

Electric autos will be available at Metro stations soon

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Chennai Metro Rail is planning to introduce electric autorickshaws to give passengers a ride till their doorstep from its stations.

It has been about three weeks since services resumed on the 45 km network in the phase-I project. Initially, there were nearly 10,000 commuters travelling but now the number has risen to

20,000 a day. But this is still lower than the pre-COVID-19 traffic of 1.15 lakh commuters a day.

Increasing patronage

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. (CMRL), the traffic could touch peak levels only next year when most professionals return to offices and educational institutions start functioning as usual.

"But we need to gradually start putting back in place facilities to assist passengers to reach their destinations from the stations. So, we have been in talks with a private firm for electric autorickshaws. But this may take some time due to formalities like obtaining permission from the government and registrations," an official said.

Electric autorickshaws are being considered after the

contract with a firm that had been running share cars around the stations was terminated some time ago.

Contractor issues

Officials said the contract had to be terminated as they were unhappy with the way the service was operated, and owing to a few other issues.

"It is important to bring in as many last mile connectivi-

ty options as possible for patronage has to go up. But now, there is an additional responsibility to ensure that there is no crowding in the autorickshaws or share cars," an official said.

For the past week, electric bikes have been available at the Alandur, Thirumangalam and Vadapalani stations. This service may be extended to more stations depending on the response.