



THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUSIVE OF DELHI TIMES (CIRCULATED ONLY IN DELHI NCR) | *APPLICABLE ONLY ON MONTHLY PURCHASE (IN DELHI NCR)

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PM Modi will be visiting Johannesburg from Nov 21 to 23 to attend the 20th G20 Leaders' Summit hosted by South Africa, says MEA

Tests done, DGCA & UP to check airport readiness before launch date

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Noida: With calibration tests at Noida International Airport complete, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) officials are set to meet the UP civil aviation department on Thursday to review the airport's readiness for an aerodrome licence and determine if any prerequisites remain pending.

The aerodrome licence will pave the way for commercial flight operations from the airport, likely to commence in Dec.

Under the aerodrome manual, key requirements for an aerodrome licence include certified runway strength, proper safety are-

as, functional taxiways, aprons, lighting and navigational aids, along with updated meteorological and aeronautical data. Airports must also show operational readiness through trained staff, an accountable manager, adequate fire and rescue cover, emergency plans, wildlife control and strong ground-handling and security systems before final inspections and calibration tests.

On Nov 4, DGCA completed the second round of calibration tests, following the first test on Oct 31. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) had cleared the airport's security preparedness on Sept 15, while the Airports Authority of India

oversaw the installation of communication, navigation, and surveillance/air traffic management systems.

Officials said while roofing of the passenger terminal is complete, technical trials are underway, and a full Operational Readiness and Airport Transfer (ORAT) programme—covering system checks, simulations and stakeholder training—is in progress, including tests of baggage handling, security systems, check-in counters and boarding gates.

With only the DGCA licence pending, Noida International Airport Limited (NIAL) earlier told the civil aviation ministry it expects flights to begin in Dec.



The airport will start operations with only domestic flights

On Wednesday, CEO RK Singh told **TOI** that additional chief secretary (civil aviation) Deepak Kumar and

DGCA representatives will attend Thursday's review, along with officials from BCAS, Tata Projects and

other stakeholders. "The aerodrome licence issue will be discussed in detail," he said.

Officials said flight-schedule announcements will be made once DGCA approval is granted. After the licence is issued, concessionaire YI-APL will coordinate with airlines to finalise operations. AERA has already approved an ad-hoc user development fee (UDF). "Ticket bookings will open at least 30 days before flights begin, depending on when the licence is issued. Airlines generally need a month's notice for slot allocation," Singh said.

The airport will initially operate domestic and cargo flights, with a handling capacity of 1.2 crore passengers

NIAL CEO

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annually. Terminal 1 is set to be nearly doubled, increasing capacity to 3 crore passengers per annum (CPA). Future phases will see the addition of a second runway and terminal, expanding capacity to 5 CPA and eventually 7 CPA.

Last month, NIAL CEO Christoph Schnellmann told **TOI** the airport would start with a limited window of daytime operations before gradually adding night flights. Services will begin with domestic routes, while international operations are expected in the first half of 2026.

In Oct, chief minister Yogi Adityanath inspected the airport and later met PM Narendra Modi, inviting him to inaugurate the terminal. With a final date awaiting approval from the PMO, whether flights would start immediately after the inauguration or 30-45 days later, depends on the PMO's schedule and the timing of the aerodrome licence.