

## Huaxi once again aims sky-high with its own helicopter

By WANG ZHENGHUA  
in Shanghai  
wangzhenghua@chinadaily.com.cn

China's richest village has flown to new heights by offering free helicopter rides for residents to overlook the "No 1 village in China" from the air.

Huaxi, in Jiangyin of East China's Jiangsu province, has gained approval from the Civil Aviation Administration to launch and operate Jiangsu Huaxi General Aviation, the country's first village-owned general aviation company.

That means the company can engage in a number of businesses, including commercial flights for sightseeing, emergency relief, pilot training, sky advertising and meteorological sounding.

It's part of the village's efforts to boost tourism. The village currently welcomes about 2 million visitors every year.

The village held a grand ceremony in Huaxi on July 26 for the foundation of the company, which has an initial investment of 100 million yuan (\$15.7 million).

But before the village starts the commercial operation of the two helicopters bought from McDonnell Douglas and Eurocopter, residents have the chance to take a free ride.

Since last year, more than 2,000 Huaxi residents have enjoyed the unique experience of flying no higher than 300 meters to gain a bird's-eye view of their hometown.

"Villagers are very excited and eager to sign up for the trial ride," Zhao Zhilong, deputy Party secretary of Huaxi, said on Monday. "They only need to reserve one day ahead, and all residents in the village are entitled to one free ride. It's part of the service that the village offers to its residents."

According to Zhao, the AS350B3 helicopter from Eurocopter can accommodate four passengers and two pilots, and the MD902 helicopter from McDonnell Douglas could seat six passengers plus two pilots.

But the flights are limited to the nearby region at the moment and the two helicopters have to take off and land at the same venue in Huaxi, as

using airports in other regions requires an application to the regulator at least three days in advance.

The two machines have been making eight trips a day to take residents sightseeing though no flight was scheduled on Monday due to the bad weather.

"It's still undecided when the free ride service will end or when the two machines will be put to commercial use," Zhao said.

The village eventually plans to charge 1,000 yuan for each 15-minute sightseeing flight.

The village is also looking to buy three more helicopters and a business jet within three years and expand the sightseeing service to Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou in Jiangsu, and divert to other general aviation sectors.

In the past five years, the village has amassed revenues of 229.6 billion yuan.

Covering a radius of 4 km and with a population of 36,000, the village is hailed as one of China's greatest success stories with all residents living in plush villas with two cars, at least \$250,000 in the bank and free healthcare and education.

In October, the village wowed the world once again by opening a 328-meter landmark skyscraper hotel for guests.

The 74-story Longxi International Hotel is as high as the tallest building in Beijing. It ranks as the 15th highest skyscraper in the world, dwarfing many famous constructions such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris and New York's Chrysler Building.



LI GEN / FOR CHINA DAILY

A helicopter sits on the parking apron at the airport of Huaxi village, in Jiangsu province.

## School for migrants' children to remain open

By LUO WANGSHU  
luowangshu@chinadaily.com.cn

A Beijing school for migrant workers' children that has been fighting a closure order will begin enrollment on Friday as scheduled, after school supporters reached a compromise with education officials.

Parents of the 658 students at Tongxin Experimental Primary School had been bracing for the daunting prospect of finding new schools for the youngsters.

However, "authorities say the school will be able to start the fall semester as usual," said honorary principal Sun Heng on Monday.

A temporary agreement had been reached over an earlier closure notice that "at least allows us to reopen on Aug 20," he added.

The news comes days after the local government cut off the water supply to the school, in northern Chaoyang district.

The officials "claimed it was to fix underground pipes," Sun said, adding that on the same day, a digger started "construction" in front of the school gates without any prior notice.

Mud was piled at the school's gate, making it difficult for students who are taking part in the school's summer camp to enter or leave the campus.

"The water came back on the next day," Sun said, adding that by Sunday, the road was smooth again and the digger had gone.

The Jinzhan township gov-

ernment, which administers the area, did not respond to an interview request. Neither did Beijing's education commission nor the Ministry of Education.

Ju Jianying, the mother of a second-grader at Tongxin Experimental Primary School, said she is relieved the school will remain open.

"My son loves the school," said the cleaner, a migrant from Henan province. "The school is right next to our family's apartment, and I wouldn't have much time to take him to one farther away. I have lots of work to do."

