

Bangalore, Tuesday, 25 Oct 2016



Open letter to BBPAG members on steel flyover

Text of the open letter by citizens, sent to Bengaluru Blue Print Action Group members, asking crucial questions on steel flyover project.

News Desk , 13 Oct 2016

From:

Citizens Concerned over the Proposed Steel Flyover

An open letter to:

The Bengaluru Vision Group

Comprising -

NR Narayana Murthy,
Azim Premji,
Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw,
Sachin Bansal,
Ramesh Ramanathan,
Swati Ramanathan,
V Ravichandar,
Kalpana Kar,
Mohandas Pai,
Ramakanth,
K Jairaj,
RK Misra,
BS Patil,
Siddaiah, and
Vivek Menon

cc: CMoK Siddaramaiah, Chairman; Bengaluru Development Minister KJ George, Co-Chairman; et al
Members,

The purpose of your group, was, according to an April 28, 2016, order of the Government of Karnataka:

"... to improve life of Bengalureans by ushering in reforms in infrastructure and systems, resource mobilization, transparent governance, especially e-governance solutions, and increased participation of citizens, organizations and industry members." (Media reports)

As concerned citizens, we humbly put forward these questions:

1) What is the problem that is proposed to be fixed by this steel flyover?

- 2) Is this steel flyover the answer? Is it part of a larger mobility plan? And what are the contours of the larger mobility plan?
- 3) Did you all, severally or individually, discuss and approve of this plan?
- 4) Have you considered alternative ideas like Namma Railu, more buses, dedicated bus lanes, alternative alignments, alternative roads towards the airport, Peripheral Ring Road, surgical fixes of bottlenecks like Cauvery Junction, etc? Why is the steel flyover along this alignment the chosen solution?
- 5) Was due diligence and process followed by the government in this matter?

As Vision Group members, you are perceived as custodians and trustees of citizens' interests - now and in the future. We trust and presume that you have applied your mind on the proposed steel flyover and have assessed the pros and cons of going ahead with it.

We look to your opinion on the proposed steel flyover project. In keeping with your reputation and professionalism, would you classify the process and data analysis followed as the gold standard for evidence-based decision making?

We citizens are anxious and confused because we are in the dark, with no response to RTI queries. There is evident and mounting public concern over this steel flyover proposal and we look to you luminaries to examine the evidence and publicly state your considered opinion on the suitability and sustainability of this project for Bengaluru.

We request you, along with the relevant authorities, to provide full and specific information on the steel flyover proposal.

Currently, given the secrecy surrounding the project, we are anxious and concerned:

- 1) Some experts say it will transfer the congestion problem to the Raj Bhavan/Vidhana Soudha area. If the flyover ends before Hebbal, what traffic problem has been fixed?
- 2) IISc professors have expressed concerns about the design. Press reports say speed will be restricted to 50 km per hour and buses will not be able to use it. There are more questions on the design front.
- 3) This steel flyover proposes to chop down 812 trees in its path, shrink public spaces, erase heritage memories. Has the mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) been made with due public hearings?
- 4) Bengaluru will be the only global city with ugly flyovers in the city centre.

In our view, this is an unacceptable price to pay for whatever dubious benefits may be claimed.

We look forward to hearing from you very soon since we understand a Letter of Intent has been issued to the contractor.

It is your vision that will help shape this city for our future generations and we look up to you for leadership in this matter.

With regards,

Sincerely,

Concerned Citizens.

Prakash Belawadi
Bimal Desai
Dr Sumitra Iyengar
Anand Varadaraj et al

News Desk
13 Oct 2016

URL for this article

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