

Kushinagar Set For A Flying Start

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Gorakhpur: With Prime Minister Narendra Modi set to inaugurate an international airport and launch over a dozen development projects on Wednesday, development is all set to usher in [Kushinagar](#) – a much revered pilgrimage site in east Uttar Pradesh.

Built at the cost of Rs 260 crore with the state's longest runway of 3200 meters, the airport will put the district on international aviation map, providing direct connectivity with south Asian countries like Sri Lanka, Japan, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea and Vietnam.

Besides PM, the opening ceremony will be attended by chief minister Yogi Adityanath, governor Anandiben Patel, union minister for civil aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia and 126 members of Sri Lanakan delegation, including Buddhist monks and pilgrims. Located strategically near Buddhist sites in both UP and Bihar, the airport will serve as a major conduit in the Buddhist circuit consisting of Sarnath, Shravasti, Bodh Gaya, Lumbini, Vaishali, Rajgir and Sankisa.

The airport is also expected to create job opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

According to the data of the bureau of immigration, Kushinagar and Shravasti had been witnessing consistent increase in the number of tourists since 2017.

Kushinagar received 8.98 lakh, 9.3 lakh, 9.7 lakh and 10.96 lakh tourists in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively while Shravasti received 2.2 lakh, 2.58 lakh, 11.32 lakh and 12.71 lakh in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively.

Apart from the airport, the PM will also lay the foundation of a government medical college which will be built at a cost of Rs 281.45 crore. CM Yogi has set a target of ensuring admission to 100 MBBS aspirants here for session 2022-23. The medical college will have a hostel and a 500-bed hospital with all facilities. As soon as its construction is completed, about 40 lakh people living in the district and adjoining border areas of Bihar will get free medical facilities. Further, foundation stone for 12 other projects worth Rs 180.66 crore will also inaugurated, including eight projects of flood protection on river Gandak, tourism development of Buddhist circuit under Swadesh Darshan scheme, construction of government college Sukrauli and government residential school for deaf and mute girls and road widening of Kasaya-Ramkola, Rampur Khurd, Kotwa, Ghughli road.