



# Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 44

September, 2011

## American Citizen Services (ACS) Contact Information

**U.S. Consulate General,  
Shanghai, China**  
1038 West Nanjing Road,  
8/F Westgate Mall  
梅龙镇广场 (Méi Lóng  
Zhèn Guǎng Chǎng)  
**Tel: (86-21) 3217-4650**  
**Fax: (86-21) 6217-2071**  
**Open 8:00am - 11:30am**  
**and 1:30pm - 3:30pm**  
**Monday to Friday \*Closed**  
**on Wednesday**  
**afternoons, weekends,**  
**and holidays.**

**After Hours Emergencies:**  
**(86-21) 3217-4650**  
**ShanghaiACS@state.gov**  
**Homepage:**  
**shanghai.usembassy-**  
**china.org.cn/service.html**

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## Arkansas to Hold Special State Highway Bond Election

On Tuesday, November 8, 2011, Arkansas will hold a special state-wide election for a state highway bond to renew \$575 million in bonds to repair approximately 300 miles of interstate highways. If voters approve on November 8, the Highway Commission will have authority to renew the bonds for additional repairs to Arkansas interstates.

Voting Assistance Officers should contact Arkansas voters and inform them of this election and assist them in requesting and returning their absentee ballot.

**Register to Vote and Request Your Ballot Now**  
The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) registers you to vote and requests absentee ballots for all Federal elections held through the next two regularly scheduled general elections. You may obtain an FPCA from your unit or installation Voting Assistance Officer and at U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide; but you must follow the Arkansas instructions given at: [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). Arkansas does not allow you to receive your blank ballot by email or fax. The State of Arkansas allows you to submit the FPCA by mail, email or fax.

- If you choose to mail your FPCA, mail the form directly to your local election office.
- If you choose to email your FPCA, scan the completed form and email it to your local election office where you intend to vote.
- If you choose to fax your FPCA, fax the forms directly to your local election office.

Mailing addresses, email addresses and fax numbers can be found at:  
<http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections/Pages/default.aspx>

[ult.aspx](#)

- You may also use the *Department of Defense Electronic Transmission Service* to fax your FPCA toll-free. To use the Electronic Transmission Service, use the cover sheet available in the Voting Assistance Guide, or at: <http://www.fvap.gov> and fax to: (703) 693-5527, DSN 223-5527, or toll-free from the U.S., Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands to 1-800-368-8683. International toll-free numbers can be found at: <http://www.fvap.gov> Voter Alert Telephone: (703) 588-1584 E-mail: [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov).

If you are already registered to vote, the deadline for submitting an FPCA to request a ballot is November 1, 2011.

Your jurisdiction will contact you if your registration is denied.

### Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) and additional information

The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), serves as an emergency ballot to be used by a uniformed services voter who is absent from his or her voting jurisdiction or by a citizen residing outside the United States who did not receive his or her regular ballot in time to be marked and returned for counting. Arkansas allows you to use the FWAB for registration and voting in primary, special, run-off, and general elections for Federal, State, and local offices and non-candidate ballot issues, including this special election. Use the FWAB to vote anytime before an election if you have not received your regular ballot.

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## Upcoming Holidays And Other Closures

A full list of all of our holiday closings is online at <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/holidays.html>. The Consulate will be **CLOSED** on the following days:

**October 1-5, Sat-Wed:** Chinese National Day (国庆节 Guó Qìng Jié)

**October 10, Monday:** Columbus Day (哥伦布日 Gē Lún Bù Rì)

## National Security Language Initiative For Youth (NSLI-Y)

The State Department's National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) provides merit-based scholarships to U.S. high school students and recent graduates interested in learning less-commonly studied foreign languages.

### Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must be:

- A U.S. citizen who is currently enrolled in or just graduated from high school;
- 15-to-18.5 years old at the start of the program;
- have a minimum GPA of 2.5.

### Languages Offered

There are seven languages: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Korean, Persian, Russian and Turkish. Read more detailed information about the individual language programs at <http://exchanges.state.gov/youth/programs/nsli/progdetails.html>.

### Application Deadline

Applications for 2011/2012 programs (for programs in summer 2011 and continuing through academic year 2011/2012, fall 2011 and spring 2012) closed in November 2010. Applications for 2012/2013 programs (for programs in summer 2012 and continuing through academic year 2012/2013, fall 2012 and spring 2013) will be available in fall 2011.

