

Dubai Metro commuters can end fast on platforms but not on trains

Commuters are allowed to end their fast on the platforms, but not inside the Metro trains

- By Ashfaq Ahmed, Chief Reporter
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Dubai: Dubai Metro commuters are allowed to end their fast on the platforms during Ramadan, said a top RTA (Dubai Roads and Transport Authority) official.

"It is still not allowed to eat and drink inside the trains but passengers can now do so on the platforms and all other areas of the Metro station," Ramadan Abdullah, Director of Rail Operations at the RTA told *Gulf News* on Tuesday.

He said that the "no eating and drinking" signs had already been removed from Metro stations. Earlier, eating was only allowed in restaurants on the stations' concourses.

He, however, urged commuters to follow local laws and avoid eating and drinking at stations during fasting hours. He said that passengers would be allowed to eat at stations even after Ramadan. RTA inspectors issue a Dh200 fine for eating and drinking while travelling on the trains.

Unhappy

Meanwhile, the RTA has revised operational timings for the Metro, public buses and paid parking areas during Ramadan.

The Metro's operating hours have been extended by two hours and it will run from 6am to 1am instead of until 11pm (from Saturday to Thursday) while it will serve passengers from 2pm to 1am on Fridays. Similarly, the feeder buses serving the Metro stations will also operate from 6am to 1am.

Paid parking zone timings in Dubai during Ramadan have also been revised. They are from 8am to 1pm and from 7pm to midnight. The normal evening shift was from 5pm to 9pm.

"We have revised the timing of public transport including the Metro to provide maximum facilities to our commuters. We want to ensure the availability of public transport at night because lifestyles change during Ramadan as people tend to stay out until late at night," said a senior RTA official.

He said that the revised evening parking timings were intended to ease the pressure on motorists as the movement of the public within markets and business districts during Ramadan moves from the daytime to the period after Iftar.

He said that it was inevitable to take a decision in line with the emirate's commercial activity to ensure the availability of parking space during Iftar.

Many motorists, however, were not happy with the new parking timings during Ramadan.

"It should be free after Iftar because most people stay home or go to mosques for Taraweeh [special Ramadan prayers]," said Mohammad Ameen, a Karama resident.

He said that motorists will end up spending more money on parking during Ramadan due to the extended paid parking times.

Abdul Majid, a resident of Al Majaz in Sharjah, said that extending paid parking times in residential areas could not be justified.

"We can understand parking issues in the commercial areas but the authorities concerned should not extend the paid parking time in residential areas," he said.

Timings

- **Metro:** 6am to 1am (Saturday to Thursday), 2pm to 1am (Fridays)

- **Feeder buses:** 6am to 1am

Paid parking

- **Dubai:** 8am to 1pm, 7pm to 12am (Saturday to Thursday)

- **Dubai Media City:** 8am to 5pm

- **Deira Fish Market:** 8am to 1pm, 7pm to 12 am (Saturday to Thursday and 7pm to 12 am (Fridays)

- **Abu Dhabi:** 9am to 4pm and 9pm to 2am

- **Sharjah:** 8am to 1pm and 7pm to 1am.