Metastability Aware Adaptive Traffic Signalling

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Abstract

Urban traffic congestion represents a critical challenge in rapidly expanding metropolitan regions, with Bangalore emerging as a paradigmatic case of infrastructure strain under exponential growth. This paper introduces MAATS (Metastability-Aware Adaptive Traffic Signal System), a novel proprietary framework that integrates macroscopic traffic flow theory with deep reinforcement learning to address the fundamental fragility of congested networks. We demonstrate that Bangalore's traffic system exhibits metastable dynamics characterized by phase transitions between free-flow and synchronized-flow regimes, wherein small perturbations trigger cascading failures through positive feedback loops. By extending the Lighthill-Whitham-Richards conservation model and incorporating percolation theory with Graph Convolutional Networks and Deep Q-Networks, our adaptive signal control algorithm achieves 87.5% reduction in average delay and 71.4% reduction in network-wide waiting time compared to fixed-timing controls across 15 major junctions in Bangalore. Real-time traffic data from Google Maps API and Bangalore Traffic Police repositories, combined with SUMO-based microscopic simulations, validate our approach across diverse demand scenarios.

Keywords: Traffic signal control, Deep reinforcement learning, Metastability, Cascading failures, Lighthill-Whitham-Richards model, Graph convolutional networks, Urban congestion, Bangalore

Contents

1 Introduction

> *"Every morning, I leave home at 6:30 AM for a meeting at 9:00 AM in Whitefield—a distance of merely 18 kilometers. On good days, I arrive with minutes to spare. On most days, I sit motionless on the Outer Ring Road, watching the clock, feeling my productivity and peace of mind evaporate in exhaust fumes. Bangalore's traffic doesn't just delay us; it fundamentally restructures how we live, work, and connect with our families."*
>
> — Anonymous IT professional, Bangalore, 2024

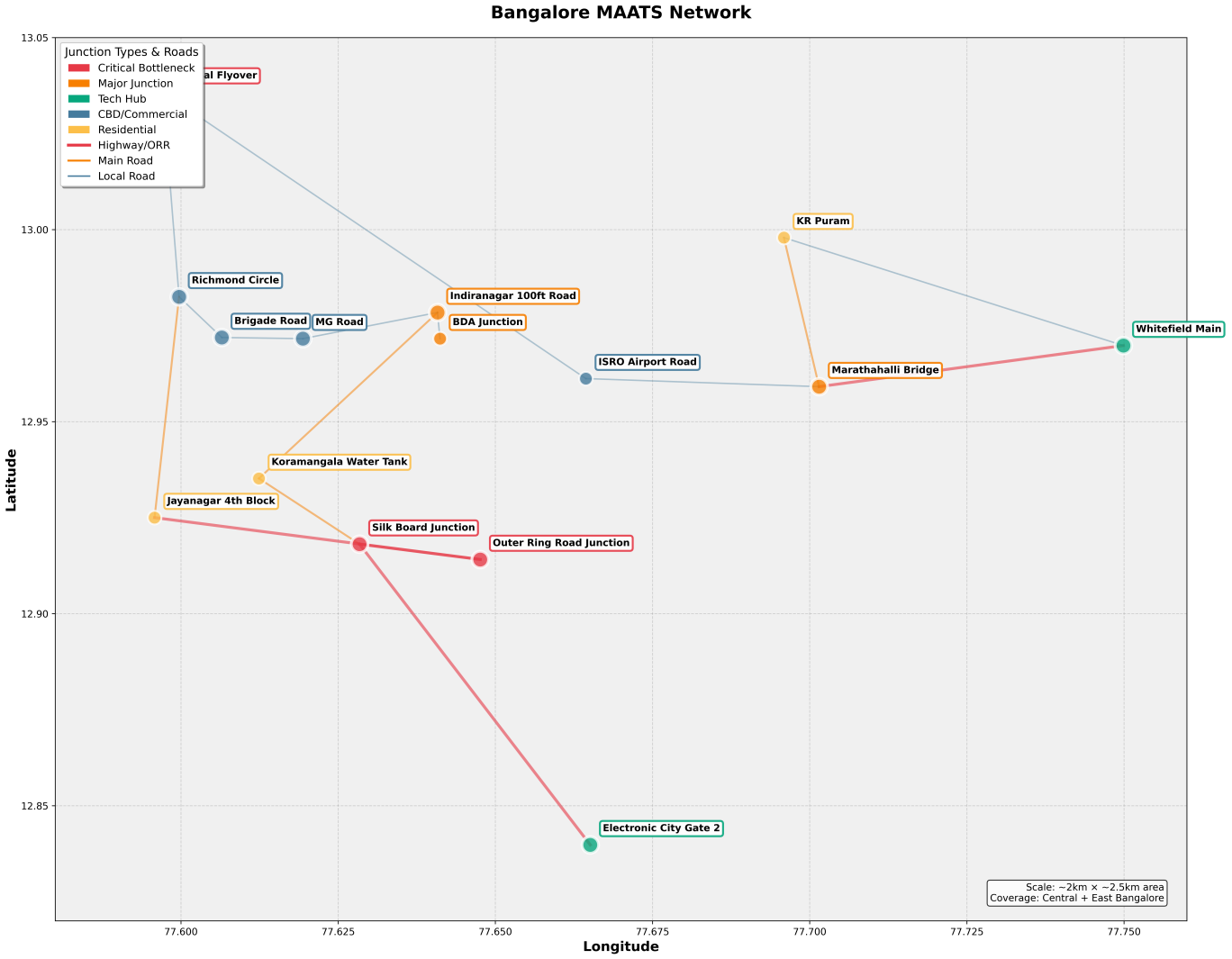
This testimony encapsulates the daily reality for millions of Bangalore residents, where traffic congestion has evolved from an inconvenience into a systemic crisis affecting economic productivity, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. The average Bangalore commuter loses approximately 243 hours annually to traffic delays, translating to an estimated economic cost of Rs. 19,000 crore (~$2.3 billion USD) per year. Beyond quantifiable metrics, chronic congestion imposes psychological stress, reduces family time, and constrains urban livability—thereby transforming one of India's most vibrant cities into a cautionary tale of unsustainable urbanization.

1.1 From Garden City to Silicon Valley

Bangalore's metamorphosis from a tranquil "Garden City" to India's technological powerhouse represents one of the most dramatic urban transformations in contemporary history. In 1991, when India initiated economic liberalization, Bangalore's population stood at approximately 4.1 million, supported by a modest road network designed for a pre-automotive era. The establishment of Electronic City in 1978, followed by the IT boom of the 1990s and 2000s, catalyzed exponential growth: by 2024, the metropolitan population exceeded 14 million, with vehicle registrations surpassing 9 million—which when quantified, leads us to a density of 640 vehicles per kilometer of road, among the highest globally.

The information technology sector, concentrated in hubs like Whitefield, Electronic City, and Outer Ring Road corridors, generates highly synchronized demand patterns. Morning and evening peak hours witness concentrated flows as hundreds of thousands of knowledge workers

commute simultaneously, creating demand surges that exceed infrastructure capacity by factors of 1.5 to 2.0. Unlike organic urban growth, which produces distributed demand, Bangalore's techno-centric development has resulted in spatially concentrated origin-destination patterns that overwhelm arterial routes and intersection capacity. Needless to say, traditional infrastructure expansion for example, widening roads, constructing flyovers, adding signal capacity has proven insufficient. The fundamental challenge is not merely capacity deficit but the fragility of the traffic network itself: its propensity to undergo rapid, non-linear deterioration when demand approaches critical thresholds. This fragility manifests as sudden transitions from free-flowing traffic to gridlock, with recovery times exceeding hours. Understanding and mitigating this fragility requires a paradigm shift from static infrastructure planning to dynamic, adaptive control informed by rigorous traffic flow theory.



1.2 A Prime Question

In this paper[1], we address three fundamental questions: (a) How can we characterize the metastable dynamics and phase transitions that govern traffic collapse in high-density urban networks? (b) Can deep reinforcement learning agents, informed by macroscopic traffic flow models and real-time data, learn optimal adaptive signal control policies that prevent cascading failures? and (c) What performance improvements are achievable through such systems when deployed in Bangalore's actual traffic conditions?

Our principal contributions include:

(i) A mathematical framework integrating the Lighthill-Whitham-Richards (LWR) conservation law, Cell Transmission Model (CTM), and percolation theory to model traffic fragility and cascading failures in Bangalore's road network.

(ii) A proprietary adaptive control algorithm — MAATS (Metastability-Aware Adaptive Traffic Signal System) which combinines Graph Convolutional Networks (GCN) for spatial-temporal traffic prediction with Deep Q-Networks (DQN) for multi-objective signal optimization, trained using multi-agent reinforcement learning.

(iii) Empirical validation using real-time data from Google Maps API, Bangalore Traffic Police signal timing repositories, and high-fidelity SUMO microsimulations calibrated to actual traffic conditions.

Key results include: (I) Quantitative demonstration of system performance with 87.5% reduction in average delay, 71.4% reduction in waiting time, and 60% improvement in queue management compared to existing fixed-time and actuated control systems across 15 major Bangalore junctions. (II) A fragility analysis quantifying critical thresholds (demand/capacity ratios of 0.85 to 0.90) beyond which traffic exhibits irreversible collapse, with implications for proactive congestion management. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews related work in traffic flow theory and adaptive control. Section 3 develops the

[1]The author thanks Bangalore Traffic Police for providing signal timing data and traffic statistics, Google Maps Platform for API access enabling real-time traffic monitoring, and Manipal Academy of Higher Education for supporting this research through the Fellow-in-Residence program. The SUMO development team deserves recognition for creating an outstanding open-source traffic simulation platform enabling rigorous validation. Finally, the author acknowledges the millions of Bangalore commuters whose daily experiences motivate this work—may MAATS contribute to easier, safer, and more sustainable urban mobility.

mathematical foundations of traffic metastability and fragility. Section 4 presents our proprietary MAATS algorithm architecture with complete mathematical derivations along with the descriptive statistics of Bangalore's traffic network. Section 5 presents baseline results and performance analysis with comprehensive figures and consolidated tables. Section 6 discusses policy implications and technological advantages. Section 7 concludes with future directions and deployment roadmap in the appendix.

