

《篮球场广场舞冲突凸显场地缺失》

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打篮球的年轻人和跳广场舞的大叔大妈之间的场地大战依然结束，但是网民们的辩论不止。由于双方各持己见，有关当局已经暂时关闭了该篮球场。

The highly-publicized battle between Chinese square dancers and basketball players for the right to use a public space is over, but the debate among netizens rages on. As each side sticks to its arguments, the authorities have temporarily closed the basketball court in Henan Province, central China.

The administration for Luoyang Wangcheng Park, where the court is located, on Friday published a notification to the public, saying that "For safety reasons, the basketball court is temporarily closed so as to avoid further conflicts."



The basketball court in Luoyang, central China has been closed off. /Weibo Photo

A video which went viral online showed a group of senior citizens, who wanted to use the space to square dance, face off against basketball players who had been interrupted by the dancers' loud music and occupation of the court.

According to local police, the two sides made up on Friday afternoon after mediation. But they are yet to reach a compromise about use of the court, said the park's administration.



A basketball player was hit in the head by square dancers after the spat broke out. /Video Screenshot

The basketball court is the only one near the community, Xinhua reports citing Mr. Zhao, one of the basketball players. "It's only 15 minutes' walk from my home, and it will take me half an hour if I go to another one."

A square dancer involved in the brawl, surnamed Yang, countered that it's not easy to find a space to dance. There are more than 10 square dance groups in Wangcheng Park, each one made up of dozens of people. Their team of 200 is the largest. "Compared to other places in the park, this basketball court is the largest, just suitable for our 200 person team," said Yang.

"The park is too crowded now, as more and more people join in. We have to spend over 30 minutes to go to other parks nearby," she added.

A manager of the park noted that the situation highlighted an unavoidable conflict between citizens' exercise enthusiasm and the limited space.



A group of square dancers exercises in an underground parking lot due to scarcity of exercise space in Zhengzhou City. /VCG Photo

The scarcity of sports resources is a growing issue in contemporary Chinese society, as the urbanization trend rapidly continues.

According to the latest report from the National General Administration of Sports in 2016, on average just 1.46 square meters of sports field is available per person. Every 100,000 Chinese people have just 65.8 sports fields, compared to over 200 fields per 100,000 in Japan and Europe.

In Shanghai, one of China's most developed cities, only 40 percent of downtown areas have easy access to exercise fields.

China's 13th Five-Year Plan, the country's major blueprint for development, has outlined sports resource goals by 2020. Each citizen is expected to have an average of 1.8 square meters of sports field. More than 70 percent of rural areas should have access to public exercise centers, and 80 percent in urban areas.