

## MoHUA objects to NCRTC's airport link plan

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**NOIDA:** The Union ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) has raised strong objections to the National Capital Region Transport Corporations' (NCRTC) proposal to connect Noida International Airport via a rapid rail corridor routed through Ghaziabad.

The ministry has instead directed NCRTC to prepare a fresh proposal for a direct Sarai Kale Khan–Jewar link, stating that the airport requires a long-term, high-capacity connection with Delhi rather than a circuitous route through Ghaziabad.

The directive follows a

detailed review meeting held on Wednesday, where officials concluded that the earlier 72km Ghaziabad–Jewar corridor would not meet future passenger demand and would require extensive technical modifications. MoHUA has now instructed NCRTC to conduct a new survey and create a revised project report for an alignment originating at Sarai Kale Khan and passing through Noida City Centre and Surajpur before terminating at Jewar.

NCRTC had earlier submitted a detailed project report for a 22-station elevated rapid-rail-cum-metro corridor estimated at Rs 20,637 crore. The

alignment proposed connecting Siddharth Vihar to Ecotech-6 and then extending to the airport through YEIDA sectors 17, 18 and 21. Although the Uttar Pradesh government had given in-principle approval, the DPR was returned by MoHUA citing several concerns—lack of a Delhi link, duplication with NMRC's Aqua Line extension, the absence of a destination survey, and doubts about the safety and feasibility of integrating metro and rapid rail on a shared elevated structure.

Officials at the meeting noted that most airport-bound passengers would originate from Delhi and Noida, making the

Ghaziabad alignment inefficient and unlikely to generate the projected ridership. A preliminary alignment now under consideration would run via the DND Flyway corridor, Noida City Centre, NSEZ, Surajpur, Knowledge Park-3, Pari Chowk and YEIDA sectors 18 and 21. If Sarai Kale Khan poses operational hurdles, New Ashok Nagar may be evaluated as an alternative starting point.

NCRTC will now prepare a feasibility study for the revised corridor, while the earlier Ghaziabad link approved by the state in December 2023 remains on hold pending the Centre's approval.