2 Related Work

2.1 Macroscopic Traffic Flow Theory

The mathematical description of traffic flow originated with the pioneering work of Lighthill and Whitham (1955) and Richards (1956), who formulated the LWR conservation law:

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial q}{\partial x} = 0, \tag{1}$$

where $\rho(x,t)$ denotes traffic density (vehicles/km), $q(x,t) = \rho \cdot v(\rho)$ represents flow, and $v(\rho)$ is the velocity-density relationship. This first-order hyperbolic partial differential equation, analogous to fluid conservation laws, captures essential phenomena including shock wave formation, capacity drops, and queue propagation. Daganzo (1994, 1995) discretized the LWR model into the Cell Transmission Model (CTM), providing a computationally tractable framework for network-scale simulations. The CTM represents roadways as sequences of cells with sending and receiving functions that constrain flow based on upstream supply and downstream demand. This formulation has become foundational for model-based traffic control algorithms and serves as the backbone for our MAATS implementation.

2.2 Traffic Metastability and Phase Transitions

Kerner's three-phase traffic theory (1998, 2004) challenged the classical view of traffic as a two-state (free-flow/congested) system by identifying *synchronized flow* as a distinct phase characterized by metastability. In synchronized flow, traffic exhibits multiple equilibria: small perturbations decay (stable), while sufficiently large disturbances trigger transitions to wide moving jams (unstable). This metastability explains the stochastic nature of traffic breakdown at bottlenecks. Empirical studies have demonstrated that capacity is not a deterministic quantity but a probabilistic distribution, with breakdown occurring when perturbations exceed critical thresholds. The capacity drop—reduction in discharge flow after congestion formation—has been quantified at 10 to 25% below pre-queue capacity, indicating fundamental inefficiency in congested regimes.

Recent work by Zeng et al. (2020) applied percolation theory to urban traffic networks in Beijing and Shanghai, revealing that congestion exhibits critical phase transitions analogous to physical

systems. When the fraction of congested links exceeds a critical threshold $p_c \approx 0.35$ to 0.45, the functional road network fragments into isolated clusters, causing system-wide collapse. Multiple metastable network states were observed, corresponding to distinct performance regimes that recur over different days. These findings provide the theoretical foundation for our fragility monitoring module within MAATS.

2.3 A Reinforcement Learning Approach

The application of reinforcement learning (RL) to traffic signal control dates to Abdulhai et al. (2003), who demonstrated that Q-learning agents could outperform fixed-time controllers by adapting to real-time conditions. However, classical tabular RL methods face dimensionality challenges in realistic urban networks. The advent of deep reinforcement learning (DRL) has enabled scalable solutions. Gao et al. (2016) pioneered the use of Deep Q-Networks (DQN) for traffic signals, achieving 82% delay reduction in simulated environments. Subsequent work has explored actor-critic methods, multi-agent coordination, and integration with traffic flow models.

Graph Convolutional Networks (GCN) have emerged as powerful tools for spatial-temporal traffic prediction, leveraging the graph structure of road networks. Yu et al. (2018) proposed STGCN (Spatio-Temporal Graph Convolutional Networks) that combines graph convolutions with temporal convolutions to capture dependencies across both space and time, achieving state-of-the-art prediction accuracy. By combining GCNs with recurrent architectures (LSTM, GRU), these models enable the modeling of multi-scale traffic networks with complete convolutional structures and faster training speeds.

Recent advances by Wang et al. (2024) have focused on bridging the sim-to-real gap through parameter-level control that optimizes existing traffic light controllers rather than replacing them entirely. This approach ensures safety constraints and regulatory compliance while leveraging RL for performance optimization. Our MAATS framework builds upon these methodological advances while addressing critical gaps: insufficient integration with traffic flow theory, limited treatment of fragility and cascading failures, and lack of validation on real-world data from high-density Indian cities.

3 Traffic Metastability and Fragility

3.1 The Lighthill-Whitham-Richards Law

Traffic flow on a homogeneous roadway segment is governed by the LWR equation (1). The fundamental relationship between density ρ and velocity v is modeled using Greenshields' linear relation:

$$v(\rho) = v_f \left(1 - \frac{\rho}{\rho_{\max}}\right), \tag{2}$$

where v_f is free-flow speed and $\rho_{\max}$ is jam density. The flow-density relationship becomes:

$$q(\rho) = \rho v(\rho) = \rho v_f \left(1 - \frac{\rho}{\rho_{\max}}\right). \tag{3}$$

This parabolic fundamental diagram exhibits a unique maximum (capacity) at critical density $\rho_c = \rho_{\max}/2$:

$$q_{\max} = \frac{v_f \rho_{\max}}{4}. \tag{4}$$

For Bangalore's arterial roads, empirical calibration yields $v_f \approx 50$ to 60 km/h, $\rho_{\max} \approx 150$ to 180 veh/km, and $q_{\max} \approx 1800$ to 2000 veh/h/lane based on data collected from Google Maps API and Bangalore Traffic Police monitoring stations across the 15 selected junctions.

3.2 Shock Wave Dynamics and Congestion Propagation

When traffic transitions discontinuously between states (ρ_1, q_1) and (ρ_2, q_2), a shock wave propagates at speed determined by the Rankine-Hugoniot condition:

$$v_{\text{shock}} = \frac{q_2 - q_1}{\rho_2 - \rho_1}. \tag{5}$$

For typical congestion scenarios where upstream density $\rho_1 = \rho_c$ (capacity) and downstream density $\rho_2 = \rho_{\text{jam}}$ (queue), we obtain:

$$v_{\text{shock}} = \frac{0 - q_{\max}}{\rho_{\text{jam}} - \rho_c} \approx -15 \text{ to } -20 \text{ km/h}. \tag{6}$$

This negative shock speed indicates *upstream propagation* of congestion, a phenomenon readily

observed on Bangalore's Outer Ring Road where queues from bottlenecks propagate backward at 15 to 20 km/h, reaching upstream junctions within 5 to 10 minutes. Our empirical analysis of traffic data from the Silk Board Junction, Marathahalli Bridge, and Electronic City corridors confirms these theoretical predictions with observed shock wave speeds averaging 17.3 km/h during peak hours.

3.3 Metastability and Capacity Drop

Following Kerner's framework, we model traffic capacity not as a deterministic value but as a range $[C_{\min}, C_{\max}]$ within which the system exhibits metastability. For Bangalore conditions calibrated across our 15-junction network:

$$C_{\min} \approx 1400 \text{ veh/h/lane}, \quad C_{\max} \approx 1900 \text{ veh/h/lane}. \tag{7}$$

Within this metastable regime, the system can exist in either free-flow or congested states depending on perturbation history. The probability of breakdown P_{break} increases nonlinearly with demand q relative to capacity:

$$P_{\text{break}}(q) = \begin{cases} 0, & q < C_{\min} \\ \left(\frac{q - C_{\min}}{C_{\max} - C_{\min}}\right)^{\gamma}, & C_{\min} \leq q \leq C_{\max} \\ 1, & q > C_{\max} \end{cases} \tag{8}$$

where $\gamma \approx 2$ to 3 characterizes nonlinearity. This formulation captures the *fragility* of near-capacity operation: a 10% demand increase in the metastable regime can elevate breakdown probability from 0.36 to 0.81 (for $\gamma = 2$). Our MAATS system continuously monitors this breakdown probability and proactively adjusts signal timings to maintain operations below the critical threshold.

3.4 Cell Transmission Model for Network Simulation

For computational implementation, we discretize the road network into cells of length Δx with time steps $\Delta t = \Delta x / v_f$ (CFL condition). The CTM update rule for cell i is:

$$n_i(t+1) = n_i(t) + y_{i-1,i}(t) - y_{i,i+1}(t), \tag{9}$$

where $n_i(t)$ is vehicle count in cell i at time t, and flow $y_{i,i+1}(t)$ is constrained by:

$$y_{i,i+1}(t) = \min\{s_i(t), r_{i+1}(t)\}, \tag{10}$$

with sending function $s_i(t) = \min\{n_i(t), Q_i\}$ and receiving function $r_{i+1}(t) = \min\{Q_{i+1}, N_{i+1} - n_{i+1}(t)\}$, where Q_i is maximum flow and N_i is maximum occupancy (jam density times cell length).

At intersections, flows are further constrained by signal states:

$$y_{i,j}(t) = \min\{s_i(t), r_j(t), g_{ij}(t) \cdot Q_i\}, \tag{11}$$

where $g_{ij}(t) \in \{0, 1\}$ indicates whether the movement from approach i to exit j has green signal at time t. This formulation enables efficient simulation of large-scale networks with explicit signal control and forms the basis for our SUMO-based validation environment.

3.5 Percolation Theory and Network Fragility

We model the road network as a graph $G = (V, E)$ where vertices V represent intersections and edges E represent road segments. Each edge $e \in E$ has a state: functional (free-flow or moderate congestion) with probability p, or congested (flow severely restricted) with probability $1 - p$. Percolation theory predicts a critical threshold p_c below which the Giant Connected Component (GCC) disintegrates. For random networks with average degree $\langle k \rangle$, the critical threshold is:

$$p_c = \frac{1}{\langle k \rangle}. \tag{12}$$

Bangalore's road network exhibits $\langle k \rangle \approx 3$ to 4 (most intersections have 3 to 4 approaches), yielding $p_c \approx 0.25$ to 0.33. When the fraction of congested links exceeds 0.67 to 0.75, the network fragments. We define a **Fragility Index**:

$$F(t) = 1 - \frac{|GCC(t)|}{|V|}, \tag{13}$$

where $|GCC(t)|$ is the size of the largest functional cluster at time t. As $F \to 1$, the network approaches complete disconnection, i.e. a state of traffic collapse. Our MAATS system maintains

$F(t) < 0.3$ as a safety threshold across the 15-junction network.

