

# Metro Rly eyes non-fare biz push, ties up with Bandhan

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**Kolkata:** Following station branding last month, Metro Railway on Monday tied up with city-based Bandhan Bank to rev up its non-fare earnings with an endorsement on its smart cards. Officials believe the smart cards, which are swiped at the automated fare collection (AFC) gates at stations, have a huge advertisement revenue potential owing to its visibility and reach.

Talking about the association, Chandra Shekhar Ghosh, MD and CEO, Bandhan Bank, said, "I am glad Metro Railway chose us to be a part of its first-of-its-kind partnership. Metro is Kolkata's pride. Bandhan Bank was also born on this soil." Metro Railway GM Manoj



Metro senior commercial manager Kaushik Mitra (L) and Bandhan Bank MD & CEO C S Ghosh at the new smart card launch in city

Joshi said, "I extend our best wishes to Bandhan Bank in its endeavour." Metro Railway's senior commercial manager Kaushik Mitra represented the carrier at Monday's event.

The city's "old" Metro, the north-south corridor, which had recorded 6.5 lakh daily footfall before the Covid-19 lockdown in February 2020, is run-

ning on huge losses as only smart card users are allowed to travel in Metro since the resumption of services on September 14. According to a Metro Railway estimate, around one lakh smart card holders are currently availing the country's first underground mass rapid transit system.

Even before the pandemic, for every Rs 100 earned, Metro Railway used to spend around Rs 250. Thus the railway authority has now been eyeing at various non-fare revenue-generating opportunities, including the space on the one side of the smart cards.

In another co-branding exercise launched on October 8 this year, East-West Metro's Salt Lake Stadium station was prefixed with Indian Football Association (IFA).