

Asian cities to turn off lights one hour: energy savings

Selected areas of Asian cities including Taipei, Beijing, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul plan to turn off their lights for one hour later Saturday to promote energy conservation and reduce light pollution.

More than two dozen cities in Taiwan, China, Japan and South Korea have agreed to join the Lights-Out-Night event from 1200 hours to 1300 hours GMT Saturday, Taiwan's Society of Wilderness, one of the sponsors, said on its website.

Major buildings and scenic spots in the participating cities will turn off lights for one hour. Residents in these cities are to participate in activities organized by local environmental protection groups, the society noted.

Lights will be switched off on landmarks like the Taipei 101, Tokyo Tower, Seoul Tower and Hong Kong's Victoria Harbor.

Taipei 101 has promised to continue the event after Saturday and turn off its lights one hour in advance to save electricity.

Nine Taiwan cities will take part in the event.

Saturday evening, tens of thousands of residents in these cities are expected to sit down under the starlight in parks for a 'no-electricity' concert.

China will be participating in the event for the first time.

In Beijing, the environmental group Friends of Nature were planning to persuade shops at four tourist areas - Shishahai, Dongsi, Xin Tian Di and Nan Luoguxiang - to turn off lights for one hour.

In Hong Kong, neon signs outside some 100 buildings at the Victoria Harbor will be turned off for an hour, in response to the call by Hong Kong's Friends of Earth group.

In Japan, several cities including Tokyo, Osaka and Sapporo will turn off lights for 1 hour while holding public awareness activities Saturday evening. Tokyo will extend the lights-out campaign till July nine.

In the South Korean capital Seoul, the Seoul Tower will go dark for an hour Saturday evening while environmental groups will hold a concert in Seoul.

Some street lights in Seoul will be turned off Saturday evening in support of the Lights Out event.

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