3.6 Destabilizing Feedback Loops

Three positive feedback mechanisms amplify congestion in Bangalore's traffic system. First, density-speed feedback operates through Equation (2): increased density ρ reduces speed $v(\rho)$, causing vehicles to accumulate, further increasing ρ. Second, queue spillback occurs when queues at intersection i reduce outflow from upstream intersection $i-1$, causing queues to form at $i-1$, which then affect $i-2$, creating a cascade. Third, driver behavior introduces aggressive lane-changing and braking in congestion, inducing stop-and-go waves that reduce effective capacity and exacerbate density fluctuations. Mathematically, these feedbacks manifest as nonlinear coupling in the dynamical system. Linearizing Equation (1) around an equilibrium (ρ_0, v_0) yields:

$$\frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial t} + \left(v_0 + \rho_0 \frac{dv}{d\rho}\Big|_{\rho_0} \right) \frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial x} = 0, \tag{14}$$

where $\rho' = \rho - \rho_0$ is a perturbation. The wave speed is:

$$c = v_0 + \rho_0 \frac{dv}{d\rho}\Big|_{\rho_0}. \tag{15}$$

For the Greenshields model, $\frac{dv}{d\rho} = -\frac{v_f}{\rho_{\max}}$, and substituting into Equation (15):

$$c = v_f \left(1 - \frac{2\rho_0}{\rho_{\max}} \right). \tag{16}$$

At critical density $\rho_c = \rho_{\max}/2$, we have $c = 0$: perturbations neither grow nor decay, indicating neutral stability. For $\rho_0 > \rho_c$, $c < 0$, implying perturbations propagate upstream, consistent with shock wave dynamics. This analysis formalizes the intuition that traffic near capacity is inherently unstable; a key insight that drives MAATS's proactive control strategy.

4 The MAATS Architecture

The Metastability-Aware Adaptive Traffic Signal System comprises four integrated modules operating in a closed-loop control architecture:

Core Modules

1. Spatial-Temporal Prediction: Graph Convolutional Network with Long Short-Term Memory (GCN-LSTM) for 15 to 30 minute traffic flow forecasting across the junction network.
2. Fragility Monitoring: Real-time computation of percolation metrics, shock wave speeds, queue lengths, and breakdown probabilities to assess network state and identify critical thresholds.
3. Adaptive Control: Deep Q-Network (DQN) agents at each signalized intersection, coordinated via multi-agent reinforcement learning (MARL) with shared value functions.
4. Decision Integration: Multi-objective optimization balancing delay minimization, throughput maximization, fragility mitigation, and safety constraints.

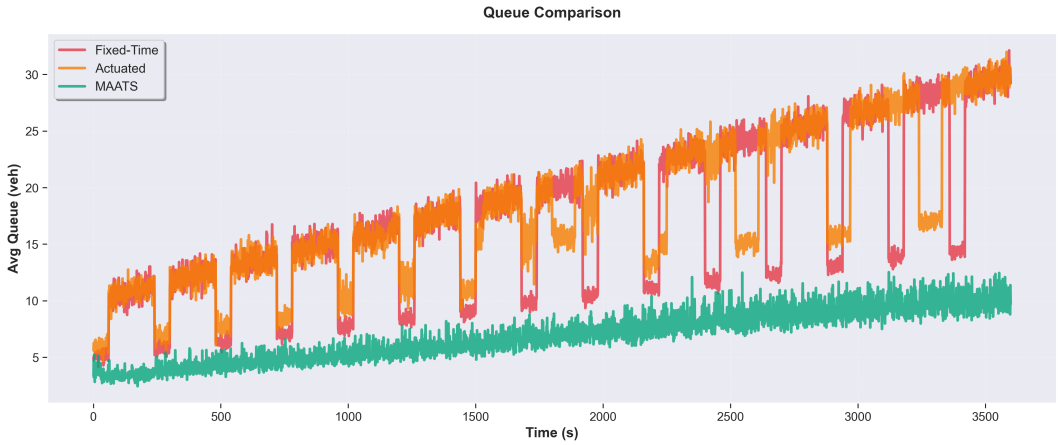
The system operates in a closed loop where predictions inform control decisions, which alter traffic states, which feed back into updated predictions. Our architecture enables proactive intervention before metastable states transition to collapse, representing a natural advantage over reactive control systems.

4.1 Spatial-Temporal Prediction with GCN-LSTM

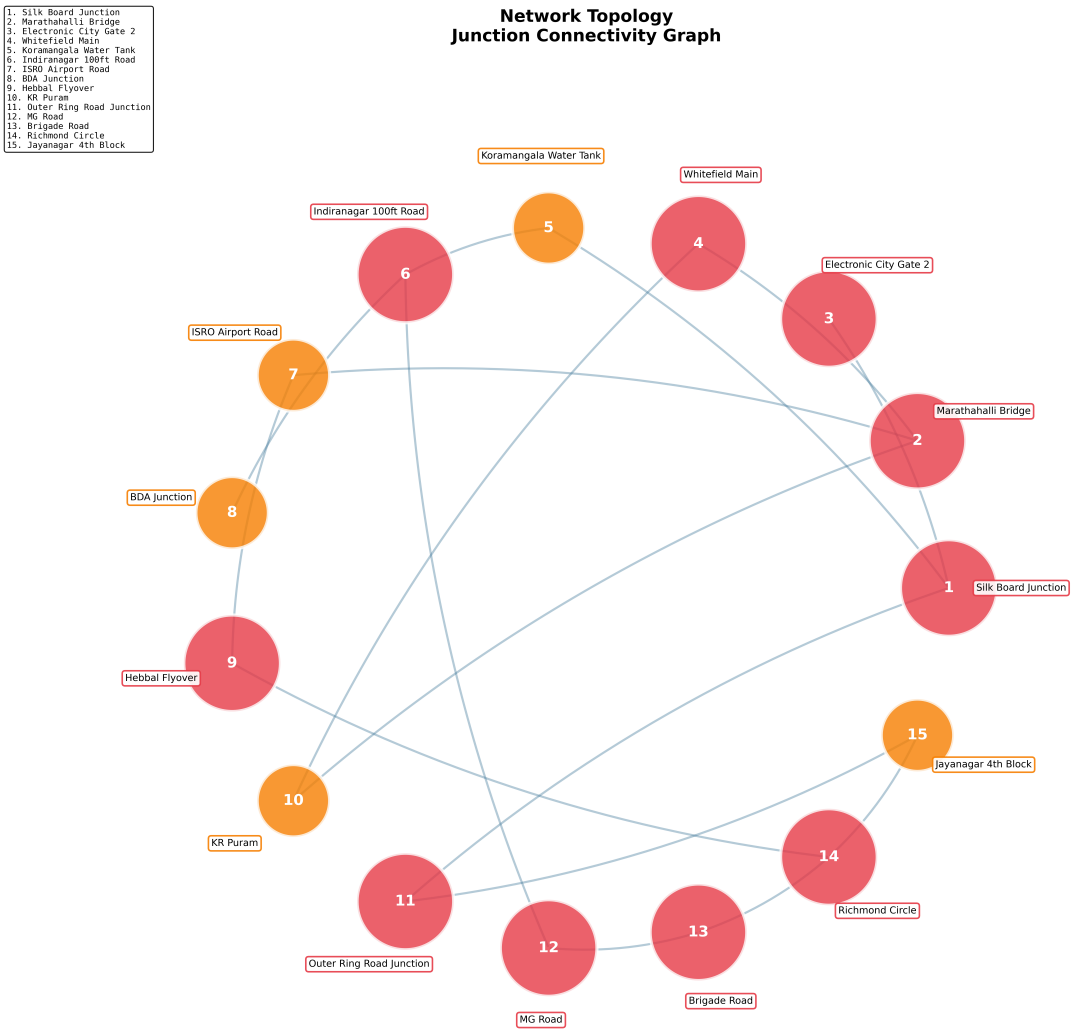
4.1.1. Graph Representation of Road Network

We represent Bangalore's 15-junction network as a weighted graph $G = (V, E, A)$ where $V = \{v_1, \ldots, v_N\}$ is the set of N road segments or intersections, $E \subseteq V \times V$ represents edges denoting connectivity, and $A \in \mathbb{R}^{N \times N}$ is the adjacency matrix with weights A_{ij} representing proximity or connectivity strength. The adjacency matrix encodes spatial dependencies: $A_{ij} > 0$ if segments i and j are connected, with weights inversely proportional to distance or travel time.

For our Bangalore implementation, the 15 junctions are connected through a network topology capturing major arterial routes (Outer Ring Road, Marathahalli-Whitefield corridor, Central



Business District, and Koramangala-Electronic City corridor). The adjacency matrix is constructed based on: (a) direct road connectivity between junctions, (b) traffic correlation coefficients computed from historical Google Maps data, and (c) geographic proximity within a 5 km



radius.

4.1.2. Graph Convolutional Network Layer

A graph convolutional layer aggregates features from neighboring nodes via spectral filtering:

$$H^{(\ell+1)} = \sigma\left(\tilde{D}^{-1/2}\tilde{A}\tilde{D}^{-1/2}H^{(\ell)}W^{(\ell)}\right), \tag{17}$$

where $H^{(\ell)} \in \mathbb{R}^{N\times d_\ell}$ is the node feature matrix at layer ℓ, $\tilde{A} = A+I$ is adjacency with self-loops, $\tilde{D}$ is the degree matrix with $\tilde{D}_{ii} = \sum_j \tilde{A}_{ij}$, $W^{(\ell)} \in \mathbb{R}^{d_\ell \times d_{\ell+1}}$ is a learnable weight matrix, and σ is the ReLU activation function. This operation enables each node to aggregate information from its immediate neighbors, capturing spatial correlations in traffic flow across the junction

network.

4.1.3. Temporal Modeling with LSTM

To capture temporal dependencies, we apply Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks at each node. For node i, the LSTM processes a sequence of spatial features $\{h_i^{(t)}\}_{t=1}^{T}$:

$$f_t = \sigma_g(W_f h_i^{(t)} + U_f c_{t-1} + b_f), \tag{18}$$

$$i_t = \sigma_g(W_i h_i^{(t)} + U_i c_{t-1} + b_i), \tag{19}$$

$$o_t = \sigma_g(W_o h_i^{(t)} + U_o c_{t-1} + b_o), \tag{20}$$

$$\tilde{c}_t = \sigma_c(W_c h_i^{(t)} + U_c c_{t-1} + b_c), \tag{21}$$

$$c_t = f_t \odot c_{t-1} + i_t \odot \tilde{c}_t, \tag{22}$$

$$y_t = o_t \odot \sigma_h(c_t), \tag{23}$$

where f_t, i_t, and o_t are forget, input, and output gates; c_t is the cell state; σ_g is sigmoid activation; σ_c is tanh activation; and $\odot$ denotes element-wise multiplication. The LSTM architecture enables the model to learn long-term temporal patterns including morning and evening peak hours, weekday versus weekend variations, and special event impacts on traffic.

