The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

First Production Model of Russia's MC-21 Jet Completes Maiden Flight

August 03, 2026

The MC-21 flying over Siberia. **uacrussia.ru**

The mass-production model of Russia's flagship MC-21 passenger jet has completed its first test flight, its manufacturer, the United Aircraft Corporation, said on Monday, days after President Vladimir Putin made a surprise visit to the company's assembly facility in Siberia.

The MC-21-310 airliner flew for one hour and 23 minutes after taking off from an airstrip at the Irkutsk Aviation Plant, reaching speeds of 600 kilometers per hour (372 miles per hour) and altitudes of 6,000 meters (19,700 feet).

"The first assembly line produced aircraft performed well, and the flight plan was completed in full," test pilot Roman Taskayev said following the flight.

United Aircraft Corporation CEO Vadim Badekha said the Irkutsk factory is preparing an initial batch of 18 airliners and that the government approved additional production orders following Putin's visit to the plant on July 24. During that visit, test pilots briefed the Russian president on preparations for the jet's flight testing.

First launched in 2009, the MC-21 program was originally slated for mass production in 2016, but sanctions and delays in replacing foreign-made parts continually pushed back delivery timelines. The plane's developers say it is built entirely with parts sourced in Russia.

State defense conglomerate Rostec, which oversees the United Aircraft Corporation, aims to complete certification of the MC-21 by late 2026, with commercial flights scheduled to begin months later.

Vitaly Naryshkin, the jet's chief designer, said running production alongside testing will allow United Aircraft Corporation to "minimize the gap between receiving certification and beginning deliveries" of the MC-21.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/08/03/first-production-model-of-russias-mc-21-jet-completes-maiden-flight-a93399