

Shuangliu hopes to soar with airport economy

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The name Shuangliu might ring a bell with travelers because of Shuangliu International Airport in Chengdu, one of the country's four major aviation hubs.

Shuangliu county, where the airport is located, has long been a significant contributor to Chengdu's economy and industrial development.

Taking off with the airport, the county now has its eyes firmly set on a new stage of economic growth with advanced manufacturing industries and the development of a bonded area.

Airport economy

As a gateway to western China and a crucial logistics center in Southwest China, bustling Shuangliu International Airport has a total of 222 routes, including 77 international connections.

It became the first in the country's central and western region with a non-stop flight to San Francisco, which started in June.

Last year, it launched eight important non-stop flights to cities including Melbourne, Frankfurt and London.

It also has 33 non-stop air routes both for passengers and freight to Europe and North America as well as southern, central and western Asia.

Authorities in Shuangliu have stepped up efforts in developing an airport-based economy focusing on aviation, logistics, manufacturing and service industries.

In the field of logistics, an international express delivery center inside the airport bonded area became operational in July. It is a major step in Chengdu's bid to become the economic and trade hub in the southwest.

According to city customs officials, the center dealing with the international delivery business, can help form new, modern industrial clusters amid the rapid development of e-commerce.

They said international logistic giants DHL and UPS will set up operations in the center.

Chengdu began a 72-hour visa-free policy last year that allows citizens from 51 countries to spend three days in Chengdu if they have valid third-country visas and flight tickets to onward destinations.

The policy has further fueled growth in Shuangliu's tourism, conference and trade sectors and will help the county further open to the world, said local officials.

New plans

Authorities in the county are now working on plans to develop a multi-functional airport economy zone that features a bonded area and a nearby business district to host regional headquarters of local and international companies.

The Chengdu Airport Bonded Logistics Center that became operational recently is the only bonded logistic center in the Sichuan province.

According to local officials, products in the bonded logistic center will enjoy a range

of preferential tax policies. The center also offers services including warehousing and international delivery.

Surrounding the airport with the logistics center as the core, the multi-functional airport economy area will bring more extensive and professional services.

Officials said county authorities are also studying the Shanghai pilot free trade zone to explore the possibility of a free trade economy in Shuangliu.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing is also an important part of the airport economy.

The Shuangliu Aviation Economic Development Zone just inked an agreement with the Chinese Academy of Sciences in October for a project to develop and produce engines for medium and small-sized aircraft.

The facility will involve a total investment of 565 million yuan (\$90.8 million).

Local officials said it is not a very large project but represents the most advanced level of the local manufacturing industry.

Shuangliu is also developing major industrial clusters for new-energy equipment and electronic information.

In addition, the county is cooperating with major universities in the country to build industrial parks and a talent pool.

The local government said it pledges to offer good services to investors.

It has set up coordination teams of officials from different departments to communicate with local businesses and to solve their problems.

It also offers one-stop services for business registration and other administration services.



PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

With 222 routes connecting domestic and overseas cities, Shuangliu International Airport is the aviation hub for Southwest China.



Home to the fourth-busiest airport in China, Shuangliu county is on forefront of Chengdu's opening up.

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