

## Bahrain allows UAE-Israel flights to cross its airspace

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 07 September, 2020



Dhaka: Bahrain has announced all flights to and from the United Arab Emirates can cross its airspace, allowing air services between Israel and the UAE to fly over the kingdom.

The decision made on September 3 at the request of the UAE, according to the kingdom's aviation authority, follows an agreement last month that saw the UAE becoming the third Arab country to reach a deal with Israel about normalising ties.

"Bahrain will allow all flights coming to and departing from the United Arab Emirates to all countries to cross its airspace," reported the official Bahrain News Agency, citing an official source at the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications.

The decision cuts flying time between the Middle East states by several hours.

Bahrain, which hosts the US Navy's Fifth Fleet and a British naval base, has an historic Jewish community. The kingdom has slowly encouraged ties to Israel, with

two US-based rabbis in 2017 saying King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa himself promoted the idea of ending the boycott of Israel by Arab nations.

Last month, an Israeli official said Bahrain and Oman could be the next Gulf countries to follow the UAE in formalising ties with Israel.

Earlier this week, Jared Kushner, US President Donald Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, flew with a high-level Israeli delegation to the UAE on the first direct commercial passenger flight between the two countries.

While no other Arab country has yet indicated a willingness to follow the UAE, Saudi Arabia allowed the El Al charter flight carrying Kushner and the Israelis to use its airspace.