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Kolkata to get India's 1st under-river Metro today

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KOLKATA: Over 100 years after an [underwater railway line](#) was proposed between Kolkata and Howrah by a British engineer born in India, trains are set to roll through tunnels under the Hooghly river after PM Narendra Modi throws open Kolkata Metro's Green Line, apart from two others, on Wednesday.

The 4.8km Howrah Maidan-Esplanade stretch of the Green Line that the PM will inaugurate will be India's first under-river transportation tunnel.

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The name of Sir Harley Dalrymple-Hay may not be widely known, but the Birbhum-born engineer, who had dreamt of an underwater railway in Kolkata as far back as 1921, will figure in a presentation on the underwater Metro tunnel made before the PM.

"The under-river tunnel is 13 metres beneath the riverbed and 37 metres (more than 120ft) below the ground surface. There was a chance of running into things like lost anchors or ship wreckage. To avoid surprises, we did four boreholes in the river to study the soil. Fortunately, there were no surprises," said S Paramasivan, MD of

Afcons, the firm that has constructed the under-river section of the Metro line.

The Green Line operates a 9.2km service between Sector V in east Kolkata and Sealdah railway station.

Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation is implementing Rs 10,000-crore project.