

Metro double-decker plan fails key IISc test

By Garima Prasher / Updated: Jun 29, 2026, 06:00 IST

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IISc study challenges viability of Namma Metro’s double-decker plan, claiming it fails key economic benchmarks and could undermine sustainable urban transport objectives

Bengaluru’s double-decker project under Namma Metro Phase 3 does not meet the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs’ (MoHUA) evaluation criteria for social and economic

impact. To gain Central approval, any project requires an Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) of at least 14%. However, a detailed economic and environmental assessment of the project by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) shows that the EIRR for the entire project is just 5.45%. The EIRR for BMRCL’s investment in the double-decker project is 9.07%.

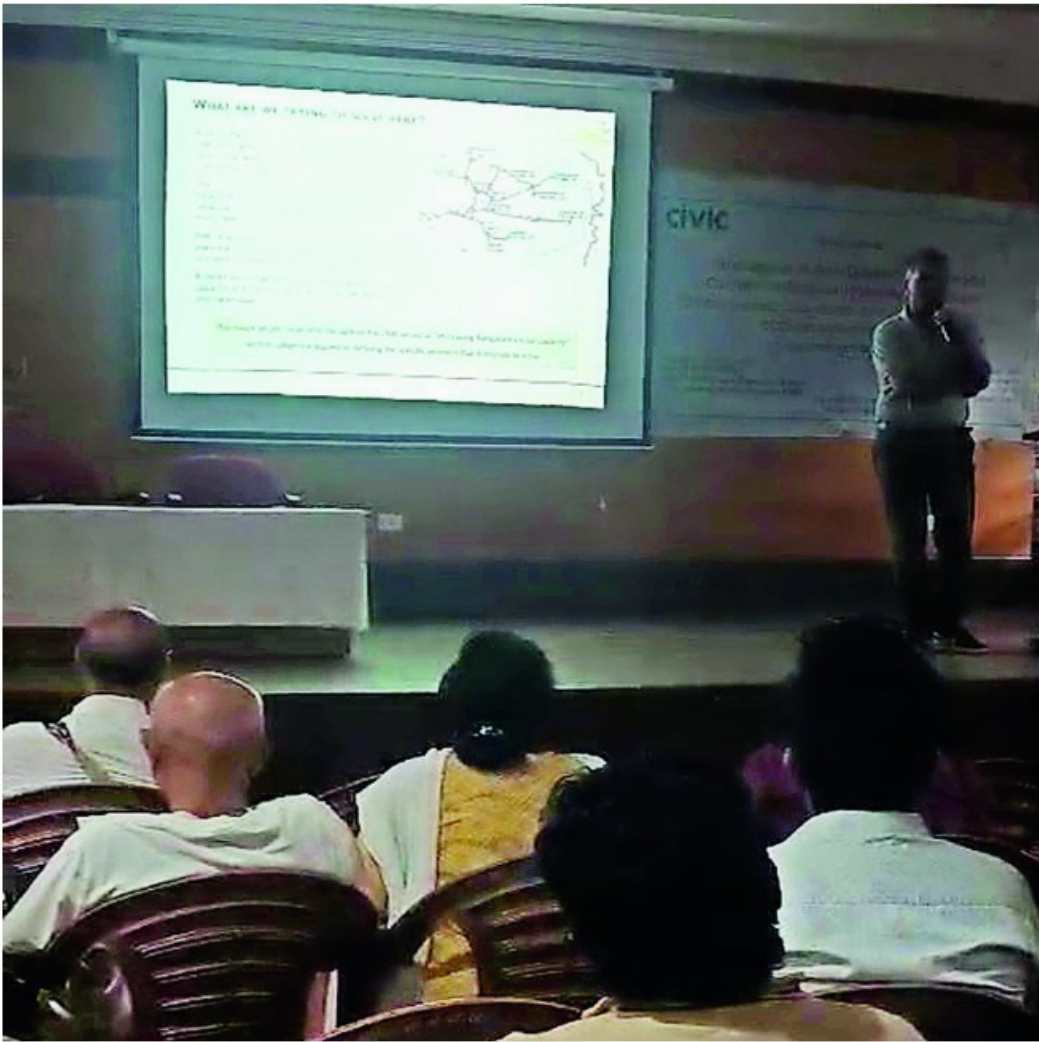
This analysis stands in stark contrast to a draft report produced by PSU RITES Ltd. In its report, released nearly a month ago, RITES stated that the EIRR of the entire 44.65-kilometre project would be 15.9%, exceeding MoHUA’s 14% benchmark. The assessment was carried out by Professor (Dr) Ashish Verma, Convenor of the IISc Sustainable Transportation Lab, and its findings were presented at a public meeting held at Gandhi Bhavan on Sunday.

The study evaluates the project using transport demand projections for 2041, comparing a Metro-only (business-as-usual) scenario with one incorporating the proposed double-decker corridor.

Public transport use to decline

According to the study, adding the double-decker corridor would reduce, rather than improve, public transport usage. It projects that daily Metro ridership on the Phase 3 corridors would decline from 8.09 lakh passengers in the Metro-only scenario to 7.98 lakh passengers if the double-decker corridor is introduced.

The analysis also forecasts a decline in the combined mode share of buses and the Metro, while the share of private vehicles is expected to increase. “This outcome contradicts the fundamental objective of Metro investment, which is to increase the mode share of public transport and reduce private vehicle use,” Professor Verma said while presenting the study.



Experts present IISc findings challenging Bengaluru’s double-decker Metro proposal at seminar

Higher fuel consumption and emissions

The study estimates that the double-decker corridor would increase vehicle travel, leading to over 7,000 litres of additional fuel consumption and fuel costs exceeding Rs 6.45 lakh per day. It also projects a rise in emissions, including carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and PM2.5. The report further estimates that the double-decker component would raise BMRCL’s Phase 3 capital cost by Rs 2,863.53 crore due to larger piers, deeper foundations, elevated stations and added integration infrastructure. Professor Verma said these costs offer no public transport benefit while imposing a long-term financial burden on BMRCL and the State Government.

Policy and planning concerns

The IISc study reviewed the MoUs and sanction letters for Bengaluru Metro Phases 1, 2, 2A and 2B, as well as Pune Metro Phase 1, and argued that the proposed double-decker corridor violates conditions for centrally approved Metro projects. It said the project encourages private vehicle use, weakens multimodal integration, raises costs beyond the approved DPR, reduces pedestrian access and promotes car-oriented development. The report also noted that the corridor is absent from Bengaluru’s Comprehensive Mobility Plan and claimed no Central approval was obtained for the major change in scope. Professor Verma said the study was submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in January, while residents of Indiranagar and JP Nagar presented case studies highlighting the project’s local impact.

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