

## WEATHER

Today's  
forecast

Nanjing	22/25 Rainy
Suzhou	23/26 Rainy
Wuxi	22/26 Rainy
Yangzhou	21/25 Overcast
Xuzhou	21/28 Cloudy
Changzhou	22/25 Rainy
Nantong	22/25 Rainy
Lianyungang	20/27 Cloudy
Huai'an	20/26 Cloudy
Yancheng	20/25 Cloudy
Zhenjiang	22/24 Overcast
Taizhou	22/25 Overcast
Suqian	20/27 Overcast

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China Daily  
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chinadaily.com.cnA FRUGAL GRAND OPENING  
HOME AT THE VILLAGE

By SUN XIAOCHEN

**T**he Nanjing Youth Olympic Games Village will provide a comfortable and secure home away from home for the participants at the gala event, officials said at the opening ceremony.

Following a brief yet warm ceremony on a breezy Aug 12 morning, the Nanjing village officially opened its doors to around 6,000 athletes, coaches, officials and reporters, who will live in the 140,000 square meter complex in the southwest of Nanjing during their 12-day stay. It will offer a variety of services to help its new residents adapt to the local environment.

"On behalf of the Chinese Olympic Committee and the State General Administration of Sport, I extend sincere welcome to all the villagers and appreciation to all the contributors to the village," Yang Shu'an, vice-minister of the SGAS and vice-president of the COC, said at the ceremony.

"The YOY, boasting cutting-edge facilities and a beautiful environment, is ready to serve athletes and coaches from 204 countries and regions. I believe the accommodation team at the village will make it a sweet home for everyone through their warm and thoughtful services," Yang said.

Although not being able to attend the ceremony himself, International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach extended his congratulations through Gilbert Felli, IOC executive director for the Olympic Games.

"I wish I could be with all of you here to be present for this official opening of the YOY," Felli said reading a letter from Bach.

"During my visit last November so many memories of my time as an Olympian flew back. The YOY symbolizes all values perfectly. This is a place for universality, excellence, harmony and respect. Let me here express my sincere congratulations to the local organizing committee team. Their work offers excellent conditions for the competition and ensures comfort and security of all athletes and officials.

"For the next 12 days, the village will be like home. I greatly look forward to coming to the village and spending some time with you. See you all in a few days."

In keeping with the Games' cost-effective approach, the opening ceremony was a simple affair that lasted only 25 minutes.

Chen Xiaohang, vice-mayor of the YOY, said the Nanjing organizing committee would show its hospitality through colorful cultural exchange events, not big-spending extravagant ceremonies.

"That's what the Youth Olympic spirit highlights," Chen said.

"The YOG needs to be sustained in an affordable way while reaching out to many other countries in the world. So we have cut down on unnecessary activities."

More than 2,900 volunteers will be on hand in the village, which has 1,275 apartments, 2,800 seats at dining halls and 599 meal choices from different parts of the world.

Walking around the village, scenes of athletes mingling at cafes, taking photos for each other and with huge mascots and talking with volunteers were abundant.

Some team officials, who had checked in early to familiarize themselves with the facilities, hailed the village as a "comfortable zone".



Top: Flag-bearers march into the Youth Olympic Games Village during the opening ceremony. Above: Children performers joke around before the ceremony. PHOTOS BY WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY



**"I believe the accommodation team at the village will make it a sweet home for everyone through their warm and thoughtful services."**

## Yang Shu'an

vice-minister of the State General Administration of Sport, and vice-president of the Chinese Olympic Committee

"I have been here twice and it just gets better. I am pleasantly surprised because I have been to 92 countries and China always has amazing infrastructure and facilities. The rooms are comfortable, there is also a large variety of halal food," Abdelrahmann Mohamad Elsallawi, Sudan's chef de mission, told the YOG's official news agency.

Ken Zseremeta, head coach of the Venezuelan women's soccer team, aired his concerns about the possible lack of Spanish-speaking staff and volunteers in the YOY.

"There are many Latin American teams here and if we cannot get help with language, it will become a problem."

He was, however, very pleased with the tasty and nutritious food on the menu.

Brazil's chef de mission, Adriana Behar, shrugged off the language issue.

"These young people will manage. All they need to do is smile and they will make friends and have fun," she said. "This is like an Olympic-level village. And the venues are also incredible."