

Long weekend helps boost Metro ridership and air traffic

Thousands of people returning home to celebrate Pongal push up footfall

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Air traffic and ridership of the Chennai Metro has been soaring the last two days, with thousands returning home for the long weekend and to celebrate Pongal with their families.

Chennai Metro Rail, which was recording nearly 45,000-46,000 passengers this last month, suddenly saw a spike, with nearly 50,000 passengers using it in the last two days. Two stations in particular – Chennai Central and Chennai Airport – have had more passengers.

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL), with nearly 4,700 passengers, Chennai Central saw the highest footfall, followed by Chennai Airport with about 3,600. “The traf-



Festive surge: The Chennai Metro saw nearly 50,000 passengers using it in the last two days. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

fic will drastically drop during the long weekend, and on Monday, we will again see a surge in traffic when people return home. After that, there will be the usual average passenger traffic of 45,000-46,000, with regular office-goers and those travelling to transport hubs like

the airport and the Central station taking the Metro,” an official said.

Stations like Alandur, Thirumangalam, Washermenpet and High Court too saw a marginal increase in ridership, and each had nearly 2,500 passengers taking the Metro these last few days.

Similarly, a higher number of flyers arrived and departed from the Chennai airport in the last few days. From a passenger traffic of 18,000-19,000 people, the airport's footfall rose to 24,000-25,000 in the last two days. Officials of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) said that apart from major cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad, whose flights usually get a good number of passengers, flights to destinations like Madurai, Coimbatore, Bhubaneswar and Jodhpur too were running almost full. “As we are permitting more flights, the traffic has been going up slowly. Since we have a long weekend, we have been seeing a sudden surge in passenger traffic,” an official said.