

The city's new international airport is taking off. Suddenly, the volume of traffic on the arterial Bellary Road has increased. **Praveen Sood**, Addl Commissioner of Police (Traffic), bears the burden of ensuring a smooth flow to the airport. He shares some plans, in this chat with **B S Manu Rao**

Now that the Devanahalli airport is taking off, what plans do you have to manage traffic on the main roads leading to it?

Now, the directions of traffic flow in some parts of the city are reversed. Almost 10,000 vehicles that used to go to the HAL airport from different parts of the city will now move to the Devanahalli airport. Similarly, the traffic that was using the Outer Ring Road will move the other way. This means a change in traffic pattern. We are realigning the traffic police force according to the situation.

There are some challenges we will face. The road from High Grounds to Mekhri Circle has been widened and there is no problem. The BDA junction surface pass is ready too. However, there may be minor hiccups as we need to reverse things done over the last three months. People need to get used to the changed directions. But things will settle down in 24 to 48 hours.

Between Mekhri Circle and Hebbal Flyover the road widening that is on will take more time to be completed. This is a pressure point. Even before the new airport be-

'We are ready for the expected traffic...'



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came operational, this stretched would get choked. Here, we will keep pushing traffic slowly.

What are the safety measures being put in place?

I keep stressing, time is not

the only issue. Safety is a major factor. You not only need to reach the airport, you have to get there safely. Also, there

is the pedestrian movement to be taken into account. There is huge pedestrian movement at the Amruthahalli and Kodigehalli junctions. Thousands cross over every hour. We have therefore put up signals at the Kodigehalli, Amruthahalli and Bagalur junctions. These are short signals of 120 seconds each. This is needed as there are many colonies on either side of the main road and pedestrians need to cross over.

There is a focus on these junctions. They have four direction roads and service roads. Traffic can be chaotic here. We are working on this and in a month we will bring about some discipline.

There are some other issues too. These junctions were also bus stands. Now we need to move the bus stand further up the road to manage traffic here. Bus drivers and commuters have to get used to the changes. We also have to regulate traffic at the trumpet changeover. All these are pressure points.

We will do our best with the infrastructure available. If at places the road is only two-lane, we cannot do anything about it. But we are ready for the expected traffic.

What happens at peak hours?

Most flights take off in the early morning hours - between 5 and 9 am. This is not the usual peak hour so it won't be a pressure point. Evenings will see most landings and take-offs between 5 and 9 pm. That will be peak time. It is difficult to quantify how many vehicles will be on the roads then.

Traffic finds its own level. There are other routes too and people will use them. People going to the airport from Bangalore South and East need not come to the Hebbal Flyover. From the Hennur Junction they can go to the Bagalur Cross. It is a non-stop drive. There are such alternate routes too.

What about manning traf-