



YUE YUEWEI / XINHUA

The first domestically developed ultra-light civil helicopter makes its debut on Thursday at the First China Helicopter Exposition in Tianjin. Priced at 3.5 million yuan (\$541,000), the one-ton AC310 helicopter can carry two to three passengers and cruise at up to 159 km/h.

Helicopter rescue hovering over horizon

By LI XIANG
AND RONG XIAOZHENG
CHINA DAILY

TIANJIN — Helicopter rescue will be available in China for 200 to 300 million people in five years, the Ministry of Civil Affairs revealed.

Kong Qingxin, director-general of the ministry's promotion center for emergency assistance, said rescue response time will be possible within 15 minutes in major cities.

About 1 million square kilometers — 11 percent of country's land area — will be covered.

"Two-thirds of those seriously injured in incidents or natural disasters will die within 25 minutes. With immediate medical treatment within 15 minutes, 80 percent of those injured will survive," said Chen

Ping, deputy director-general of the promotion center.

In the next 10 to 15 years, at least 30 billion yuan (\$4.7 billion) is needed to establish 850 rescue bases with 1,050 helicopters, Kong said at a helicopter forum in Tianjin on Wednesday, ahead of the First China Helicopter Exposition.

The exposition runs from Thursday to Sunday.

According to Kong, there will be nearly 300 sites for about 350 helicopters along major freeways in the east by the end of 2020. An additional 260 bases and 300 helicopters will cover 50 highly populated large- and medium-size cities.

Hundreds of additional helicopters are needed to resolve rescue problems in sparsely populated and remote areas.

Ministry of Transport flight teams currently have 11 rescue bases, 12 helicopters and eight rented aircraft.

Since it was launched in 2001, the team has implemented more than 1,500 rescues in extreme weather and sea conditions, saving nearly 2,000 lives, said Zhang Jinshan, deputy director of the rescue and salvage bureau of the Ministry of Transport.

Across the nation, only 294 helicopters are available for rescue operations, an average of three per 100,000 square kilometers on average, far less than developed countries, Chen said.

According to international standards, each helicopter rescue base should cover a radius of 50 km, said Chen.

"With reductions of government

constraints on low-altitude airspace, helicopters will be irreplaceable in saving people's lives," Chen said.

The nation's first exclusive aviation rescue training base is gearing up for construction in Guangdong province, Chen said.

Yin Zhigang, deputy general manager of China Flying Dragon General Aviation, expressed his concerns about the present condition of helicopter medical aid in China.

"Several hospitals in Shanghai, Chongqing, Nanjing and Tianjin have established buildings with landing pads. However, due to the quantity and cost of helicopters, helicopter medical aid still remains at the test stage or only for occasional use. Basically, helicopter medical aid is still a blank in our country."

Rail line sales go online

By XIN DINGDING
CHINA DAILY

BEIJING — Sales of all bullet train tickets will go online at the end of this month, and passengers will pay lower fees if they refund tickets, the railway ministry said.

Following sales of tickets online since July for the Beijing-Shanghai and Beijing-Tianjin high-speed trains, the Ministry of Railways said on Thursday that tickets for all bullet trains will be sold at 12306.cn.

Starting Tuesday, passengers can make a few clicks and buy tickets online for the Zhengzhou-Xi'an and Wuhan-Guangzhou high-speed railways.

Then from next Thursday, six more high-speed railways will go online, including Shanghai-Nanjing, Shanghai-Hangzhou and Guangzhou-Shenzhen.

All bullet train tickets will be available online from Sept 30, the ministry said.

Passengers can dial the number 12306 or go to the website to inquire about the train timetable, ticket prices and the number of remaining tickets, but so far the hotline has no service in English.

Meanwhile, the ministry ruled that it will charge only a 5-percent refund fee starting Sept 25.

In the past, passengers could only get 80 percent of the ticket price back.

The measures will improve the quality of passenger railway ser-

vice, the ministry said in a news release on Thursday.

Netizens mostly applauded the measures on Thursday, but worried that lower refund fees could be good news for scalpers, who will pay less if they fail to find a buyer.

