

DH Bengaluru 2040 Summit | Time to focus on implementing congestion tax and paid parking

Health and family welfare minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said that it was important to declutter the city roads and footpaths to ease traffic flow.

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Panelists talk about 'Can Bengaluru beat traffic?' at the Deccan Herald Bengaluru 2040 Summit, on Friday. Credit: Pushkar V

Bengaluru: "Time has come for us to focus on implementing solutions such as congestion tax and paid parking," said Dinesh Gundu Rao, Health and family welfare minister.



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Speaking on the panel 'Can Bengaluru beat traffic' at the DH Bengaluru 2040 Summit on Friday, Rao opined that it was important to declutter the city roads and footpaths to ease traffic flow.

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"Bengaluru is growing at a fast pace and it is important that we come up with solutions to address traffic congestion. We can no longer afford to allow free parking on the roadsides. That apart, we should also think about other measures like asking for proof of space before someone buys a vehicle, imposing higher taxes on people who want to own multiple vehicles," he said.

Echoing the opinion, Dr C N Ashwath Narayan, former Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka, said that simple measures like improving the last mile connectivity and increasing the fleet of metro feeder vehicles could attract more people to use public transport.

"This is as good as disincentivising use of private vehicles. If last mile connectivity is ensured, why would someone want to drive a car," Narayan said.

While promoting public transport is the key, it is also important to have domain experts manage traffic, opined Ashish Verma, Convenor of IISc sustainable transportation lab.

"I suggest that traffic management should be a specialised cadre in civil services like we have for railways or telecom sector. Management of traffic is not the job of our police. No other countries do this," Verma suggested.

Pointing out that Bengaluru is known for its entrepreneurs and tech ecosystem, Gayathri Kuppendra Reddy, Founder, KReate Foundation and NOW Venture Studio pushed for setting up an innovation district.

"If we can provide solutions for the world, we can very well work on solutions for our local problems. We have all the resources. We just need to build a lab and push towards solutions. We can start with a pilot for one area and then scale it up," she said.

Panelists also emphasised on the need to improve walkability, need for better footpaths, and push to increase bus fleet to beat traffic.