

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

Ningbo and Hungary Now Connected by Direct Air Route

By Jin Lu

At 16:13 on May 29th, a Boeing 787-9 aircraft carrying 59 passengers took off from the runway of Ningbo Lishe International Airport. Bound for Budapest's Liszt Ferenc International Airport, the capital of Hungary, this transcontinental journey is expected to span approximately 11 hours.

Commencing on June 12th, this flight will be operated on a regular basis, signifying a notable milestone for Ningbo Airport. It marks the debut of the airport's first regular intercontinental passenger route, paving the way for enhanced connectivity between Ningbo and Europe.

Previous Air Connections

Budapest, the capital of Hungary, is renowned as the "Paris of Eastern Europe" and the "Pearl of the Danube River". Its iconic landmarks, including the Chain Bridge and Heroes' Square, showcase the city's grandeur and allure.

The enhanced transport connectivity between Hungary and Ningbo can trace its roots back to 2015 when Ningbo Airport and Budapest Airport signed a memorandum of cooperation in November of that year, becoming "sister airports".

The collaboration gained further momentum in June 2016, during the 2nd China-CEEC Investment and Trade Expo, as Ningbo Airport introduced a direct charter passenger flight to Budapest, establishing a convenient link between the two regions.

A significant milestone arrived on May 26, 2021, when Ningbo Airport proudly inaugurated its maiden direct cargo route to Budapest, solidifying the transportation ties.

On July 10, 2022, 36 international traders from Ningbo and Shanghai boarded the MU7101 charter passenger flight from Ningbo Airport to Budapest. Notably, this historic flight



A Boeing 787-9 aircraft carrying 59 passengers took off from the runway of Ningbo Lishe International Airport. [Photo by Fan Hong]

marked China's first-ever charter flight dedicated exclusively to import and export business representatives.

The frequent flights and collaborations between Ningbo and Budapest form a compelling "prelude" to the much-anticipated launch of today's regular flight.

A Transcontinental Flight On Ningbo's Doorsteps

At 1 PM on the 29th, Wang Qiuqin, a tour guide from Ningbo International Travel Agency, was already at the airport briefing a group of thirty-three tourists bound for Budapest, many of whom were travelling abroad for the first time after the three-year pandemic.

"The flight time is only around 11 hours, which is really convenient!" said Chen Longyu, Deputy General Manager of Ningbo Auland International Trade Co., Ltd. As a seasoned

import and export trader, he revealed the purpose of his journey, "I'm going as a tourist this time!"

"Previously, I had to go to Shanghai for my flight, and put up with layovers in Frankfurt. Now there's a transcontinental flight right on my own doorstep, saving at least a dozen hours of travel time," he added.

"With the inaugural flight, residents of Ningbo and surrounding cities can depart from an airport much closer to home if they want to travel to Europe for business or leisure," said Shen Qiuyan, Deputy General Manager of Ningbo International Travel Agency. Budapest, located at the heart of Europe, affords easy access to most major cities on the continent.

Many travel agencies are making the most of the direct flight by offering new package deals consisting of popular destinations in Central and Eastern Europe. These comprehensive tours typically span nine days

and include captivating itineraries such as "Hungary - Slovenia-Croatia" and "Hungary -Croatia-Serbia". The prices range from 15,800 to 16,800 yuan.

Enhance Connectivity Brings Infinite Possibilities

During this year's China-CEEC Expo, the Hungarian Pavilion took center stage at the Ningbo International Conference Center, representing the Expo's Guest Country of Honor.

Shen told reporters that the launch of the direct flight between Ningbo and Budapest not only makes it more convenient for Ningbo tourists travelling overseas but also has the potential to turn Ningbo into a hub of partnership activities between China and Central and Eastern Europe.

"Tourists from across the Yangtze River Delta region, including Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai, will all benefit from

Ningbo Airport's direct flight, as Ningbo is easily reachable by high-speed train and bus," she said.

Travel agencies from beyond the Yangtze River Delta are also regarding the direct flight as a golden opportunity.

"I am jealous of the people in Ningbo! You have breathtaking landscapes, delightful weather and now unparalleled transportation connectivity!" Exclaimed He Zhiyong, Chairman of Shanxi International Business Travel Agency.

