

Station planned inside airport complex

On Delhi-Varanasi High-Speed Route

AERIAL SURVEY UNDER WAY

- ▶ The high-speed bullet train from Delhi to Varanasi will halt at the terminal building of Noida International Airport in Jewar
- ▶ The original plan was to construct tracks along the expressway but detour will be taken for airport connectivity
- ▶ Aerial survey with help of helicopter in Greater Noida region was initiated from Sunday
- ▶ Plans are also afoot to connect Ayodhya

THE ROUTE

Delhi, Jewar, Mathura, Agra, Etawah, Lucknow, Raebareli, Prayagraj, Bhadohi and Varanasi



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Noida: The high-speed rail corridor planned between Delhi and Varanasi is likely to have a station within the international airport complex at Jewar. This is the first concrete proposal to connect NCR's second airport, which is chasing a 2023-24 launch schedule, with Delhi. The idea of a metro corridor has also been floated but that proposal is yet to be firmed up.

A spokesperson for the National High-Speed Rail Corporation said a survey to plan the alignment of the train route had begun on Sunday. A helicopter equipped with light detection and ranging technology and a high-resolution camera is studying the area through which the tracks are being planned. Officials of the Yamu-

na Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) and the railway corporation are still deliberating on the best alignment possible at the airport site.

The high-speed tracks will mostly be laid parallel to the Yamuna Expressway up to Agra, except in Jewar, where a small tweak has to be made to the alignment if the station is to come up within the airport complex. A strong view among officials overseeing the airport project is that the station should be constructed within the terminal complex itself so that passengers coming from Delhi can alight at the airport directly and walk up for their check-ins. Sources said the commercial block of the terminal building could be one of the primary contenders for the station. Officials

clarified that except for the detour in Jewar, the tracks would be constructed along the expressway as planned. "There is no point of offering airport connectivity if there is no station at the terminal building. Talks are on with YEIDA officials to finalise the exact alignment of the tracks and villages through which they would pass," said an official of the railway corporation. Arun Vir Singh, the chief executive officer of YEIDA, said the high-speed train would be the quickest mode of transport between Delhi and the airport in Jewar. "The distance should be covered within 20 to 25 minutes. That is why we had been trying to convince the railway ministry to provide connectivity to the airport while planning the alignment of the corridor," he said.