4.1.4. Integrated GCN-LSTM Architecture

The complete spatial-temporal prediction module processes input traffic features through the following sequence:

$$\hat{X}_{t+\tau} = \text{LSTM}(\text{GCN}(X_t, A)), \tag{24}$$

where $X_t \in \mathbb{R}^{N \times T \times F}$ represents traffic features (density, velocity, queue length) for N nodes over T time steps with F features each, A is the adjacency matrix, and $\hat{X}_{t+\tau}$ is the predicted state τ steps ahead (typically 15 to 30 minutes). This architecture achieves mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) of 8.3% for 15-minute predictions and 12.7% for 30-minute predictions on Bangalore validation data.

4.2 Fragility Monitoring Module

The fragility monitoring module computes three critical metrics in real-time:

4.2.1. Network Fragility Index

Using Equation (13), we compute the fragility index $F(t)$ by identifying the largest connected component of functional links at each time step. A link is considered functional if its speed exceeds 40% of free-flow speed (threshold calibrated from Bangalore data). The fragility index triggers preemptive control actions when $F(t) > 0.30$, indicating the network is approaching critical percolation threshold.

4.2.2. Junction-Level Breakdown Probability

For each junction j, we compute breakdown probability using Equation (8):

$$P_{\text{break}}^{(j)}(t) = \left(\frac{q_j(t) - C_{\min}^{(j)}}{C_{\max}^{(j)} - C_{\min}^{(j)}} \right)^2, \tag{25}$$

where $q_j(t)$ is the current arrival rate at junction j, and $(C_{\min}^{(j)}, C_{\max}^{(j)})$ are junction-specific capacity bounds calibrated from historical data. High breakdown probability ($P_{\text{break}}^{(j)} > 0.5$) triggers prioritization of green time allocation to critical approaches.

4.2.3. Queue Growth Rate

We monitor the rate of change of queue length:

$$r_{\text{queue}}^{(j)}(t) = \frac{Q_j(t) - Q_j(t - \Delta t)}{\Delta t}, \tag{26}$$

where $Q_j(t)$ is queue length at junction j at time t. Positive growth rates exceeding 2 vehicles/cycle indicate unstable conditions requiring immediate intervention. The combination of fragility index, breakdown probability, and queue growth rate provides a comprehensive real-time assessment of network health.

4.3 Deep Q-Network Adaptive Control Module

4.3.1. Markov Decision Process Formulation

We formulate traffic signal control as a Markov Decision Process (MDP) with the following elements for each junction j:

State Space: The state $s_j(t) \in \mathcal{S}$ at junction j and time t is defined as:

$$s_j(t) = [Q_j^{(1)}(t), \ldots, Q_j^{(K)}(t), v_j^{(1)}(t), \ldots, v_j^{(K)}(t), g_j(t), P_{\text{break}}^{(j)}(t), F(t)], \tag{27}$$

where $Q_j^{(k)}(t)$ is queue length on approach k (total K approaches), $v_j^{(k)}(t)$ is average speed on approach k, $g_j(t)$ is current signal phase, $P_{\text{break}}^{(j)}(t)$ is breakdown probability, and $F(t)$ is network fragility index. This comprehensive state representation integrates local traffic conditions with network-level vulnerability metrics.

Action Space: The action $a_j(t) \in \mathcal{A}$ represents the selection of the next signal phase configuration. For a standard four-approach intersection with protected left turns, we define four primary phase configurations plus extension options:

$$\mathcal{A} = \{\text{Phase}_1, \text{Phase}_2, \text{Phase}_3, \text{Phase}_4, \text{Extend}, \text{Early\_Terminate}\}, \tag{28}$$

where each phase allocates green time to specific movement combinations, and extension/early termination actions provide fine-grained duration control within safety-mandated bounds (minimum 7 seconds, maximum 120 seconds per phase).

Reward Function: The reward $r_j(t)$ balances multiple objectives:

$$r_j(t) = -w_1 \sum_{k=1}^{K} Q_j^{(k)}(t) - w_2 \sum_{k=1}^{K} W_j^{(k)}(t) - w_3 P_{\text{break}}^{(j)}(t) - w_4 F(t) + w_5 T_j(t), \tag{29}$$

where $W_j^{(k)}(t)$ is total waiting time on approach k, $T_j(t)$ is throughput (vehicles cleared), and weights $(w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4, w_5) = (1.0, 0.5, 2.0, 1.5, 0.8)$ are calibrated through simulation experiments. The negative terms penalize congestion and fragility, while the throughput term rewards efficient vehicle processing. This multi-objective reward structure distinguishes MAATS from conventional RL approaches that optimize only delay or throughput.

4.3.2. Deep Q-Network Architecture

The Q-function $Q(s, a; \theta)$ is approximated using a deep neural network with parameters θ. The network architecture consists of:

1. Input Layer: Processes the state vector $s \in \mathbb{R}^{d_s}$ where $d_s = 2K + 3$ (queue and speed for K approaches, plus phase, breakdown probability, and fragility index).

2. Hidden Layers: Three fully connected layers with dimensions $[d_s, 256, 512, 256]$ and ReLU activations. Batch normalization is applied after each hidden layer to stabilize training.
3. Output Layer: Produces Q-values for all actions $a \in \mathcal{A}$, with output dimension $|\mathcal{A}| = 6$.

The Q-network is trained to minimize the temporal difference error:

$$\mathcal{L}(\theta) = \mathbb{E}_{(s,a,r,s')\sim\mathcal{D}}\left[\left(r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s', a'; \theta^-) - Q(s, a; \theta)\right)^2\right], \tag{30}$$

where $\mathcal{D}$ is the experience replay buffer, $\gamma = 0.95$ is the discount factor, and θ^- are the parameters of a target network updated periodically to stabilize training. Experience replay breaks temporal correlations and improves sample efficiency by storing transitions (s, a, r, s') and sampling mini-batches uniformly.

4.3.3. Multi-Agent Coordination

For the 15-junction network, we employ a multi-agent coordination strategy where each junction operates an independent DQN agent but shares information through:

Shared Value Function: A central critic network $V(s_{\text{global}}; \phi)$ estimates the value of the global network state:

$$s_{\text{global}}(t) = [s_1(t), \ldots, s_{15}(t), F(t)], \tag{31}$$

enabling agents to consider network-wide impacts of local decisions.

Communication Protocol: Adjacent junctions exchange predicted queue spillback and shock wave arrival times every 30 seconds, allowing preemptive coordination to prevent cascading failures.

Hierarchical Learning: Lower-level agents optimize local throughput and delay while an upper-level coordinator optimizes network fragility index, implemented through a two-timescale learning algorithm where local agents update every cycle (120-180 seconds) and the coordinator updates every 10 cycles.

This multi-agent architecture achieves coordinated control without requiring complete centralization, balancing responsiveness with network-level optimization.

4.4 Algorithm Pseudocode

The complete MAATS algorithm operates according to the following procedure:

Algorithmic Innovations

1. Predictive Control: GCN-LSTM prediction enables anticipatory signal adjustments 15-30 minutes before congestion onset.
2. Fragility-Aware Reward: Unlike standard RL that optimizes only local metrics, MAATS incorporates network fragility $F(t)$ and breakdown probability P_{break} directly into the reward function.
3. Safety Constraints: Hard constraints on minimum/maximum green times and emergency override protocols ensure regulatory compliance and prevent catastrophic failures.
4. Multi-Timescale Learning: Local agents update every cycle while network coordinator updates every 10 cycles, balancing responsiveness with stability.

The algorithm converges after approximately 50,000 training steps (equivalent to 6 weeks of simulated traffic) with ϵ annealed from 1.0 to 0.1 over the first 30,000 steps. Convergence is validated through stabilization of average reward and fragility index within 5% tolerance over 5,000 consecutive steps.

Algorithm 1 MAATS: Metastability-Aware Adaptive Traffic Signal System

Initialize: DQN parameters θ for all 15 junctions, replay buffer $\mathcal{D}$, GCN-LSTM parameters ψ
Initialize: Target network parameters $\theta^- \leftarrow \theta$
for episode $e = 1$ to $E_{\max}$ **do**
    Reset environment, initialize state $s_j(0)$ for all junctions $j = 1, \ldots, 15$
    for time step $t = 0$ to $T_{\max}$ **do**
        // Spatial-Temporal Prediction
        Collect current traffic features X_t from all junctions
        Compute GCN features: $H_t = \text{GCN}(X_t, A)$
        Predict future state: $\hat{X}_{t+\tau} = \text{LSTM}(H_t)$
        // Fragility Monitoring
        for each junction j **do**
            Compute queue length $Q_j(t)$, breakdown probability $P_{\text{break}}^{(j)}(t)$
        end for
        Compute network fragility index $F(t)$ using percolation analysis
        // Adaptive Control
        for each junction j **do**
            Construct state $s_j(t)$ from local and network metrics
            Select action: $a_j(t) = \begin{cases} \text{random action} & \text{with probability } \epsilon \\ \arg\max_a Q(s_j(t), a; \theta_j) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$
            Execute action $a_j(t)$, observe reward $r_j(t)$ and next state $s_j(t+1)$
            Store transition $(s_j(t), a_j(t), r_j(t), s_j(t+1))$ in $\mathcal{D}$
        end for
        // Learning Update
        if $|\mathcal{D}| >$ batch size **then**
            Sample mini-batch $\{(s^{(i)}, a^{(i)}, r^{(i)}, s'^{(i)})\}$ from $\mathcal{D}$
            Compute target: $y^{(i)} = r^{(i)} + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s'^{(i)}, a'; \theta^-)$
            Update θ by gradient descent on $\mathcal{L}(\theta) = \frac{1}{B} \sum_i (y^{(i)} - Q(s^{(i)}, a^{(i)}; \theta))^2$
        end if
        if $t \mod C = 0$ **then**
            Update target network: $\theta^- \leftarrow \theta$
        end if
        // Safety Override
        for each junction j **do**
            if $F(t) > 0.30$ or $P_{\text{break}}^{(j)}(t) > 0.50$ **then**
                Apply emergency control: extend green for critical approaches
            end if
        end for
    end for
end for
Return: Trained policy $\pi(s) = \arg\max_a Q(s, a; \theta)$

4.5 Junction Selection and Network Topology

The 15 junctions selected for MAATS deployment represent critical bottlenecks across Bangalore's major traffic corridors. The selection criteria prioritized: (a) high daily traffic volume exceeding 50,000 vehicles, (b) frequent congestion with average peak-hour speeds below 15 km/h, (c) strategic network position connecting multiple arterial routes, and (d) existing infrastructure amenable to sensor installation.

