

Chennai Metro hires 13 transgender persons

On day one, they were happy to interact with commuters

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Thirty-year-old Vinithra Devi, a postgraduate in Economics, used to take home tuitions to make both ends meet until last week. Today, she is a proud employee issuing tickets and answering the queries of the commuters at the New Washermenpet Metro station.

Vinithra Devi is one of the 13 enthusiastic transgender persons working for the Chennai Metro for the first time. "We want to make the best of this opportunity after enduring years of suffering. For someone who felt engulfed in darkness, this feels like a ray of hope. We will cling to it and go forward with pride," she says, with a beaming smile.

Gajakrishnan, 27, who was a State-level cricket player and national-level basketball player, says many attempted to demoralise him. Being jobless, he was exacerbated. "This almost seems surreal. When people



Looking ahead: It is a new beginning for this group of employees working for Chennai Metro. ■ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

look at us and our work, it will encourage and inspire more from our fraternity a great deal," he says.

Bhavani, V. Kanimozhi and S. Bhargavi say that from facing harassment to discrimination, they have seen it all, and now are looking forward to doing this job because they can interact with people directly.

"After this, we are sure many will look up to us. And we will feel satisfied because we are helping and having a

good interaction with the public. We are grateful to Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. and KCIC that hired us," Ms. Bhavani says.

An engineering graduate, Arun Karthick, 26, says he went through years of struggle doing part-time jobs. "From surviving alone to fighting all odds, I feel accomplished to have landed in this job. I only hope people accept us for what we are and not discriminate against us," he says.