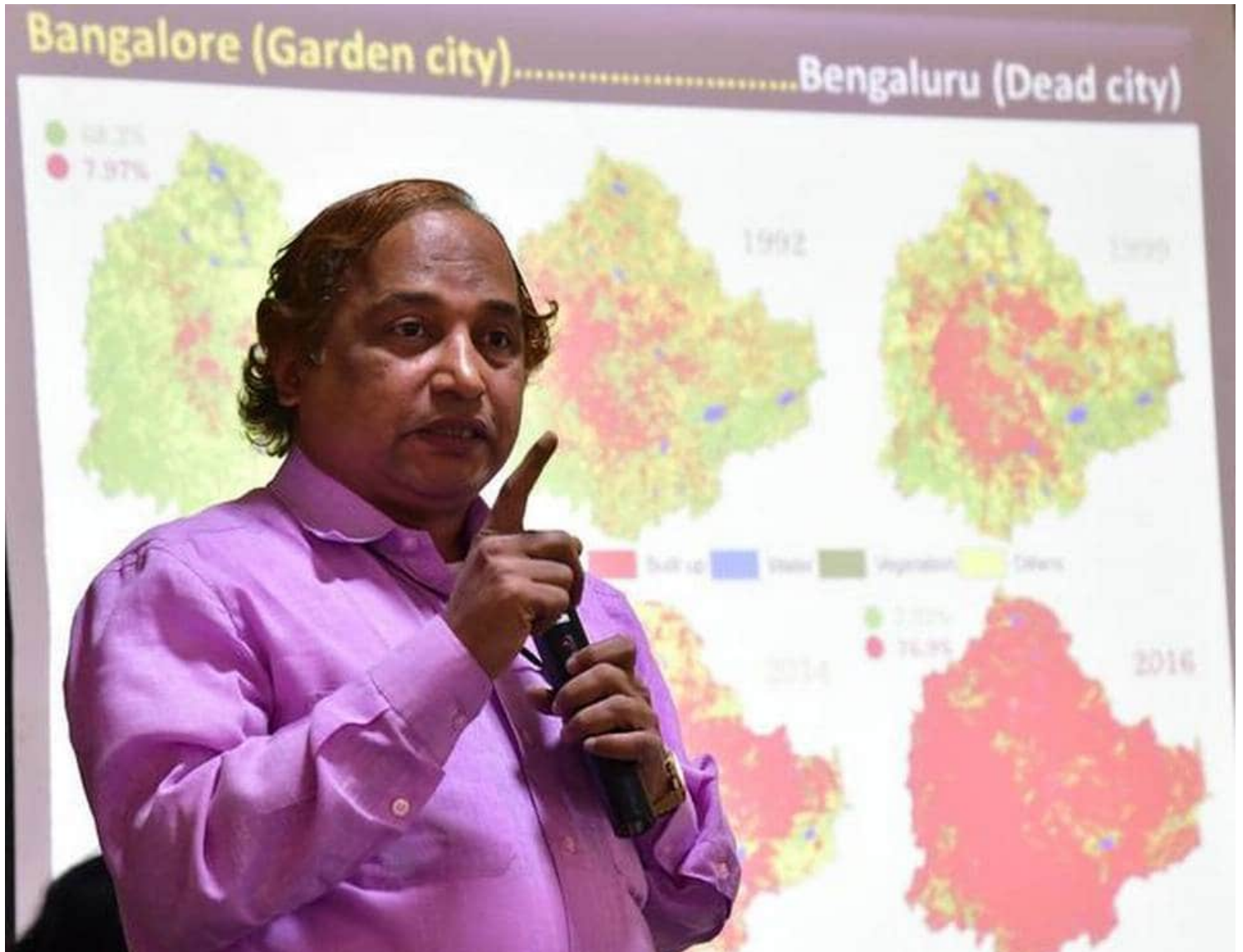


BENGALURU

'Reject unplanned projects'



STAFF REPORTER

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Civic activists say government's developmental priorities are skewed

Say #Beda to unplanned flyover projects to save the city, said civic activists and environment and transport experts at a meet, #SaveBangaluru, organised by several civic groups on Sunday.

They also demanded 'an extensive public consultation' before the government goes ahead with the elevated corridor and steel flyover projects.

"Decisions about these mega projects that impact common people are made behind closed doors, without consulting people," said Shaheen Shasa, an activist from Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike.

Civic groups have started a postcard campaign #JanaraMatuKeli (listen to the people). Dr. TV. Ramachandra, co-ordinator, Energy and Wetlands Research Group, IISc., said the proposed projects would be a burden on the already stressed greenery ratio of the city and make it worse.

The elevated corridor will affect 3,821 trees and the steel flyover another 800 trees. While the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study is under way for the elevated corridor, the government is yet to apply for an assessment of the steel flyover project.

'Focus on public transport'

Dr. Ashish Verma, associate professor, Centre for Infrastructure, Sustainable Transportation and Urban Planning (CiSTUP), IISc., advocates public transport. "Getting more people to shift to public transport is the only solution to solve traffic congestion in the city. Introducing these kind of projects is nonsensical. India is not an oil-rich country. Hence, we should reduce the dependency on fuel." he argued.

Kathyayini Chamaraj, trustee, CIVIC, criticised the allocation of huge resources to projects that only serve a small cross-section of society. "The budget allotment for basic amenities, like health, education and housing, has been neglected. The government has skewed developmental priorities."