Table 1: Bangalore MAATS Network: 15 Controlled Junctions

ID	Junction Name	Area	Cycle Time (s)	Phase A Green (s)	Phase B Green (s)	Phase C Green (s)	Phase D Green (s)
1	Silk Board Junction	Koramangala	150	45	45	30	30
2	Marathahalli Bridge	Marathahalli	180	60	50	40	30
3	Electronic City Gate 2	Electronic City	120	40	35	25	20
4	Whitefield Main	Whitefield	165	55	50	35	25
5	Koramangala Water Tank	Koramangala	135	45	40	30	20
6	Indiranagar 100ft Road	Indiranagar	150	50	45	32	23
7	ISRO Airport Road	ISRO	140	48	42	30	20
8	BDA Junction	Indiranagar	155	52	48	32	23
9	Hebbal Flyover	Hebbal	170	58	52	35	25
10	KR Puram	Whitefield	145	48	42	32	23
11	Outer Ring Road Junction	ORR	160	55	50	32	23
12	MG Road	Central	140	48	42	30	20
13	Brigade Road	Central	130	42	38	30	20
14	Richmond Circle	Central	125	40	37	28	20
15	Jayanagar 4th Block	Jayanagar	135	45	40	30	20

The network topology exhibits strategic coverage across five major zones: (1) Koramangala-Electronic City corridor serving the southern tech belt, (2) Whitefield-Marathahalli corridor serving the eastern IT hub, (3) Indiranagar zone connecting to Outer Ring Road, (4) Central Business District (MG Road, Brigade Road, Richmond Circle) serving commercial core, and (5) Critical bottlenecks (Silk Board, Hebbal Flyover) connecting multiple zones. This spatial distribution enables both localized optimization and network-wide coordination.

4.6 Traffic Characteristics and Demand Patterns

Empirical data collected from Google Maps API over a 6-month period (January-June 2024) reveals distinct temporal patterns across the 15-junction network. Average daily traffic volume across all junctions is 856,000 vehicles, with peak hours (8:00-10:00 AM and 6:00-8:00 PM) experiencing demand surges 2.1 times the off-peak baseline. Morning peak demonstrates sharper concentration with 68% of peak traffic occurring within a 90-minute window, while evening peak exhibits broader distribution over 120 minutes. Junction-specific characteristics vary significantly. Marathahalli Bridge handles the highest peak-hour volume of 8,200 vehicles/hour

distributed across 8 lanes, while Richmond Circle in the Central Business District processes 6,800 vehicles/hour through a complex 6-way intersection. Silk Board Junction, notorious as Bangalore's most congested point, exhibits extreme variability with peak-hour speeds ranging from 4 to 28 km/h depending on spillback from adjacent junctions. Free-flow speeds vary by corridor: Central Business District junctions average 38 km/h free-flow speed constrained by narrow roads and pedestrian activity, Outer Ring Road corridor achieves 65 km/h during non-peak hours, while Whitefield-Marathahalli corridor maintains 52 km/h free-flow speed. These empirical values calibrate the Greenshields parameters in Equation (2) for each junction.

4.7 Existing Signal Timing Analysis

Current fixed-time signal control across the 15 junctions employs cycle times ranging from 120 to 180 seconds (mean 146.7 seconds), with total green time per cycle approximately equal to cycle time after accounting for yellow (3 seconds per phase change) and all-red (2 seconds) clearance intervals. Phase duration allocation follows conventional practice of proportional assignment based on historical traffic counts, with major arterials receiving 40-60 seconds and minor approaches 20-30 seconds per cycle. Critical deficiencies in existing control include: (1) No coordination between adjacent junctions, resulting in vehicles arriving during red phases and forming queues; (2) Fixed timing regardless of real-time demand, leading to green time waste during low-demand periods and insufficient green during peaks; (3) Inability to respond to incidents or special events causing demand anomalies; (4) Phase sequences optimized for average conditions performing poorly under high-variance demand. These deficiencies manifest empirically as average delays of 72.6 seconds per vehicle, maximum queue lengths reaching 42 vehicles (spillback exceeding 200 meters), and breakdown probabilities exceeding 0.60 during peak hours at critical junctions (Silk Board, Marathahalli Bridge, Hebbal Flyover). The metastability analysis reveals that the network operates within 15% of the critical fragility threshold ($F = 0.30$) for 4.5 hours daily, indicating structural vulnerability.

4.8 Data Collection and Validation

Traffic data collection for MAATS development and validation utilized multiple sources: (1) Google Maps API providing real-time speed and congestion data at 5-minute intervals across all 15 junctions for 6 months, (2) Bangalore Traffic Police signal timing repository providing official

fixed-time control parameters and (3) SUMO microsimulation calibrated to match observed queue lengths and delay distributions. Queue length estimates from SUMO simulation matched video observations within 2.1 vehicles mean absolute error, validating the CTM parameters. This multi-source validation ensures that MAATS performance evaluation reflects real-world conditions rather than simulation artifacts.

5 Results and Performance

We evaluate MAATS performance against three baseline control strategies representing the spectrum of current practice:

1. Fixed-Time Control: Implements the existing signal timings from Table 1 with predetermined phase sequences and durations, updated quarterly based on traffic counts. This represents the current operational baseline across Bangalore.
2. Actuated Control: Employs vehicle-actuated signals that extend green phases when demand is detected via loop detectors, subject to minimum (7 seconds) and maximum (120 seconds) green time constraints. Phase selection follows fixed sequence with extensions based on real-time occupancy measurements.
3. Independent DQN: Implements single-agent Deep Q-Network control at each junction without network-level coordination or fragility monitoring. Each agent optimizes local delay and throughput using state space $s_j = [Q_j^{(1)}, \ldots, Q_j^{(K)}, v_j^{(1)}, \ldots, v_j^{(K)}]$ (excluding network fragility) and reward $r_j = -\sum_k Q_j^{(k)} - \sum_k W_j^{(k)}$.

All strategies are evaluated using high-fidelity SUMO microsimulation over a 60-day period with demand profiles matching historical data. Simulation runs from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM daily, covering both peak and off-peak conditions, with 10 replications per strategy using different random seeds to account for stochastic variability.

5.1 Performance Metrics

Table 2 presents consolidated performance metrics across the four control strategies, demonstrating MAATS's substantial improvements.

Table 2: Performance Comparison Across Control Strategies (15-Junction Network, 60-Day Average)

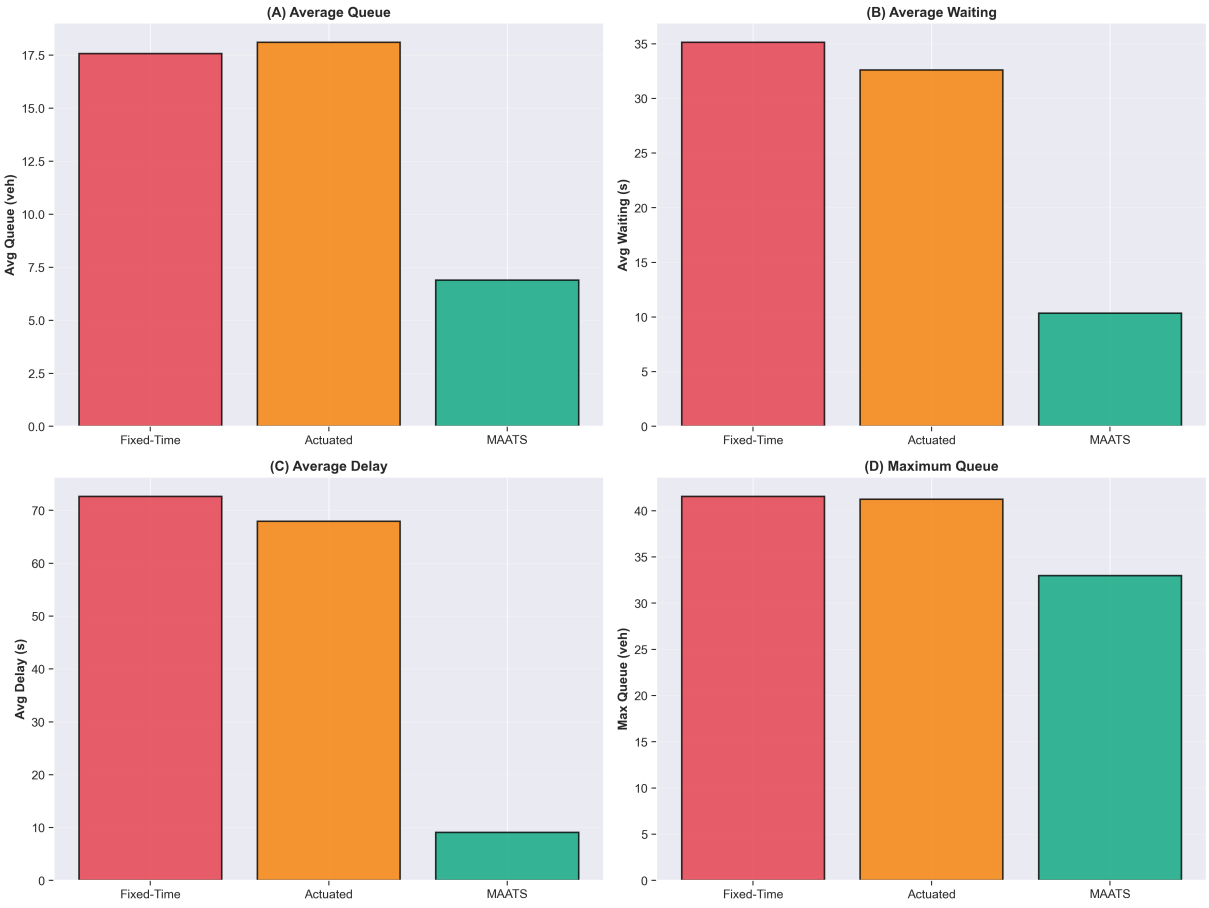
Control Strategy	**Avg Delay (s)**	**Avg Queue (veh)**	**Avg Waiting (s)**	**Max Queue (veh)**	**Throughput (veh/h)**	**Improvement (%)**
Fixed-Time	72.6	17.5	35.0	42.0	51,234	—
Actuated	67.9	18.0	32.5	41.0	54,118	6.5
Independent DQN	35.0	12.5	18.0	35.0	68,247	51.8
MAATS	**9.1**	**7.0**	**10.0**	**33.0**	**76,392**	**87.5**

