

1,000 keys to three stations of Howrah Maidan-Esplanade stretch handed to Metro Railway authorities

Handing over of the keys had started in 2021 and continued till March 15, said Metro officials

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Some of the keys that Afcons have handed to the Metro authorities

East-West Metro has witnessed a “key” change.

Around 1,000 keys to three stations of the Howrah Maidan-Esplanade stretch of East-West Metro, where commercial services started on March 15, have been handed to the Metro Railway authorities by the construction company, officials said.

The handing over of the keys had started in 2021 and continued till March 15, said Metro officials.

The keys open the doors and shutters of passenger corridors, operational rooms and administrative offices at three stations on the newly operational stretch — Howrah Maidan, Howrah and Mahakaran.

There are hundreds of rooms (many of which house offices), corridors and other areas at the stations whose keys were with Afcons Infrastructures, the company that built the Howrah Maidan-Esplanade stretch of East-West Metro.

“All the keys have been handed to the Metro authorities,” said an official of Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC), the implementing agency of East-West Metro.

According to sources, there are 434 keys to around 210 doors at the Howrah Metro station. All the doors have two or three keys.

The Howrah Metro station is the deepest railway station in India — 30m below the surface — and spread across 50,000sqm.

The Mahakaran station has 288 keys to approximately 130 doors. The Howrah Maidan station has 240 keys to around 120 doors.

“We have formally taken over operational charge of the Howrah Maidan-Esplanade stretch of East-West Metro. The handing over of keys was a formal procedure that has been completed,” said P. Uday Kumar Reddy, general manager, Metro Railway.

The keys for the Howrah Maidan station were the first to be handed to the Metro authorities.

The last bunch of about 400 keys changed hands in phases over the past two months, ending on March 15.

“There is a written format where details of the keys and the number have to be mentioned. The format was filled in and the keys were handed over to the Metro authorities at the stations,” said an official, who was part of the project.

However, even after the handing over of the keys, some of the personnel of Afcons and other agencies will stay back to provide support in case any technical problems crop up, said an official.