

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 38
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 22nd July 2024)

FLIGHT OPERATIONS AT PAKYONG AIRPORT

38. SHRI DORJEE TSHERING LEPCHA

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Pakyong Airport since its commissioning in 2018 is marred by flight cancellations due to poor visibility particularly during Monsoon season;
- (b) if so, the efforts made by Government to improve potential operations of the Pakyong Airport in low visibility;
- (c) whether Government will conduct a feasibility study for installation of GAGAN based navigation system and/or Instrument Landing System (ILS) at Pakyong airport to enhance the flying operations during low visibility conditions;
- (d) if so, details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) & (b): Pakyong Airport is licensed as a Visual Flight Rules (VFR) aerodrome which can sustain flight operations at or above 5 kilometres of ground visibility. However, during the monsoon season, the visibility often drops to 500 meters or less, posing substantial difficulties for flight operations under Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC). In January 2021, Required Navigation Performance (RNP) approach was implemented at Pakyong Airport to mitigate visibility constraints. This initiative reduced the visibility criteria to 2400 meters, leading to a notable 75% reduction in flight cancellations.

(c) to (e): For the installation of GAGAN-based navigation aids at Pakyong Airport, a feasibility study was conducted which recommended the removal or cutting of adjacent hilly terrain. The installation of the Instrument Landing System (ILS) at Pakyong Airport is limited by space availability, hilly terrain, and the need for additional land along with the cutting of hills and trees.
