



Bengaluru will be ‘a dead city in 5 years’

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The unplanned growth of the Garden City of Bengaluru is turning it into an uninhabitable and dreadful megalopolis.

An Indian Institute of Science (IISc) study paints a depressing picture about the future of the city. Prof T V Ramachandra of the Centre for Ecological Sciences terms the wild urbanization as ‘senseless growth’. The city has seen 525% growth in built-up area in the last four decades, a 78% decline in vegetation and a 79% decline in water bodies.

Prof Ramachandra asks: “What’s the point of earning more when the food that you eat is adulterated? As a result of unplanned urbanisation, Bengaluru is going to be an unlivable and dead city in the next five years.”

Over the last decade or so, a lot of the small lakes and trees that surrounded living areas in the city have silently disappeared as a result of the urban sprawl.

Urban designer and expert Ashwin Mahesh puts the blame squarely on the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA). “The BDA has become an agency which facilitates land deals for the benefit of corrupt politicians. People feel it should be closed down,” he said.

It was not very long ago that Bengaluru was the most sought-after place to live in India, because of its salubrious climate, the greenery, the availability of land for building, low crime rate and sedate political life, with a generally homogeneous population. The British made it a garrison city after they defeated Tipu Sultan in 1799.

They became so fond of their small town they they began considering it a piece of little England. Bengaluru was a small provincial town till the 1970s with a modest population.

It was the economic liberalization of the early 1990s that changed the city forever. In the last 25 years, became known as the Silicon Valley of India, with global corporations moving there and attracting thousands of people from across India looking for jobs.

The Deccan Herald quoted former principal chief conservator of forests AN Yallappa Reddy as saying that the government should use 40,000 acres of land reclaimed after evicting squatters for community benefits such as creating lung space, water bodies and playgrounds. “The government is not competent enough to foresee the future implications of the present growth. There is no proper policy on land use and water. Land is being exploited on the whims and fancies of the politicians.” CINEWS