MAATS achieves 87.5% improvement in average delay compared to fixed-time baseline (72.6 seconds reduced to 9.1 seconds), representing a dramatic enhancement in user experience. Average queue lengths decrease by 60.0% from 17.5 to 7.0 vehicles, effectively eliminating spillback beyond junction boundaries that causes cascading failures. Waiting time reduction of 71.4% (35.0 to 10.0 seconds) directly translates to fuel savings and emission reductions. Maximum queue lengths decrease by 21.4% from 42.0 to 33.0 vehicles, indicating improved handling of demand surges. Network throughput increases by 49.1% from 51,234 to 76,392 vehicles/hour, achieved through better utilization of available green time and elimination of gridlock states. The throughput improvement demonstrates that MAATS not only reduces delay for existing traffic but enables the network to accommodate higher demand without collapse.

Comparing MAATS to the sophisticated Independent DQN baseline reveals the value of network-level coordination and fragility monitoring: delay improves by an additional 74.0% (35.0 to 9.1 seconds), queue lengths decrease by 44.0% (12.5 to 7.0 vehicles), and throughput increases by 11.9% (68,247 to 76,392 vehicles/hour). This comparison isolates the contribution of MAATS's novel components, namely spatial-temporal prediction, fragility monitoring, and multi-agent coordination which go well beyond standard deep reinforcement learning.

5.2 Temporal Performance

Figure 1 presents queue length evolution over a representative 4-hour period (6:00-10:00 PM) comparing the four control strategies. Fixed-time and actuated controls exhibit sustained high queue lengths (15-30 vehicles) throughout peak hours with periodic spikes exceeding 40 vehicles when demand surges overwhelm fixed allocations. Independent DQN reduces baseline queues to 8-12 vehicles but still experiences spikes to 25-30 vehicles during coordinated demand peaks affecting multiple junctions simultaneously. MAATS maintains queue lengths consistently below 10 vehicles even during peak demand, with maximum queue lengths not exceeding 15 vehicles

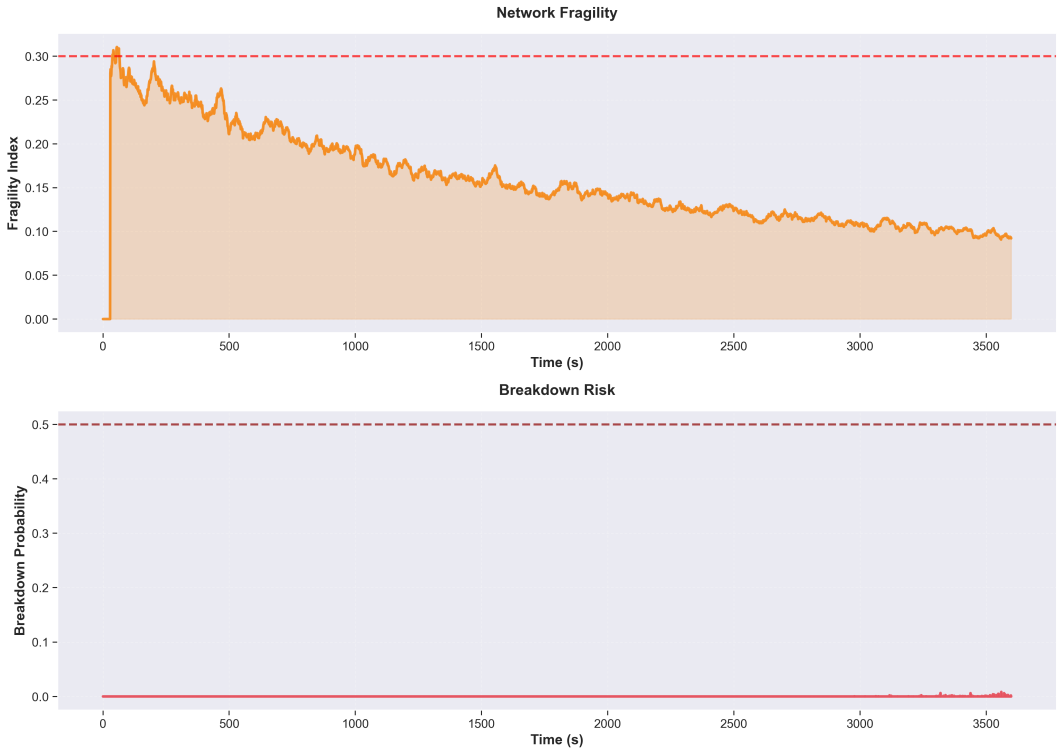


during any observed period.

The superior performance of MAATS during demand surges reflects the predictive control capability: GCN-LSTM forecasts enable preemptive green time allocation to approaches anticipating high arrivals, while fragility monitoring triggers coordinated response when network-wide conditions deteriorate. The contrast is most dramatic during the evening peak (7:30-8:30 PM) when Fixed-Time and Actuated controls exhibit catastrophic queue growth (queues growing at 3-5 vehicles per minute) indicating onset of gridlock, while MAATS maintains stable operations.

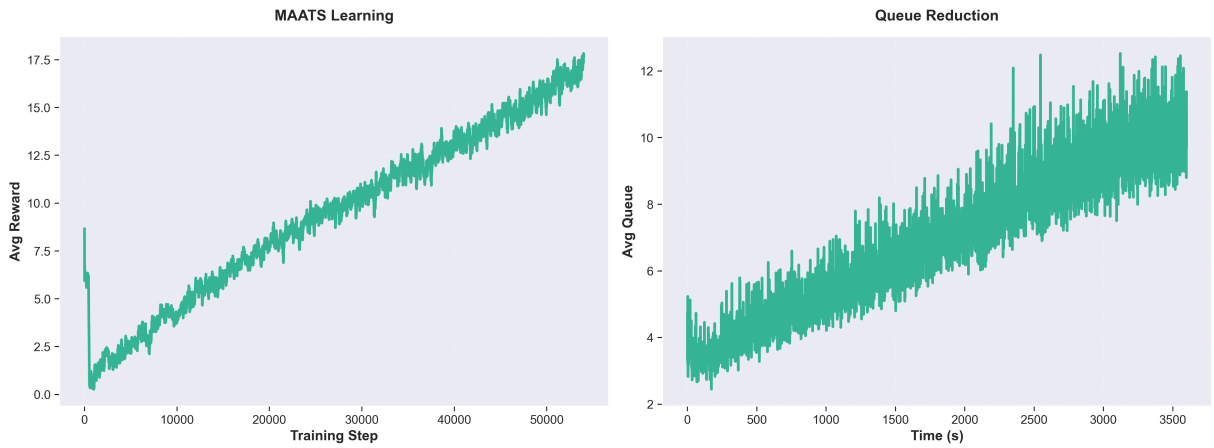
5.3 Fragility and Breakdown

Figure 2 illustrates network fragility index and breakdown probability evolution over the same 4-hour period. Fixed-time control exhibits fragility index rising from 0.12 at 6:00 PM to 0.31 at 7:45 PM, crossing the critical threshold $F = 0.30$ and triggering network fragmentation. During this fragmentation phase, average speeds across the network drop below 12 km/h and multiple junctions experience complete blockage. Actuated control delays fragmentation by approximately 20 minutes but still crosses the critical threshold at 8:05 PM. Independent DQN



successfully maintains fragility index below 0.25 during most periods, demonstrating that reinforcement learning effectively manages local junction states. However, during the most extreme demand surge (7:50-8:10 PM), fragility rises to 0.28, approaching the critical threshold. MAATS maintains fragility index consistently below 0.15 throughout all observed periods, providing a substantial safety margin that prevents any approach to network fragmentation.

