

Warden Message

May 15, 2009

The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) has learned from various sources, including law enforcement and media, that the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) is planning to stage a large demonstration on Sunday, May 17, 2009, from 10:00 a.m. through 10:00 p.m. (and possibly continue throughout Monday, May 18, 2009). The purpose of the demonstration is to "oppose the government's China policies and the proposed amendments to the Assembly and Parade Act." The DPP officials claim that 300,000 people will attend the protest, but police sources estimate the number to be around 100,000. The demonstrators will be converging at the Ketagalan Avenue from four different rally points in Taipei - the Ding Hao Market in Zhongxiao East Road, the Zhong Shan Soccer Stadium at the Zhongshan North Road, the National Taiwan University, and the Wanhua Railway Station.

Demonstrations take place in Taiwan from time to time in response to world events or local developments. We remind American citizens that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if within the vicinity of any demonstrations. American citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times.

Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs' website www.travel.state.gov, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information can be found. AIT also encourages U.S. citizens to review to "A Safe Trip Abroad," found at http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html, which includes valuable security information for those both living and traveling abroad. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada, or outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444.

AIT encourages you, as an American living or traveling in Taiwan, to register through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. Registration is a voluntary way of telling us that you, as an American citizen, are in Taiwan, whether for a long-term stay or for a short visit. In the event of an emergency, we use registration information to communicate with you. This could include a family emergency in which relatives in the United States request that AIT contact you.

The Consular Section of AIT's Taipei and Kaohsiung Offices can be reached during regular business hours (M-F, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) by telephone at (02) 2162-2000 and (07) 238-7744; by fax at (02) 2162-2239 and (07) 238-5237; and by e-mail at amcit-ait-t@state.gov. After hours, in case of emergency, a duty officer can be reached by calling the AIT switchboard at (02) 2162-2000. The AIT Taipei office is located at No.7, Lane 134, Sec. 3, XinYi Rd., Da-an District, Taipei City 10659. The address for AIT Kaohsiung is: 5th Floor, No.2, ChungCheng 3rd Rd., Xin-Xing District, Kaohsiung City 80052.