Tongxin Experimental Primary School, which opened in 2005, has 32 teachers and scores of volunteers from Beijing universities. It has been recognized as a model school for migrant workers' children, receiving subsidies and social supports from celebrities and universities. It also plays as the research center of many prestigious universities.

However, on June 19, the principal received a notice from Jinzhan township's education and hygiene authorities that ordered him to close the school immediately because of safety issues. The notice accused the school of lacking proper credentials.

The move prompted six celebrities, including former talk show host Cui Yongyuan and several professors, to send a letter to the Ministry of Education, calling for the preservation of the school.

In the letter, they wrote: "The Tongxin school shows how

migrant workers are involved in the city, and are aiding in the city's development. The school and its people are precious education resources. Children who study here will benefit from its education for their whole lives."

Cui also posted on a micro blog on July 31 that education authorities had responded to the concerns and promised that no child will be left out of school at Tongxin.

"Because of responsible adults, children can pay attention to their studies without distractions," Cui wrote.

Beijing education authorities have made great efforts to settle migrant workers' children, and made a promise that no child would be left out of school in 2011.

The Ministry of Education recently announced plans to avoid shutdowns and merging schools, Xinhua News Agency reported.

"The best way to improve education is to conduct an equal competition among public schools, elite schools, and the ones for migrant workers' children," said Li Changping, director of the China Rural Construction and Planning Institute and one of the co-signers of the letter to the ministry.

Li added that it is the government's responsibility to offer resources and guidance to less-developed schools, and to provide all children from different families and backgrounds the same educational opportunities.



BAO KANGXUAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Residents watch a 5D movie as their seats move along with the movie, at a night market in Dongyang, Zhejiang province.

## Poll: Chinese want lower movie-ticket prices

By LI WENFANG  
in Guangzhou  
liwenfang@chinadaily.com.cn

Many Chinese people are shunning cinemas because of sky-high ticket prices and a lack of diverse movie options, a study suggests.

Of the 5,000 people polled, more than 65 percent said they have not visited a cinema within the last year, although 52 percent said they would be interested in doing so.

The study was done by the Guangzhou Public Opinion Research Center in 423 cities and counties in 23 provinces and four municipalities.

Thirty-one percent of respondents said ticket prices are too expensive, while 50 percent said they would like to see

prices lowered.

The Ministry of Culture has laid out a plan to promote cultural industries from 2011 to 2015, saying it is important to cultural development to offer citizens operas and movies.

However, although 72 percent of those polled agreed with the statement, 36 percent said their movie needs cannot be satisfied locally.

In addition to lower ticket prices, the respondents said they would also like to see more movies, as well as more and better cinemas.

Some said they are hoping for more big productions, more diversified movies and more outdoor movies.

At a news conference on movie-fund management last week, Tong Gang, head of film

administration bureau for the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, said the issue of high movie-ticket prices will be addressed.

This year, six of China's top filmmakers, all members of the national committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, including Zhang Yimou and Feng Xiaogang, called for cheaper cinema tickets.

Cinema tickets at a shopping mall in central Guangzhou, Guangdong province, for example, cost between 40 yuan (\$6) and 110 yuan.

However, Xu Binbiao, general manager of the Pearl River Cinema Circuit, said the tickets are not as expensive as they appear because discounts are available, such as through

bank-card payments and online purchases.

A ticket costs only about 40 yuan on average in Guangzhou in reality, with full-price tickets accounting for less than 10 percent of the total, he said.

The existing listed prices were set 10 years ago and are actually going down, considering the higher cost in running cinemas.

An immediate price cut could create losses given the contracts already signed with partners, but Xu said they are working to make the listed prices and discounts more reasonable.

"I also hope for lower prices so that more consumers will come to boost sales and bring a boom to the market," Xu said.

Shu Meng contributed to this story.

CHINADAILY

With the global warming, energy shortage and environmental pollution problems causing growing concern worldwide, the world energy industry has reached a global consensus on the issues: develop renewable energy resources, speed up the application of new and clean energies and actively promote an energy revolution.

At the end of this year, the UN Climate Change Summit will be held in Doha, Qatar.

During the event, China Daily will launch a **Green Solutions Special** to cover China's positive measures to protect the environment, conserve energy, reduce emissions and cope with climate change.

Chinese and foreign enterprises committed to doing their part in climate change are welcome to join us for inserting advertisements in the Green Solutions Special and sharing their success stories with our readers.

For further details, please contact:  
huangmengxin@chinadaily.com.cn