The launch of the Ningbo-Budapest passenger flight is expected to usher in a new era of two-way cooperation.

Looking ahead, Ningbo Airport plans to expand its international route network by gradually introducing routes to Tokyo (Japan), Nha Trang (Vietnam), and beyond, offering exciting opportunities for travelers and fostering meaningful partnerships across borders.

SPOTLIGHT

Bountiful Bayberry Harvest Begins

By Gou Wen

It is now prime season for the harvest of greenhouse-grown bayberries, a busy time for Ningbo's fruit farmers.

Due to weather conditions, this year's harvest came a week later than last year's. However, the quality of this year's haul is exceptional. Some farms are selling up to 500 kg of greenhouse bayberries daily.

In mid-June, outdoor-grown bayberries will also be ready for picking.

Cixi's Henghe Town is well-known for cultivating traditional varieties of bayberry, especially the Biqi cultivar. The Guorong Fruit and Vegetable Planting Company has a 9.34-hectare bayberry farm in Henghe, with 2.67 hectares dedicated to greenhouses. It boasts the largest expanse of greenhouse bayberry cultivation in Cixi.

How are these delicious fruits faring on the retail market? Good news: the greenhouse bayberries are incredibly popular with consumers, at a price similar to last year's.

Currently, the price of regular greenhouse bayberries is about 130 yuan/kg, and the price of premium bayberries is about 200 to 300 yuan/kg.

According to Hu Guorong, a bayberry farm owner, the harvesting of greenhouse bayberries typically starts on May 14th. However, this year's ripening period was delayed by over a week due to the colder weather at the beginning of the year, which affected the trees' growth.

Currently, the greenhouse trees are adorned with ripe red berries, with fallen fruits on the ground. The outdoor trees are also bearing fruit, but they are not yet fully ripe and remain green.

Dongwu Town in Yinzhou District has nearly 47 hectares of bayberry farms, most of which are outdoors. The largest farm in town, operated by Ningbo Jiutou Shanshang Agricultural Technology Company, covers over 33 hectares and has over 10,000 bayberries trees. "We can look forward to a good yield of the finest berries this year. The start of the harvest will be around June 15th," said Ying Qiyue, manager of the farm.

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双语汇 Different Tongues

半边山沙滩排球中心:风景绝佳的赛事胜地

By Dong Na

Sunshine, the ocean breeze, and a sandy beach... to many, this is the picturesque image that comes to mind upon the mention of beach volleyball.

阳光、微风、沙滩,在很多人眼中,沙滩排球是一项浪漫的运动。

The Beach Volleyball Stadium for the 19th Asian Games is located in the Banbianshan resort of Ningbo's Xiangshan.

这次杭州亚运会的沙滩排球馆,坐落于宁波象山半边山景区。沙排中心拥有巨大的白色敞篷顶、蓝白相间的座位,与景区美景十分协调。

With its immense white canopy and blue and white seating, the beach volleyball

stadium blends harmoniously with the surrounding landscape.

沙排中心总投资约1.25亿元,从开工建设到通过验收历经284天。主场馆为C字形半开放式,面积为4400m²,可容纳1200名观众。

With a total investment of approximately 125 million yuan, the Beach Volleyball Stadium took 284 days to complete. The main arena, in a C-shaped semi-open design, spans 4,400m² and accommodates 1,200 spectators.

值得一提的是,沙排中心的这片沙滩可不简单,比赛用沙均经过严格筛选。比赛用的沙子来自海南文昌,它的大小、色泽、颗粒度和棱角都有严格要求。沙子颗粒的直径基本在1毫米到0.5毫米之间。

Notably, the sand used in the beach volleyball stadium



Ningbo Banbianshan Beach Volleyball Stadium. /宁波半边山沙滩排球中心。

[Photo by Tang Yan] 唐严 摄

is meticulously selected. Sourced from Wenchang, Hainan, the sand undergoes strict selection process for size, color, granularity, and

angularity. All particle diameters are between 1 mm and 0.5 mm.

在沙滩排球项目10天的赛程中,将有来自25个国家和地区的164名运动员,角逐2枚金牌。

During the 10-day beach volleyball competition, 164 athletes from 25 countries and regions will vie for two gold medals.