For more information, please contact American Councils, the current Department of State award recipient, at 1.866.790.2086, by email: [nsliy@americancouncils.org](mailto:nsliy@americancouncils.org), or visit the American Councils' NSLI-Y website at <http://www.nsliforyouth.org/nslicms-1.1/>.

### NSLI -Y Alumni

Shared stories of experiences before, during and after exchange: <http://exchanges.state.gov/youth/programs/nsli/nsliy-audio.html>.

### Still Have Questions?

Visit <http://exchanges.state.gov/youth/programs/nsli/faqs.html>.

## Travel Warnings And Alerts

*Security reminder: It is advisable that you and your family review your personal security profile and be aware of your surroundings at all times.*

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new Travel Warnings for the following countries:

<a href="#"><u>Libya</u></a>	09/22/2011
<a href="#"><u>Algeria</u></a>	09/19/2011
<a href="#"><u>Syria</u></a>	09/15/2011
<a href="#"><u>Iraq</u></a>	09/13/2011
<a href="#"><u>Yemen</u></a>	09/02/2011

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff. This information is available at

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).

The U.S. Department of State also has issued new Travel Alerts:

<a href="#"><u>Bhutan</u></a>	09/23/2011
<a href="#"><u>India</u></a>	09/23/2011
<a href="#"><u>Nepal</u></a>	09/23/2011
<a href="#"><u>9-11 Anniversary</u></a>	09/02/2011

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert. This information is available at :

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/pa/pa\\_1766.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html).

The most up-to-date information regarding permitted and prohibited items on flights can be viewed online at <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>.

For additional information, please visit "Americans Traveling Abroad" on the U.S. Department of State website: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans\\_1252.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans_1252.html). Students traveling abroad may wish to visit the State Department site designed for them: <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>.

To obtain up-to-date information on security conditions, please call 1-888-407-4747 (toll free in the United States), or +1-202-501-4444 if you are outside the United States.

## New USCIS Procedures for Filing I-130 Petitions for Alien Relatives

Effective Aug. 15, 2011, Petitioners residing in a country with a United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office have the option of sending their Petition for an Alien Relative (Form I-130) to the Chicago Lockbox, or they may file it at the international USCIS office having jurisdiction over the area where they live. China has an USCIS office in Beijing, which accepts petitions filed in China. Please see their contact information below.

### DHS/USCIS, Beijing (for petitions filed in China)

Address (Mailing Address within

#### China and Express Mail):

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

c/o US Embassy Beijing

55 An Jia Lou Road, ChaoYang District, Beijing, 100600

#### Mailing Address From the U.S.:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

c/o American Embassy Beijing

PSC 461 Box 50, FPO AP 96521-0002

#### Phone:

(010) 8531-3111 (from within China) or

011 (8610) 8531-3111 (from the United States)

#### Fax:

(010) 8531-3100 (from within China) or 011 (8610) 8531-3100 (from the United States)

Email: [dhsbeijing-cis@dhs.gov](mailto:dhsbeijing-cis@dhs.gov)

Petitioners residing in countries without USCIS offices must file the Petition for an Alien Relative (Form I-130), with the USCIS Chicago Lockbox facility. For specific instructions please see: <http://www.uscis.gov/i-130>.

## STEP: Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

We encourage you to sign up for the U.S. State Department's free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP, formerly known as "Travel Registration" or "Registration with Embassies and Consulates").

STEP is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that U.S. embassies and consulates can better assist you in an emergency, including situations where your family or friends in the U.S. are having problems trying to contact you with important news.

U.S. citizens around the world who travel or reside abroad can access this site either through a link on <http://travel.state.gov/> or directly at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. We invite you to register yourself and your family and get acquainted with STEP.

STEP allows you to register and update your contact information on the

Internet at any time, making it easier for you to keep your information current. The site also provides you with up-to-date travel information customized to your unique travel agenda and itinerary. The data you provide is secured behind Department of State firewalls, accessed only by cleared personnel in Embassies, Consulates, and the Department of State, and releasable only under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

When you sign up, you will automatically receive the most current information embassies compile about the country where you will be traveling or living. You will also receive any applicable Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts.

