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Dy CM: Govt to bear cost of ₹78cr Kempegowda statue



TIMES NEWS NETWORK

GRAND PLAN:
An artist's impression of the 108-ft-tall statue, which is proposed to come up in a 23-acre park outside KIA. The chief minister will perform bhoomi puja on Saturday

Bengaluru: Announcing Karnataka's ambitious plan to install a 108-ft-tall statue of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda outside the airport, deputy chief minister Ashwath Narayan said the government will bear the project cost — approximately Rs 78 crore.

Work on the project will formally commence with the chief minister laying foundation stone for installation of the statue and development of a 23-acre park where it will come up, on Saturday.

KPCC president DK Shivakumar on Thursday suggested the cost be borne by Kempegowda International Airport and not the government. He wrote to the CM welcoming the decision to erect a statue of the chieftain at KIA, but asked why should the government spend on it. "When huge concessions have been pro-

vided to KIA, why not use its services to construct the statue," he asked. Narayan, who is chairman of Kempegowda Development Authority, said it is the government's duty to bear the cost.

The government has released sketches of the statue and a blueprint of the park. Noted sculptor Ram Sutar, who designed the Gandhi statue located between Vidhana Soudha and Vikasa Soudha and the Statue of Unity in Gujarat, will be part of this project as well.

Narayan said the government was not competing with any other state on having a tallest/largest statue while emphasising that Kempegowda ensured the city had tanks, markets and drainage system when it was founded. He added the government won't invite many guests to Saturday's ceremony. "Most legislators will be given a virtual link to view the event," he said.