[Airport plans may leave delays in the past](#)

Beijing Capital International Airport, the busiest in China, will increase ground resources and reduce the number of flights to improve flight punctuality, the airport president said on Wednesday.

Improvements are planned to the airport's operation resources, such as improving the runway and taxiway system, increasing the number of spaces on the ground for aircraft and enhancing shuttle efficiency. On the other hand, the airport will optimize flight slots and improve availability during its peak hours of operation, the airport's president, Han Zhiliang, said at the Beijing Global Friend Airports CEO Forum, a conference of the civil aviation industry.

Many Chinese airports have on-time performance issues. In July, the national flight punctuality rate was 50.76 percent, the Civil Aviation Administration of China said. Nearly half of all flights were delayed or canceled.

As China's busiest airport, Beijing Capital International strives for significant improvement to its on-time performance, Han said.

It's slot scheduling is overused. "The utilization rate of slots capacity has reached 98 percent at the airport … while data show that a reasonable slots capacity percentage for a large-scale hub airport is 80 percent," Han said.

"The heavy slot arrangement at a busy airport lowers the ability to respond to extreme weather and emergencies, increasing the possibility of causing large-scale and lengthy delays," he said.

"Once extreme weather or an emergency happens at the hub airport, punctuality will fall like dominoes, causing delays. … At the Beijing International schedule screen, it is rare to see a blank slot from morning to night. Nearly all slots have been allocated to airliners," he said.

He said 103 flights depart and land in an hour at the airport during peak hours, while the capacity standard is 88 flights per hour.

Ouyang Jie, a professor of airport research at Civil Aviation University of China, said, "The move aims to cut regional routes, such as the number of direct flights to third-tier small cities, and detour those regional routes to nearby Tianjin and Shijiazhuang airports". He said passengers can take high-speed rail between nearby airports and Beijing.

It takes about 30 minutes to travel between Tianjin and Beijing by high-speed rail, and 90 minutes between Shijiazhuang and Beijing.

Beijing Capital International Airport will increase the volume of international flights.

The airport handled 94 million passengers in 2016, making it the second busiest in the world for the seventh consecutive year, but it is designed to handle 82 million.

To ease the heavy pressure, Beijing is constructing a second airport.

Liu Xuesong, president of Capital Airports Holding Co, said on Wednesday that the capital will build both the current and the new airport into large-scale international hubs.

According to Liu, construction of the second airport is proceeding well. The main structure of the terminal building was topped off last month, he said.