



Elevated corridor only for elites: T V Ramachandra

The investment of over Rs 32,000 crore to build the elevated corridor is aimed at creating more space for the cars of the elite even as the poor are forced into the crumbling public transport, IISc Professor T V Ramachandra has said. At a public discourse on the project, the noted environmentalist said experts have already proven that the project is unscientific, as it will only give boost to more private vehicles in the coming years before becoming futile due to increased congestion. "The environmental cost of the project, which affects thousands of trees, is unacceptable. There is no socio-economic survey. About 94% of Bengaluru will turn into the built up area, making it vulnerable to several crises," he said.

According to the professor, the proposed corridor was the product of collusion between consultants and contractors on the one hand, and bureaucrats and politicians on the other. "Only these elites who want to fly between cities and travel in AC cars will benefit from the project. The majority of the population in the city needs a sustainable transport like the metro. But people have been kept out of the entire decision making process," he said. Prof Ashish Verma from the transport engineering cell of the IISc said he presented a 160-page report to the Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara, forecasting the impacts of the project and suggesting alternatives.

"A week later, I saw reports in which the deputy chief minister claimed that they will go ahead with the project," he said, calling upon officials and leaders to take an unbiased view of the proposal. Verma, who has published a scientific analysis of the project, said metro lines on the same route as the proposed corridors will have a capacity 38.3 times more than the road flyovers. "The government should invest in public transport to make it affordable and attractive. Investments should focus on moving the people, not cars or bikes," he said. Transport sector activist Sanjeev Dyamannavar said the Hebbal flyover, which was touted as a panacea for the congestion on airport road, has completely failed the people of north Bengaluru. "There is no footpath, no bus shelter and no service road. In all these plans, it is the common man who ends up as the loser," Dyamannavar said.