi-

gation of trains, which we used to carry out only once a month, is now being done every day. We have also identified another chemical effective against Covid,” a metro rail official said. “We are also sending precautionary measures as text messages to passengers. Dos and Don’ts are put up at all metro stations. Announcements are also regularly made,” the release said.

At the CMRL head office in Koyambedu, staff members have been asked to manually mark their attendance in a register instead of using biometric devices. Large LED screens have been put up at the entrance that play awareness messages.

CMRL officials said they may scale down operations if the daily footfalls drop at the stations drop below one lakh. The daily average ridership has gone down by 5% after educational institutions shut down and companies asked their employees to work from home. Officials said they have seen a drop of around 6,000 in the average daily ridership in the last one week. The average daily patronage has been 1.2 lakh. CMRL operates 35 trains during peak hours and 25 during the non-peak hours.