Some passengers, however, believed the ministry could do more.

"For the railway ministry that monopolizes the rail industry, it has the social responsibility to reduce fees. The ministry could do better, such as setting a fixed fee instead of a fixed percentage," said Wang Lingyun, 23, an employee at a German company in Shanghai.

Netizens pointed out other rules that need to be abolished, including refusing to refund tickets for trains that have departed, and only refunding tickets where they were sold.

They also complained that the online system is not consumer friendly, suggesting the ministry improve it.

Ticket agencies whose income partly comes from commissions said they are not worried about the online sales.

A woman surnamed Tang at a ticket agency in Beijing said her clients are all old customers from nearby communities, and it is easier for them to buy tickets from agencies instead of the Internet.

Jin Huiyu contributed to this story.



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Malaysian property sector ripe for Chinese investment

By MATTHEW FULCO

Malaysia is wooing Chinese investment in its thriving real estate sector, with the government agency Malaysia Property Incorporated (MPI) leading the campaign.

MPI facilitates investment in Malaysian real estate and manages relevant promotions.

The Malaysian government aims to increase foreign participation in the Southeast Asian nation's property market from 2 to 5 percent in the coming years.

Chinese buyers could play a cornerstone role in that process as the nation's largest corporations expand internationally and wealthy individuals seek to diversify their property investments.

Malaysia's real estate market is uniquely affordable, open and stable in a region marked by volatile fluctuations in property prices and regulations, says MPI.

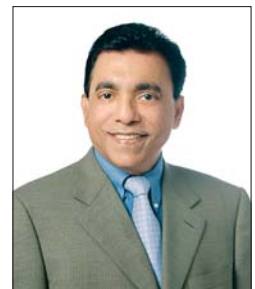
The Malaysian property market has grown steadily since 1999 and emerged relatively unscathed from the 2008 global financial crisis, according to the agency's statistics.

Forecast investment returns for the moderate risk Kuala Lumpur property market range between 7.6 and 10.8 percent across prime retail, office, industrial warehouse and luxury residential categories, according to a report published by ING Real Estate Investment Management. That compares favorably with Singapore and Bangkok, where returns are similar but carry higher risk.

"For buyers in the region

seeking a long-term investment that will steadily appreciate, Malaysia is the place," says Kumar Tharmalingam, chief executive officer of MPI.

Meanwhile, Kuala Lumpur is considerably more affordable than other comparable cities in the region. The Malaysian capital is ranked 104th by



Kumar Tharmalingam, chief executive officer of MPI

consultancy Mercer in its 2011 Cost of Living survey, while Hong Kong is 9th and Singapore 8th.

Few restrictions

Overseas buyers benefit equally from Malaysia's few restrictions on foreign ownership of real estate. Most property is freehold, meaning foreigners can purchase it without a local partner. There is no limit to the number of properties an overseas buyer can hold. Land titles are independent and transparent.

The one major caveat is that foreigners are only permitted to buy property priced at \$180,000 or higher, yet this should have little effect on Chinese buyers. Homebuyers in the market are interested in

luxury residences, while corporations seek large commercial and industrial properties, says Tharmalingam.

Huawei Technologies is a case in point. The telecom giant signed a memorandum of understanding during Premier Wen Jiabao's April visit with Malaysia's Ministry of Science and Technology and Innovation to help the Southeast Asian country train 10,000 telecom professionals over the next five years. That will require a sizable training center in all likelihood, said Chan Tze Wee, MPI vice-president of investment promotions, in a research note.

MPI says Malaysia has seen increasing enquiries from Chinese homebuyers since the second quarter of this year.

"Chinese real estate agents are testing the viability of promoting prime Malaysian properties to their local clients in first-tier cities," Chan says.

Prospective Chinese buyers are unique in their strong preference for themed properties like villas on golf courses and beachfront condos, she explains. Their immediate areas of interest are Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Kota Kinabalu, she adds.

MPI will host a forum today and tomorrow in Shanghai to help familiarize prospective Chinese buyers with the Malaysian residential property market. It is the first event of its kind in China and is being held with the support of the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority and Malaysian External Trade Development Corporation.