

Bicycle sharing will be extended to more areas

CM launches next gen e-bikes under Smart City mission

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Thursday launched e-bikes and next gen bikes to facilitate non-motorised transport along Marina Beach and in various parts of the city.

The bicycle sharing system was proposed to be implemented at a cost of ₹9.5 crore under the Chennai Smart City mission, covering 378 stations and 5,000 smart bikes.

E-bike users have to pay ₹10 for the first 10 minutes and ₹1 for every subsequent minute.

The charges for the next gen bike and the eco-bike are ₹5.5 for the first hour and ₹9.9 for the subsequent half an hour.

At present, 500 e-bikes and 500 next gen bikes are ready for launch in various parts of the city.

"The bicycle sharing system has been implemented at 78 locations with 500 smart bikes in areas such as T. Nagar, Rajiv Gandhi Salai and Marina Beach. We will increase the number of stations to 500, covering all parts of the city, in one year," said an official.

There are three types of bikes – eco-bike, e-bike and next gen bike – in the bicycle



Clean transport: A view of the e-bikes, which were rolled out in Marina Beach on Thursday. * SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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sharing system in Chennai. The bicycles can be hired by smartphone users as only digital payment is accepted through the SmartBike App. The bicycles will be available between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m. every day.

Greater Chennai Corporation officials said the bicycle sharing system had been launched in 14 Metro Rail stations in the city.

Seven new bicycle stations would be set up at St. Thomas Mount, Alandur, Guindy, Mannady, Saidapet, Thousand Lights and Tondiarpet Metro stations shortly.

Post-pandemic slump

At present, on average, about 100 people use the bicycles every day. The number of users had decreased from 500 to 100 after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Officials said they expected at least 8,000 users every day after the launch of the new e-bikes and next gen bikes.

The civic body is planning to create dedicated bicycle lanes for promoting non-motorised transport.