

Kushinagar-Nepal flight to boost Buddhist circuit



Airline plans to operate a flight between Kushinagar and Bhairahawa in Lumbini province of Nepal

LUCKNOW: Six months after it got the nod from Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to operate international flights, the newly constructed [Kushinagar](#) airport has received the first proposal from Nepal-based [Buddha Airlines](#) to connect the east UP district with [Kathmandu](#) via Lucknow.

The airline submitted a proposal to Kushinagar airport authorities, which referred it to DGCA for clearance. Deputy general manager, AAI, Kushinagar airport, Sanjay Kumar Narain, confirmed the carrier has submitted a proposal to operate flights to and from Kushinagar.

“The authority has asked the company to get DGCA nod. Flight operations are currently suspended till September 30 and the airline will be allowed to operate after due approval,” Narain told TOI. Sources said, the airline also plans to operate a flight between Kushinagar and Bhairahawa in Lumbini province of [Nepal](#).

Kushinagar Airport likely to be inaugurated before UP polls

Air connectivity with Nepal is expected to boost the Buddhist circuit, which the [UP government](#) seeks to push on the global map. Tourists and pilgrims from Buddhist nations touch down at Kathmandu airport and then come to Kushinagar by road. Now, tourists will be comfortable with a direct flight from Bhairahawa and Kathmandu to Kushinagar.

Buddha Airlines had experimented with the idea of operating flights from Kathmandu to Lucknow and Varanasi around 10 years ago. The move, however, fell flat in the wake of less footfall. The airline, eventually, had to suspend its operations to India.

The [Kushinagar International Airport](#) is likely to be inaugurated months before UP assembly elections. Sources said, AAI has been seeking feedback before making the airport functional. The Kushinagar airport was handed over operations to AAI in October, 2019, and a regional connectivity scheme (RCS) terminal was completed a year later.