

Andal airport may open on Poila Boisakh

Debajyoti Chakraborty

Andal: With the ground calibration for Kazi Nazrul Airport in Andal completed on Monday, the government is targeting a Poila Boisakh opening for the showcase project.

"This is a great day for Indian aviation history as ground calibration of the first Greenfield private airport since Independence was completed yesterday (Monday). Our communications department will analyze the report and send it to the director general of civil aviation (DGCA) for final approval of licence for Kazi Nazrul Airport," said Suddasatwa Bhaduri, executive director (eastern region) of the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

He said Kazi Nazrul Airport has night-landing facility — the second such airport in the state after NSCBI Airport in Dum Dum. Officials of DGCA, two general managers (CNS and ATM) of AAI and Changi Airport representatives have been taking part in the three-day flight calibration that was done with Beechcraft 350 aircraft.

State transport secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay said the state government has tied up with non-scheduled air carrier Pinnacle Air for low-cost flights on the Andal, Bagdogra, Cooch Behar and Kolkata routes. "Once we get the licence, which will hopefully happen within a month, we will start with flights four days a week from Poila Boisakh," he added.

Partha Ghosh, managing director of BAPL, told TOI that besides Pinnacle Air, talks are on with GoAir for four-days-a-week Delhi-Andal flights on 70-to 80-seater planes with ticket prices within Rs 5,000.