

Shanghai sets up China's 1st flight base for drones

The first test-flight base for civilian drones opened in Shanghai on Thursday, according to the East China Regional Administration of Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC).

There are about 110 manufacturers of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in east China, nearly 30 percent of the national total, said Jiang Chunshui, Communist Party secretary of the administration.

East China also boasts 40,000 registered drones, more than one third of the national total, according to Jiang.

Private drones are popular in China and illegal drone activity has become a problem, especially at airports.

China has required civilian drones weighing more than 250 grams to be registered under real names from June 1. Over 120,000 drones have been registered, according to Ke Yubao, executive secretary of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association of China.

"Drone users need a test flight ground where they can learn the law and regulations," said Ke.

The base is located at Qingpu district in western Shanghai. Drones are required to fly under 150 meters and all test flights are monitored for safety.

China's summer railway transport peak period ends

China's summer transport peak period ended Thursday, with nearly 600 million of passenger trips made by train this year, according to China Railway Corporation.

The period runs from July 1 to August 31, when students on summer vacation have time to travel or return home.

"During the transport peak, even tickets for business class on high-speed rail, which are much more expensive than standard tickets, were in high demand," said Song Jianguo, an official with Beijing West Railway Station.

One high-speed train departed from Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station every

two minutes during the peak period.

During the summer, Yangtze River Delta railways recorded 118 million passenger trips, a year-on-year increase of 11.5 percent. Beijing Railway Bureau recorded 60 million during the same period.

Western China's railways have also seen rising passenger numbers. The new high-speed link between Baoji in northwest China's Shaanxi Province with Lanzhou, capital of neighboring Gansu Province, carried 41,100 people on August 12, the most since it started operations on July 9.

"With Baoji-Lanzhou line, the number of passengers from Xi'an to Lanzhou and Xining, capital of northwest China's Qinghai Province has increased from last year's 10,000 to 23,000 this year," said Hui Lixia, deputy director of the Xi'an North Station.

New airport terminal opens in central China

A new airport terminal in Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province, went into use Thursday, when flight CZ6175 for Chongqing took off at 7:20 a.m.

At a cost of 40 billion yuan (6.1 billion U.S. dollars), terminal 3 of Wuhan Tianhe International Airport is expected to accommodate 35 million passengers annually by 2020, said Gan Xiangtian, deputy manager of Hubei airport group.

Annual cargo throughput may reach 440,000 tonnes.

T3 will take over all international and domestic flights, while T1 and T2 are renovated for budget airlines and special flights.

A transit center at the airport also opened Thursday, providing subway links, long-distance coaches, buses and cabs.

Tianhe airport saw 20.8 million passengers last year, up 9.6 percent from 2015. The airport has overseas flights to 47 cities in 24 countries.

China holds 57 people in investigation

of deadly gas explosions

China's State Council said on Thursday that 57 people have been held following investigations into two fatal colliery explosions that killed 65 people last year.

A State Council investigation team concluded that the tragedies in Chongqing and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region were both workplace safety accidents caused by issues including lax regulation.

On Oct. 31 last year, an explosion at Jinshangou Coal Mine in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality killed 33 people and resulted in direct economic losses of 36.8 million yuan (about 5.6 million U.S. dollars).

Jinshangou Coal Mine operated illegally beyond its boundary, used banned equipment and ignored regulatory orders, according to the investigation report.

The other explosion, at Baoma Mining Company in Inner Mongolia on Dec. 3, 2016 killed 32 people and caused 44 million yuan in losses. It was also caused by illegal operations.

The 57 people have been held responsible for the accidents. The report blamed authorities in the two regions for failure to carry out their responsibilities and the State Council has ordered the local governments concerned to rectify problems found during the investigation.

Mu Huaping, vice mayor of Chongqing and Wang Bo, vice chairman of the regional government of Inner Mongolia, were both found to have failed to perform their duties adequately.

Despite regular calls by the central government for more focus on work safety, frequent tragedies still occur. A lack of safety awareness, poor regulation and lax safety regimes are among the factors leading to the accidents.

Official data showed the number of workplace safety accidents fell 24.7 percent year on year during the January-July period, while related fatalities were down 16.8 percent.

26 dead, 9 missing in SW China landslide

The death toll from a landslide in southwest China's Guizhou Province on

Monday morning rose to 26 on Thursday, with eight people injured and nine still missing, according to local authorities.

Rescue workers continue to search for the missing.

More than 2,800 people, including local police, fire fighters, medical workers and local government staff, along with 110 emergency vehicles, 20 life detectors and eight drones have been involved in the rescue, the rescue headquarters said.

After searching an area of nearly 150,000 square meters and clearing more than 200,000 cubic meters of debris, no signs of life have been detected.

The Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Civil Affairs have jointly allocated a relief fund of 16 million yuan (2.4 million U.S. dollars) to the landslide-hit county. A total of 289 residents from 80 households have been evacuated after the landslide.

The landslide occurred at about 10:40 a.m. Monday in Zhangjiawan Township, Nayong County. More than 600,000 cubic meters of rock and mud fell 200 meters covering the village.

The province has seen continuous rainstorms over the past week as a result of two recent typhoons.