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Cisco formula for Bengaluru future

By By Our Correspondent

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Jan. 4: Cisco is working on developing a methodology that will help in planning for the city taking socio-economic and ecological indicators into account, according to member of ABIDe Ashwin Mahesh. Participating in the foundation day celebration of the Centre for Infrastructure, Sustainable Transportation and Urban Planning on Monday, he said Cisco would come out with a formula for management of traffic, heritage structures, security and emergencies in Bengaluru. The Rs 30 lakh project has been funded by the Union government and will see Cisco developing a multi-domain administration platform for cities. The methodology, which will lay emphasis on the use of scientific data, will be submitted to the government authorities by the end of February.

“The government is very bad at collecting data. Most of the data that it has at present is irrelevant. For instance, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) does not have proper statistics on the number of borewells that come under its jurisdiction, although one third of the water in the city is supplied from them. Also, some departments have errors in their data ,” Mr Mahesh said, explaining that once the methodology is developed and put into use, the Union government will invite other states to follow it. Meanwhile, pointing out the various problems in the administration of Bengaluru, T.V. Ramachandra, of the Energy and Wetlands Research Group, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) said the IT capital of the country which is on the international map for its technological prowess, is totally lacking when it comes to environmental literacy.

Mr Ramachandra said indiscriminate disposal of waste, vehicular and industrial pollution and poor design of buildings in the city were contributing to global warming and climate change. “Our architects seem to be good at the copy-paste method, taking their ideas from the West. The built-up area in Bengaluru has gone up by 632 per cent from 1973 to 2009,” he added.

“Lakes have become seasonal, local temperatures have increased and the ground water table has fallen from 80-100 ft to 600 ft Anekal, Bengaluru North, Hoskote and Devanahalli are over exploited,” Dr Ramachandra observed, deploring that only three per cent of the city’s population was environmentally literate. P.P. Iyer, expert with the civil engineering department, felt only participation of people could help save the city’s environment from further degradation.

“We don’t have the luxury to design the environment but we can develop our systems to enhance or minimise the effects on the environment. This will be possible only through participation from the civil society and we are working on creating an initiative for public participation in infrastructure projects,” said Mr Iyer.

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