

Metro Railway, Kolkata has been declared as a Zone (17<sup>th</sup>) on 29-12-2010 under the Railway Act. It carries more than 6 lakh passengers daily. In the last financial year the increase in the number of passengers was almost 14% and increase in passenger earning 4.82% from the similar period of the previous year which is good indication how it is becoming the principal mode of transport of the city. Now, it is Kolkata's life and part of it.

At the outset, let us recapitulate some facts and figures about the city Kolkata before navigating into the main issue. Kolkata is the main business, commercial & financial hub of Eastern India and the North-eastern States. Once India's prime city, of late, the development of which has lagged far behind the needs of its growing population. The area of Kolkata Municipal Corporation is 185 Sq. Km. And the Kolkata Metropolitan Area spread over 1750 Sq. Km. comprising 157 postal areas in 2006, making it the 13<sup>th</sup> most populous urban city in the world and the 18<sup>th</sup> largest urban agglomeration in the world. The suburban areas of Kolkata metropolitan district incorporate parts of the districts of North 24-Parganas, South 24-Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly & Nadia. The relative antiquity of Kolkata and unplanned growth has further exacerbated the problem of inadequate civic amenities in realizing the magnitude of this problem. Only 6.2% of Kolkata is comprised of roads compared to 20% for comparable metro cities in India. It was realized early that only road transport would not be adequate to meet the growing transport needs of the population and a rail based system for mass rapid transport is the most visible option to address this need. In 1949, The Govt. conceived the idea of building an underground Railway for Kolkata in the face of mass democratic movement. The initiative had to wait for 2 decades when in 1969 the Metropolitan Transport Project was initiated. The master plan prepared by them in 1971 envisaged a network of 97.50 Km. Consisting of three North-South of which there were selected for detailed planning. These three lines were Dum Dum – Tollygunj, Bidhan Nagar – Ramrajatala and Dakshineswar – Thakurpur.

The survey of the project was conducted by M/S. Techno expert of Moscow on agreement between Govt. of India – USSR in 1970.

The project i.e construction of Metro Railways, (Previously MTP rapid Transport System) was sanctioned on June 1, 1972 and the foundation stone was laid by Smt. Indira Gandhi the then Prime Minister of India on December 29<sup>th</sup> 1972. After several hurdles the first Metro Railway project of length 16.45 Km. In the North & South axis of the city between Dum Dum and Tollygunj came into reality with the commissioning of commercial service in the following phases.

**Line No. 1.**

| Station                                            | Date of Commissioned. |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Esplanade- Bhowanipur(Now Netaji Bhavan)           | 24-10-1984            |
| Dum Dum - Belgachia                                | 12-11-1984            |
| Netaji Bhavan-Tollygunj(Now Mahanayak Uttam Kumar) | 29-04-1986            |
| Belgachia - Shuambazar                             | 13-08-1994            |
| Esplanade-Chandni Chowk                            | 02-10-1994            |
| Shyambazar-Girish Park                             | 19-02-1995            |
| Girish Park - Central                              | 27-09-1995            |
| (Full Stretch opened)Mahatma Gandhi Road Station   | 11-02-1996            |
| Tollygunj – Kabisubash (new Garia) 9.7 Km.         | 07-10-2010            |
| DumDum – Noapara (2.54 Km.)                        | 07-07-2013            |