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Government to launch Taali Bhagya for poor Hindus

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: To help poor Hindu families who cannot afford the increasing cost of wedding expenses, the government on Thursday launched Taali Bhagya, a sequel of sorts to former chief minister Siddaramaiah's Shaadi Bhagya, a flagship scheme for minorities.

Muzrai minister Kota Srinivas Poojari said mass marriages will be held on auspicious days of April 26 and May 24 next year at select temples that fall under the Muzrai department.

Temples would spend Rs 55,000 per couple, which includes an eight gram gold taali (mangalashtra) worth Rs 40,000. Poojari said Rs 5,000 would be given to the groom and Rs 10,000 for bride for clothing and other wedding expenditure.

The cash would be deposited in their bank accounts soon after the wedding.

"The money is for traditional wedding attire," Poojari said.

Unlike Shaadi Bhagya which was limited to BPL families, Taali Bhagya has no income limit. Mass marriages will be held at 90 to 100 select 'A' category temples that get a high income and have good

OTHER CABINET DECISIONS

- > Second set of school uniforms for 37 lakh students from Class 1 to 8 at a cost of Rs 250 per student
- > Rs 100 crore allocated for a 400-bed hospital in Kodagu
- > Global exhibition of services from Nov 26 to Nov 28
- > New taluk of Manchenhalli in Gowribidanur
- > Lease 20 acres of land in

Mavallipura landfill for a period of 25 years and 600 MT of waste to private firm National Environmental Group to generate 12 MW electricity

> Karnataka Housing Board to enter into land acquisition partnerships with private owners on 50:50 basis in Bengaluru, 55:45 basis in rural district and 60:40 basis in rest of the state

resources. This includes Kukke Subramanya and Chamundeshwari temples.

"A month [30 days] prior to the wedding date, couples who want to get married under the Hindu Marriage Act can register their names with the department. A list of those getting married will be announced," Poojari said. He said objections will then be invited to ensure the scheme is not misused.

Taalies will be procured in a transparent manner and district deputy commissioners will be responsible for this, he said. The department expects about 1,000 couples to get married state-wide, with most heading towards the more prominent temples across the state for the event. Poojari said it is mandatory

for parents of the bride and groom to be present at the wedding to ensure there are no "runaway" couples.

"Traditions have been considered in setting the date. Those getting married can opt for either date," he said.

Although not novel — chief minister Ramakrishna Hegde announced a similar scheme in 1983-84 — the scheme will be a boon to many poor and below poverty line (BPL) families.

"Our government had given 10-gram taali while hosting mass marriages," said B Somashekar, a former minister in Hegde cabinet. Somashekar said the fate of that scheme was unknown after the fall of the Hegde regime. "We christened it Taali Bhagya," he said.