

SinoCast Construction/Real Estate Business Beat

Metro to Add Two Stores in Beijing, Though Time Not Fixed

BEIJING, October 10, SinoCast -- Leading German retailer Metro Cash & Carry insists on opening two new stores in Beijing before the 2008 Olympic Games, although it has not fixed the opening time of the third store, said Zhang Shouchuan, Metro's general manager for North China.

In 2006, Metro saw its sales from China

soar 24.1% from a year earlier, hitting CNY 9.3 billion. At the same time, it successfully increased its store number to 34.

Metro opened its first store in Beijing in June 2006 and then the second at the end of the same year. According to its previous expansion plan, two other stores will start operation in Beijing before the Olympics.

Cooperating with Jinjiang International Group, Metro entered China as early as 1995 and set up its first store in the country in Shanghai in 1996. The world's leading chain store carrier built up four sales regions in 2002 to provide better service to customers.

Third Airport to Start Building for Beijing

BEIJING, October 19, SinoCast -- A new domestic civil airport is set to start construction in 2010 to the south of Beijing, Yang Yuanyuan, head of the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC), disclosed in an interview.

Beijing Capital International Airport (Capital Airport) can hardly meet the surging demand, an insider from the CAAC explained. But Capital Airport will remain the industrial hub in the north metropolis.

Currently, the CAAC has set up a team so as to decide where the new airport will be located. The most hopeful candidate sites are Langfang and Tianjin, industry analysts pointed out.

Tianjin, known for its fast growing industry, is a 12,000-square-kilometer and 9.38-million-people port city, 137 kilometers away from Beijing. Langfang, a city in central Hebei, Northern China, is located between Beijing and Tianjin with an area of 6,429 square kilometers and a total population of 3.88 million.

The team will work out a feasibility study

based on their study and suggestions from related units, including airports and airlines. It has been unknown yet how much to be invested in the new airport, which is reported to be completed in 2015.

For the moment, the two airports - Capital Airport and Beijing Nanyuan Airport - are serving passenger flight and airfreight service providers in Beijing.

The air passenger throughput in the city is estimated to hike to 5.56 million ones during the period of the 2008 Olympic Games, which is beyond the city's current capacity.

As one of the largest airfields in the country, Capital Airport has joined hands with approximately 66 airlines, including 11 domestic ones and 55 international ones. From the airport, passengers can reach more than 88 cities in China and 69 cities in foreign countries.

The airport served 48.64 million passengers last year, ranking ninth on the global airport list issued by the Airports Council International (ACI).

The airport is building its third runway as long as 3,800 meters, and scheduled to complete it at the end of 2007. It has even decided where to build its fourth runway by now. In addition, it will construct a waiting building of 900,000 square meters.

The Chinese government has shown great support to the expansion. From 2007, it will earmark CNY 1 billion to fuel the growth of regional aviation, including over CNY 600 million for medium- and small-sized airfields and more than CNY 300 million for medium- and small-sized airways, told Yang.

(USD 1 = CNY 7.52)