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Press Release

AAI conducts international workshop for utilizing GAGAN for harmonized Satellite Navigation in APAC

New Delhi, 16th March, 2018: In keeping with the Prime Minister's objective of using technology as a means of development and co-operation, Airports Authority of India has now offered GPS-aided Geo Augmented Navigation (GAGAN) to SAARC and Southeast Asian countries in order to allow them to reap the significant benefits that accrue from such an advanced navigation system. AAI conducted a two-day workshop on 15th and 16th of March 2018 for civil aviation representatives from SAARC and Southeast Asian nations to appraise them of the performance and benefits of GAGAN and provide them with hands-on experience of the functioning of the system.

AAI in conjunction with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) had developed and deployed the Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS) which augments GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite Systems) signals through the use of additional satellite-broadcasting techniques. India is amongst only four nations in the world to develop and deploy this ingenious technology that removes the signal errors from GNSS and provides highly precise navigation signals to the users. Other countries/regions that use such a system are the United States of America, the European Union and Japan.

Implementing an SBAS system is a long-term investment for India, which will go a long way in bringing operational efficiencies to the civil aviation environment as well as non-aviation sectors like developing Smart Cities, intelligent transportation, town-planning, maritime, highways, railways, surveying, security, telecom, geodesy and personal usage that require precise navigation, positioning and timing signals. Basis the successful deployment and certification, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued a directive mandating GAGAN equipage on all Indian registered aircraft entering the country on or after 1st January 2019 and is also examining the feasibility of issuing a mandate for retrofitting of the current Indian registered aircraft.

The workshop was inaugurated by Shri. R. N. Choubey, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation with Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, AAI delivering the Key Note address. Shri. A. K. Dutta, Member (Air Navigation Services), AAI along with Shri. S. V. Satish, Executive Director (Air Traffic Management), AAI and in charge GAGAN, set the context for the workshop by providing an update on the GAGAN programme.

During the workshop, AAI, ISRO and DGCA as equal partners in implementation of GAGAN shared their perspective and learnings from the development, deployment and certification of the system along with Raytheon, which has provided the ground equipment necessary for GAGAN operations. Leading aircraft and receiver manufacturers such as Airbus, Bombardier, BELL helicopters, Honeywell, Rockwell Collins and Accord also provided information to the SAARC and Southeast Asian nations regarding readiness of solutions for GAGAN enablement in various types of aircraft. KPMG also presented how a business case was built to prove to the stakeholders that GAGAN was not only a viable alternative to the current land-based navigational aids, but is a highly efficient option.

Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, AAI stated that the system had been designed with adequate capabilities to be able to cater to the needs of the Asia Pacific region. He hoped that the countries across the region collaborate to operationalize Asia's SBAS in a time bound manner.

The conference was followed by a visit to the Master Control Center at Nangloi, Delhi on the second day of the workshop. The representatives of neighbouring countries were shown the infrastructure that has been built to ensure operational integrity of the GAGAN service. The visitors not only appreciated the efforts being made by AAI to push the boundaries of safe, reliable and cost-efficient air navigation services, but they also expressed sincere intent that their countries can collaborate towards making GAGAN not just a reality in India but also across a larger region.

The workshop was jointly organized by AAI and KPMG who is assisting AAI under the US-Aviation Cooperation Program and was attended by representatives from Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives.

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From (L to R) Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, Airports Authority of India; B.S. Bhullar, DG, Directorate General of Civil Aviation; R.N. Choubey, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation; Mehnaz Ansari, US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) India representative and A.K. Dutta, Member (ANS), AAI during the inauguration of two-day workshop on GAGAN, held in New Delhi.