

# Metro phase I extension line draws more commuters

Daily passenger traffic has shot up to 85,000 since the inauguration of the line

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Within two weeks of the opening of the new stretch and the subsequent reduction in fares, Metro Rail's daily ridership has risen from 55,000 to nearly 85,000 passengers.

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. (CMRL), after the phase I extension project from Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar was opened last Sunday, the average daily number of passengers rose to 74,000.

On Monday, the reduction in fares came into effect, and the maximum fare became ₹50 from ₹70, with an additional 20% discount for those who bought smart-cards or QR code tickets. "In the last two days, we have witnessed nearly 86,000 passengers a day. We are expecting the ridership to touch one lakh a day very soon," an official said.



**Increase in occupancy:** Officials are hopeful that Metro Rail's passenger traffic will touch 1 lakh soon. ■ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Chennai Central, with nearly 7,000 passengers a day, has been seeing the maximum footfall, followed by 4,500 at the airport and Thirumangalam stations, the officials said.

"In the phase I extension stretch, the Washermenpet and Wimco Nagar stations both get nearly 2,000 passengers a day, which is much higher than what we expect-

ed. We see that many office-goers and college students travel from the northern areas to the central parts of the city. In addition, we have seen a surge in the passenger traffic at the Koyambedu station, with nearly 3,000 passengers a day. This could be because of traders travelling to the Koyambedu market. But we need to do an elaborate study on the passenger

## More trains to run today

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In view of the transport strike, Metro Rail will run trains every five minutes from 7 a.m. till 11 a.m. instead of 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. instead of 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursday, according to a release.

profile. It will help in understanding the traffic we get," another official of the CMRL said.

Recently, last-mile connectivity services, like share autos, have resumed at select stations but they have to be provided at all stations, especially from the airport to places like Chromepet, Pallavaram and Tambaram, the officials added.