

QR-code readers at all metro rail gates by mid-2021

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: With QR-code ticketing facility gaining popularity among commuters, Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL) before mid-2021 will upgrade automatic fare collection gates (AFC) across all 32 stations with QR-code scanners and have in place an integrated system to detect all forms of tickets and tokens.

QR-code enables contactless travel as commuters can purchase tickets through the CMRL app and scan the QR-code they receive in their phones on a code reader at the station. "By June 2021, all AFC gates will have readers that can detect QR-codes. When the foot-



A Prathap

FOR A SAFE COMMUTE: Metro rail is making improvements

fall goes up and more people opt for QR-code tickets, more readers at all gates will prevent unnecessary queues," a metro rail official said. "Once installed, a single gate will be able to scan a

QR-code ticket, smartcard or a token."

At present, only one entry and exit point in stations have QR-code scanners. In another month, all 32 stations will have

at least one QR-code reader at all four entry/exit points.

"We procured the scanners and installed them during the lockdown. We wanted to launch the facility when we resumed operations in September. We will soon begin upgrading all our gates," an official said.

With an average of 632 commuters purchasing QR-code tickets, a total of 19,607 passengers used the facility in October. Officials said they are hopeful that the number of users will go up once IT employees and students, who make up for the majority of metro rail's daily patronage, begin using the service again.

CMRL is also planning to extend QR-code service to make payments at the parking lot. Commuters had been posting complaints on social networking sites that while they purchase QR-code tickets for train ride, they are still forced to buy smartcards to pay for using the station's parking lot.

Despite the risk, tokens will still be in use as many commuters still prefer them because they are mostly one-time passengers who do not want to block their money in a smartcard. Out of the 6.78 lakh passengers who travelled between September 7 and October 15, more than 1.5 lakh passengers purchased tokens.