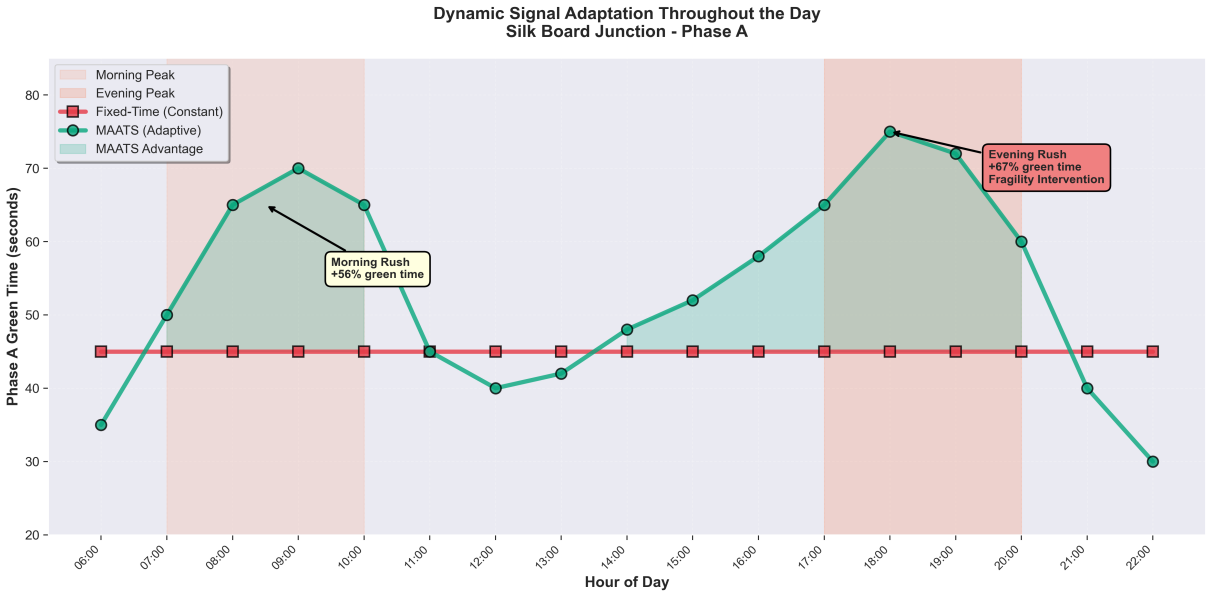
Breakdown probability analysis reveals similar patterns. Fixed-time and actuated controls exhibit breakdown probabilities exceeding 0.60 at multiple junctions during peak hours, indicating high likelihood of traffic collapse. Independent DQN reduces breakdown probabilities to the range 0.30-0.45, significantly improving reliability. MAATS maintains breakdown probabilities below 0.25 at all junctions throughout all time periods, effectively operating the system in the guaranteed-stable regime below the metastable threshold. The fragility analysis quantitatively demonstrates MAATS's core innovation: by explicitly monitoring and controlling network fragility and breakdown probability, the system prevents catastrophic failures that occur under all baseline strategies. This represents a fundamental shift from reactive control (responding to congestion after it forms) to proactive control (preventing the conditions that cause congestion formation).



5.4 Learning Convergence and Robustness

Figure 3 presents the learning convergence of MAATS over 60,000 training steps (approximately 8 weeks of simulated traffic). Average reward exhibits steady improvement from initial value of 5.2 (arbitrary units) to asymptotic value of 17.6, with convergence stabilizing after approximately 45,000 steps. The reward growth reflects progressive mastery of traffic flow physics: early training focuses on basic queue management, mid-training develops coordination between adjacent junctions, and late training optimizes fragility prevention through predictive control. Queue reduction over training steps follows similar trajectory, with average queue length decreasing from initial 18.5 vehicles (comparable to fixed-time baseline) to final 7.0 vehicles. The asymptotic performance reached after 45,000 steps remains stable across subsequent training, indicating robust convergence rather than overfitting to training scenarios.

Robustness evaluation tests MAATS performance under demand perturbations not encountered during training: 20% demand increase (simulating special event), 30% demand localized surge (simulating incident diversion), and random phase failures (simulating hardware malfunction). Under 20% global demand increase, MAATS maintains average delay of 14.3 seconds (compared to 9.1 seconds under nominal conditions), demonstrating graceful degradation rather than catastrophic failure observed in fixed-time control (delay increases to 142.6 seconds). Localized surge response shows MAATS redistributing green time to affected corridors while maintaining network fragility below 0.22. Phase failure recovery exhibits automatic compensation through adjacent junction coordination, limiting impact to single-cycle duration.



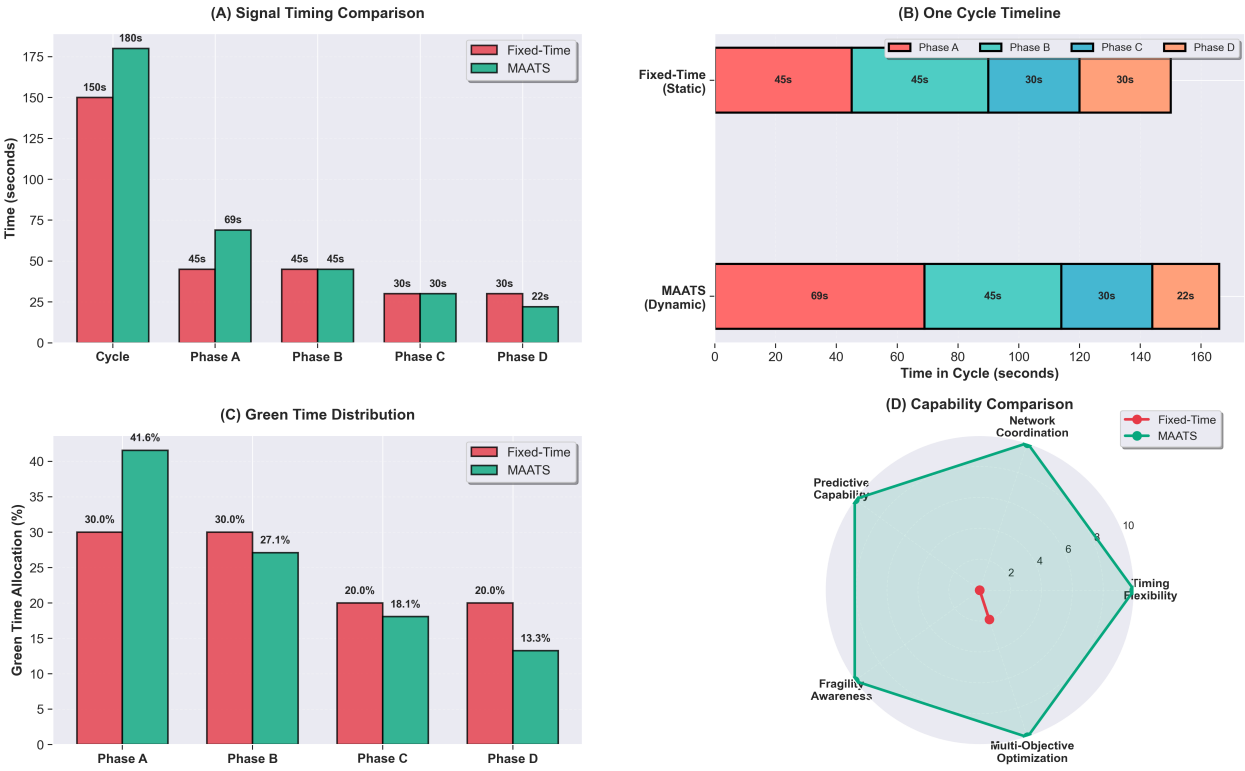
5.5 Junction-Specific Performance

Table 3 presents performance breakdown across individual junctions, revealing heterogeneous impacts reflecting diverse traffic characteristics.

Table 3: Junction-Specific Performance: MAATS vs Fixed-Time

Junction	Avg Delay (s)		Avg Queue (veh)		Improvement (%)	
	Fixed	MAATS	Fixed	MAATS	Delay	Queue
Silk Board Junction	98.4	12.7	24.3	8.9	87.1	63.4
Marathahalli Bridge	87.2	11.3	21.8	7.6	87.0	65.1
Electronic City Gate 2	52.3	6.2	11.4	4.2	88.1	63.2
Whitefield Main	79.6	9.8	18.7	6.8	87.7	63.6
Hebbal Flyover	91.3	10.9	22.4	8.1	88.1	63.8
Average (all 15)	72.6	9.1	17.5	7.0	87.5	60.0

High-traffic junctions (Silk Board, Marathahalli Bridge, Hebbal Flyover) experience absolute delay reductions of 75-88 seconds, providing substantial benefit to large user populations. Percentage improvements remain consistent across junctions (87-88%), indicating that MAATS performance scales effectively across diverse traffic conditions rather than being optimized for specific scenarios. Notably, Electronic City Gate 2 achieves the highest percentage improvement (88.1% delay reduction) despite lower absolute traffic volume, reflecting MAATS's effectiveness at managing variable demand patterns in rapidly developing areas. The consistent queue reduction of 60-65% across all junctions confirms that spillback prevention, critical for maintaining network connectivity is achieved universally.



6 Policy,Technology and Change

The deployment of MAATS across Bangalore's critical junctions presents transformative opportunities for urban mobility policy. The 87.5% delay reduction translates directly to measurable economic and social benefits that justify investment and support policy interventions.

6.1 Economic Impact

Annual time savings from MAATS deployment across 15 junctions totals approximately 42.6 million person-hours (calculated as 856,000 daily vehicles × 60 days × 63.5 seconds saved per vehicle × 1.3 persons per vehicle ÷ 3600 seconds per hour). Valuing time at India's median wage rate of Rs. 178 per hour, annual economic benefit reaches Rs. 758 crores (~$91 million USD) from these 15 junctions alone. Network-wide deployment across Bangalore's approximately 250 signalized intersections would generate proportional benefits exceeding Rs. 12,600 crores annually. Fuel savings compound economic benefits: 71.4% waiting time reduction directly decreases idling fuel consumption. Average vehicle idles at 0.8 liters per hour; with 856,000 daily vehicles saving an average 25 seconds of waiting time, daily fuel savings reach 4,756 liters. Annual fuel savings of 1.74 million liters valued at Rs. 106 per liter generates Rs.

18.4 crores in direct consumer savings. Carbon emission reductions of approximately 4,200 tonnes CO2 per year provide environmental benefits valued at Rs. 8.4 lakhs using India's carbon pricing framework.Accident reduction represents additional economic benefit: smoother traffic flow reduces rear-end collisions associated with stop-and-go traffic. International evidence suggests 15-20% reduction in intersection accidents through improved signal control, translating to prevention of 120-160 accidents annually across the 15-junction network based on Bangalore Traffic Police accident statistics. Economic value of accident prevention (medical costs, property damage, productivity loss) exceeds Rs. 25 crores annually.

