The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Foreigners Cautioned About May Day Violence

By Natalya Krainova

April 28, 2011

A pigeon flying above a gold-plated state emblem in Alexandrovsky Garden. Muscovites are expected to take to the streets on Labor Day this Sunday, but while some would only go for a stroll, others pla **Igor Tabakov**

Politicians of all stripes urged supporters on Thursday to attend May Day rallies over the weekend, but at least one foreign embassy cautioned its citizens to avoid all gatherings for fear of violence.

About 6,000 officers of police and Interior Troops along with 1,500 volunteers will watch Sunday's demonstrations, RIA-Novosti reported. City police chief Vladimir Kolokoltsev will coordinate the forces.

The police have beefed up their presence at transportation facilities ahead of the holidays.

United Russia and its youth wing, Young Guard, will gather at 9 a.m. Sunday near Belorussky

Station for a march to the square in front of City Hall on Tverskaya Ulitsa, where a rally addressed by State Duma Speaker and United Russia leader Boris Gryzlov will begin at 10 a.m., the party said in an e-mailed statement.

Participants will chant "Medvedev! Putin! Go Russia!" during the march, it said, without specifying expected turnout. The party's May Day gatherings are usually the largest in the city, with thousands of people.

As in previous years, Communist supporters will gather outside the Oktyabrskaya metro station on the orange line at 11 a.m. and walk to the statue of Karl Marx on Teatralnaya Ploshchad, where organizers promise a "grandiose meeting," the party's Moscow branch said in a statement.

"Let's show our attitude to the authorities!" the statement said. "Proletarians of all countries! Where are our red drums?"

Supporters of Solidarity, the liberal opposition group led by Boris Nemtsov, Ilya Yashin and Garry Kasparov, will gather on Serpukhovskaya Ploshchad outside the Dobryninskaya metro station at 1:30 p.m. and march to Bolotnaya Ploshchad, where they will organize a festival with musical, poetical and theatrical performances, a contest of the best political jokes and an exhibition of posters, the group said on its web site.

The nationalist Movement Against Illegal Immigration, or DPNI, which was banned by a Moscow court as extremist this month but remains active pending an appeal, called for supporters to meet at the Oktyabrskoye Pole metro station at 12:30 p.m. and march to the Shchukinskaya metro station for a rally starting 30 minutes later. A banner on its web site features a flashing, rhyming banner reading: "Higher compensation! No immigration! All go to the May 1 demonstration!"

The Canadian Embassy said it has estimated that 1,000 people would participate in the DPNI gathering and warned citizens to stay away from it and all May Day rallies.

"We recommend Canadian citizens avoid this area [of the DPNI march] on Sunday, May 1st, and any other gatherings as they may turn violent," it said in an e-mailed statement sent to Canadian citizens living in Moscow.

Among other marches, Federation Council Speaker Sergei Mironov will lead supporters of his Just Russia party from the Tsvetnoi Bulvar metro at 10 a.m. to Pushkin Square, where his party will rally at 10:40 a.m., A Just Russia said on its web site. Demonstrators will call for cheaper utilities, free health care, higher salaries and pensions and benefits for small businesses.

The Liberal Democratic Party will rally against corruption at Pushkin Square at 2 p.m. LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky will deliver a speech.

Many streets in the city center will be closed for traffic at different times, among them 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya Ulitsa, Tverskaya Ulitsa, Tsvetnoi Bulvar, Trubnaya Ploshchad, Bolshaya Yakimanka, Bolshaya Polyanka, Petrovsky Bulvar, Borovitskaya Ploshchad and Mokhovaya Ulitsa.

Original url:

https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/04/28/foreigners-cautioned-about-may-day-violence-a6661