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## 'Flyovers aren't fixes'

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*Almost 5,000 new vehicles are registered every day, and new infrastructure cannot solve the traffic issue*

**By Saumyangi Yadav**

### **Study finds that building new flyovers can only divert city traffic, not curb it**

New infrastructure projects like flyovers and underpasses are not better approaches and solutions to deal with congestion, a study by the Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) reveals.

The study, called 'gradual sustainability approach for urban transport through subtle measures', was done at five key Metro stations in Delhi to understand the traffic situation on the ground.

Experts say that the same is true for Bengaluru or any other metro city in India. Ashish Verma, Professor, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Convenor, IISc Sustainable Transportation Lab (IST Lab), said that such infrastructural changes only divert traffic from one place to the other.

"In the past 15-20 years, so many flyovers and underpasses have been constructed in the city. Despite that, the traffic problem is only increasing. Bengaluru is still one of the worst cities in terms of traffic index as per the Tom Tom index," he said.

"The thing is that they do not solve the problem from the root, they just shift the traffic congestion and often end up forming another bottleneck by diverting congestion from one place," he explained. He stated that no amount of infrastructure would be sufficient to accommodate the increasing number of private vehicles in the city.

### **'Enough flyovers, focus on public transport'**

"India still hasn't reached the saturation point of private vehicles like developed countries. Here, the car ownership average is about 20 cars per thousand people compared to the US where it is almost 700-800 per thousand people. In cities like Bengaluru, it must be somewhere around 150-200 cars per thousand people," he informed. Almost 5000 new vehicles are registered every day in the city. New infrastructure cannot solve

this problem.

### **What's the alternative?**

The study shows that within a few years of construction, such approaches have only increased the number of personal vehicles on roads and worsened sustainability without reducing congestion.

Instead of investing in huge infra projects, the government should invest more in public transport. Verma said that Bengaluru followed other cities like Delhi and Mumbai in constructing flyovers, but throwing open more infra projects will not fix the traffic issue. Instead, sustainable mobility should be focused on by focusing on cycling lanes and bus services.

### **As per studies, a car takes eight times more space to carry one passenger than public transport modes like buses**

—Ashish Verma, IISc professor

“As per various studies, a car takes eight times more space to carry one passenger than public transport modes like buses. Similarly, two-wheelers take almost five times more space to carry one passenger. These vehicles also add to the tailpipe congestion. Public transport is not only space efficient but also checks air pollution,” he said.

The CRRI report also shows that minor corrections on roads like improving facilities for sustainable modes, no new construction for vehicle users, implementing on-street parking, lane and segregated parking for cycles and e-rickshaws, and better crossing facilities for pedestrians can reduce congestion.