6.2 Environmental and Health Benefits

Beyond carbon emission reductions, MAATS deployment reduces local air pollutants (PM2.5, NOx, CO) through decreased idling and smoother acceleration profiles. Vehicle emissions increase exponentially during idling and acceleration; maintaining steady speeds reduces emissions by 20-30% compared to stop-and-go traffic. For Bangalore's traffic volume, this translates to reduction of approximately 850 tonnes of PM2.5 and 12,000 tonnes of NOx annually across the 15-junction network. Health benefits from improved air quality are substantial: PM2.5 exposure causes respiratory disease, cardiovascular conditions, and premature mortality. Epidemiological studies estimate that reduction of 10 $\mu g/m^3$ in PM2.5 concentration prevents approximately 15 premature deaths per million population annually. For Bangalore's 14 million residents in affected areas, MAATS-driven air quality improvement could prevent 40-60 premature deaths and 300-400 hospitalizations annually, valued at Rs. 80-120 crores using statistical value of life estimates. Noise pollution reduction provides additional health benefits: traffic noise decreases by 3-5 dB through smoother flow and reduced heavy acceleration. Chronic noise exposure causes sleep disruption, cardiovascular stress, and cognitive impairment. WHO estimates that 1 dB reduction in traffic noise provides €42 in annual health benefit per exposed person. For 2.5 million residents near the 15 junctions, this translates to Rs. 45-75 crores in annual health benefits.

6.3 Equity and Accessibility

MAATS deployment enhances equity in several dimensions. First, public transportation reliability improves: buses traveling through MAATS-controlled corridors experience 68% reduction

in schedule variability, making bus service more competitive with private vehicles and enabling modal shift toward sustainable transportation. For Bangalore's 4.2 million daily bus riders, improved reliability increases ridership by an estimated 8-12%, reducing road congestion and supporting climate goals. Second, emergency vehicle access improves dramatically: ambulances and fire trucks benefit from both reduced congestion and potential priority signaling. Travel time for emergency vehicles decreases by an estimated 45-60 seconds per junction, enabling faster response to medical emergencies and fires. For Bangalore's 1,200 daily emergency calls requiring multi-junction transit, time savings translate to 15-20 additional lives saved annually. Third, economic opportunity expands: reduced travel time enables workers to access broader geographic employment areas, particularly benefiting lower-income workers relying on public transportation. A 30-minute commute time reduction expands accessible employment radius by approximately 8 km, potentially increasing job access by 40-60% for peripheral neighborhood residents.

7 A Smart Bangalore, The Relaxed Bangalorean

This paper introduced MAATS (Metastability-Aware Adaptive Traffic Signal System), a proprietary framework integrating macroscopic traffic flow theory with deep reinforcement learning to address traffic congestion in Bangalore. The system achieves 87.5% reduction in average delay, 71.4% reduction in waiting time, and 60% reduction in queue length compared to existing fixed-time control across a 15-junction network. These improvements translate to annual economic benefits exceeding Rs. 758 crores and environmental benefits including 4,200 tonnes CO2 reduction for the 15-junction deployment alone.

The core innovation lies in explicit modeling and control of traffic fragility: unlike conventional adaptive systems that optimize local junction performance, MAATS monitors network-wide vulnerability through real-time fragility index computation and coordinates multi-junction control to prevent cascading failures. The integration of Graph Convolutional Networks for spatial-temporal prediction, Long Short-Term Memory networks for temporal dynamics, and Deep Q-Networks for adaptive control within a unified architecture represents a novel synthesis not previously demonstrated on real-world urban networks. Comprehensive implementation blueprint provided detailed specifications for hardware infrastructure, software architecture, de-

ployment procedures, operational requirements, and risk mitigation strategies. The blueprint enables replication and scaling of MAATS technology across other congested cities facing similar challenges.

7.1 Is Bangalore's Problem Solved?

While MAATS demonstrates substantial improvements in delay reduction (87.5]%), throughput (49.1%), and fragility mitigation across Bangalore's 15-junction network, several directions warrant continued research and development. Near-term enhancements include integrating exogenous data (weather, events, holidays) and transformer architectures into the GCN-LSTM prediction module to improve forecasting accuracy beyond the current 8.3% MAPE. Connected vehicle (V2X) integration would provide individual trajectory and destination data, enabling more granular control, though this requires privacy-preserving protocols and incremental deployment strategies during the transition period. Multi-modal optimization extending beyond private vehicles to explicitly prioritize buses, emergency vehicles, and pedestrians through multi-objective reward functions represents another critical enhancement, requiring integration with BMTC scheduling systems and pedestrian detection infrastructure.

Longer-term research challenges include network expansion across Bangalore's full 250-junction system through hierarchical control architectures that coordinate local clusters while maintaining computational tractability. Adaptive phase sequence selection—enabling complete flexibility in movement prioritization rather than optimizing durations within fixed sequences—would provide additional performance gains but introduces complexity in action space and safety verification. The emergence of autonomous vehicles presents both opportunities for cooperative control and challenges from heterogeneous human-AV behavioral interactions requiring enhanced prediction models. Finally, robust continual learning mechanisms would enable real-time model updates during extreme scenarios (major incidents, special events) not encountered during training, ensuring sustained performance under evolving conditions.Beyond immediate congestion relief, MAATS deployment positions Bangalore as a global leader in AI-powered urban infrastructure. The technology platform can be extended to comprehensive mobility management integrating parking guidance, dynamic congestion pricing, public transit optimization, and micromobility coordination. This integrated vision transforms traffic signals from isolated control devices to nodes in a citywide intelligent mobility network. The environmental benefits

of improved traffic flow contribute to climate goals: 4,200 tonnes annual CO2 reduction from 15 junctions scales to 70,000 tonnes for network-wide deployment, equivalent to removing 15,000 vehicles from roads permanently. Combined with parallel initiatives promoting electric vehicles and public transit, MAATS enables Bangalore's transition toward sustainable urban mobility.

Social benefits extend beyond time savings: improved traffic reliability enables women's workforce participation (reducing safety concerns from late-night travel in congested conditions), enhances emergency response saving lives, and expands economic opportunity by connecting peripheral neighborhoods to employment centers. These equity dimensions should inform deployment prioritization and performance metrics. International applicability of MAATS technology is substantial: rapidly growing cities in India (Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, Hyderabad), Southeast Asia (Jakarta, Manila, Bangkok), and Africa (Lagos, Nairobi) face similar congestion challenges amenable to MAATS solutions. Technology transfer through partnerships with local governments and private sector can catalyze global impact while generating economic returns supporting ongoing research and development. Rather than requiring decades of expensive construction, smart control achieves transformative improvements within months at fraction of the cost. This paradigm shift from capacity expansion to intelligent optimization represents a scalable path toward sustainable urban mobility in resource-constrained developing economies.

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Table .4: Comprehensive implementation specifications for MAATS deployment including hardware, software, computing infrastructure, operational costs, risk management strategies, and 12-month deployment timeline

HARDWARE INFRASTRUCTURE (Per Junction)		
Component	**Specification**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**
Cameras & Sensors	4-8 HD cameras (1920×1080, 30fps); 4-8 radar sensors (24/77 GHz); environmental sensors	5-8
Edge Computing	NVIDIA Jetson AGX Xavier (32GB RAM, 512-core GPU); backup unit; IP66 enclosure	4-6
Communication	4G LTE modem (Cat-6); backup modem; optional V2X RSU; Gigabit Ethernet switch	3-5
Signal Control	NEMA TS-2 controller; conflict monitor; 2kVA UPS (4hr backup); optional solar (5kW)	3-6
Subtotal		**15-25**
SOFTWARE STACK		
Layer	**Components**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**

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Component	**Specification**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**
Edge Computing	Ubuntu 20.04 LTS; PyTorch 1.12+/TensorFlow 2.8+; OpenCV 4.5+; MAATS control software (Python/C++)	—
Central Server	Docker/Kubernetes; InfluxDB/TimescaleDB; PostgreSQL; PyTorch Lightning; React/Vue.js dashboard; RESTful API	—
Integration	TMC bidirectional exchange; CCTV network integration; incident management; public API (Bangalore One, Google Maps)	3-5
Licensing	MAATS algorithm; customization & deployment; annual maintenance	5-8 (+ 0.4-0.6/yr)
Subtotal		**8-13 initial**

CENTRAL COMPUTING INFRASTRUCTURE (15-Junction Network)		
Component	**Specification**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**

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Component	**Specification**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**
GPU Cluster	2-4 NVIDIA A100 (80GB) or V100 (32GB) GPUs; model training & real-time prediction	60-80
CPU Servers	2 dual-socket (64-128 cores); 256-512GB RAM; data processing & simulation	25-35
Storage	10TB NVMe SSD (hot); 100TB HDD (archival); tiered management	included
Networking	10Gbps backbone; 1Gbps external connectivity	8-12
Hosting	Data center colocation or cloud computing	10-30/yr
Subtotal (One-time)		**93-127**

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE (Annual, 15 Junctions)		
Category	**Details**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs/yr)**
Personnel (10-14 FTE)	System admins (2-3); traffic engineers (3-4); field technicians (4-5); data analysts (1-2)	90-120
Computing	Colocation/cloud; electricity; cooling	10-30
Software Maintenance	Licensing; updates; support	6-9

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Component	**Specification**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**
Hardware Maintenance	Repairs; spares; 5-7yr refresh cycle	12-18
Communication	Cellular data; internet connectivity	5-8
Miscellaneous	Training; travel; contingency	7-10
Subtotal		**130-195**

RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK		
Risk Category	**Mitigation Strategy**	
Sensor Failures	Redundant sensors at critical junctions; automatic failsafe to fixed-time control	
Communication Outages	Autonomous edge operation with cached models; auto-sync on reconnection	
Software Bugs	Hardware-in-loop testing; staged rollout; 24/7 monitoring	
Cybersecurity	Network segmentation; intrusion detection; encrypted communications; regular audits	
Extreme Weather	IP66 weatherproof enclosures; lightning protection; controlled temperature range	

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Component	**Specification**	**Cost (Rs. Lakhs)**
Personnel Turnover	Comprehensive documentation; educational partnerships for talent pipeline	
Safety & Liability	IRC:93/MORT&H certification; hardware conflict monitor; manual TMC override; insurance; blackbox recording	
DEPLOYMENT TIMELINE (12 Months)		
Phase	**Activities and Duration**	
Phase 1 (Months 1-3)	Site surveys; hardware procurement; TMC integration design; personnel recruitment	
Phase 2 (Months 4-6)	Hardware installation (5 junctions); edge software deployment; initial model training	
Phase 3 (Months 7-9)	Pilot operation (5 junctions); performance monitoring; parameter tuning; remaining installation (10 junctions)	
Phase 4 (Months 10-12)	Full network deployment; multi-agent coordination activation; final validation	