We are aware that some users have trouble accessing the STEP website from within China. If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions about our travel registration website, please send an email to [CAIbbs@state.gov](mailto:CAIbbs@state.gov). If you are repeatedly unable to register, please contact the Shanghai Consulate directly at [ShanghaiACS@state.gov](mailto:ShanghaiACS@state.gov) for assistance.

Once you register online, you will be assigned to a warden who lives near you. A warden is a volunteer American citizen who can act as a contact with the Consulate in times of emergency. If you provide your e-mail address with your registration, you will also receive periodic notices from the Consulate, including our monthly newsletter, which contains important information for American citizens residing in Shanghai, Anhui, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang provinces. For any questions regarding the warden system, please contact us at [ShanghaiACS@state.gov](mailto:ShanghaiACS@state.gov).

### Leaving the Shanghai Consular District?

If you are departing the Shanghai consular district and wish to NOT receive notices via e-mail any longer, please update your account to reflect your repatriation in your STEP account: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. If you previously submitted a paper enrollment form to the U.S. consulate in Shanghai, you may un-enroll yourself by sending an email request to: [ShanghaiACS@state.gov](mailto:ShanghaiACS@state.gov)

## Forewarned Is Forearmed – SCAMS Endemic To Shanghai

The American Citizen Services (ACS) unit is regularly contacted by Americans victimized by scams that take advantage of their generosity or ignorance of local norms and culture. While petty theft remains the most prevalent type of crime Westerners encounter in China, the diversity and sophistication of scams is increasing. While the following list is not meant to be all-encompassing it does forewarn and forearm you against the most common scams encountered by Americans in the Shanghai area:

**“Art Show / Art Student” scam** – “Hi, I’m an art major at a Chinese university (usually Xi’an). We are showing our work nearby and would love for you to have a look. Don’t worry, entrance is free and there’s no need to buy anything.” If you follow this “art student” you will be pressured to purchase expensive, low-grade art prints.

**“Tea Ceremony / English student” scam** – “Hi, we are English students at a local university. Would you mind helping us practice our English? In exchange, we will treat you to a traditional Chinese tea ceremony.” After ordering tea and snacks they will excuse themselves. Moments later the bill will arrive and

very large men will force you to pay an exorbitant amount of money before allowing you to leave. Real English students will not mind going to a place of your choosing for a chance to practice their English for an hour.

**“Bar tabs”** - Better to pay as you go. Starting a tab makes it possible for a bartender to hand you a bar bill of \$500. If you decline to pay you could be threatened with physical violence until you pay (usually by credit card), before being escorted out.

**“Injured Relative / Arrested Relative” scam** – “Hi, I’m a friend of your grandchild here in China and she was just seriously injured (usually in a traffic accident) and/or arrested. In order for her to receive medical care in China you must pay all fees upfront. The American Consulate won’t help. Please wire \$2000 to my account so I can ensure your granddaughter receives the necessary medical treatment.” Always best to try and contact your relative directly, or call ACS to help you find out the facts, if someone tells you that they are in trouble and need you to wire them money ASAP. In China medical facilities will usually contact the U.S. Con-

sulate if an American citizen is admitted without anyone to assist. We will never refuse to assist American citizens in need.

**“Please Hold the Line for the Police”** – You receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from your bank or the police station and you are told that someone assumed your identity and used your credit card to commit credit card fraud, which is now under investigation by the Public Security Bureau (PSB). You are informed that the PSB requires your bank account information to complete their investigation. After providing your personally identifiable information over the phone that included your savings account information, your account is liquidated. You later find out that the person who called you was not from your bank or the police station. If you receive a call from the police asking for personal information you should ask them to wait, and contact your nearest police station to inquire into the situation in person.

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## Arkansas to Hold Special State Highway Bond Election

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### Vote Your FWAB:

To find out the races and candidates for which you can vote, go to: <http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections.html>. For each office for which you vote, write in either a candidate’s name or a political party designation. Once the ballot is complete, fold and place it in the security envelope and seal. Place only the voted ballot in the security envelope and do not write on the security envelope.

### How and Where to Submit Your FWAB:

The deadlines for submitting the FWAB are the same as for State absentee ballots. If you receive the State ballot after submitting the voted FWAB, you may also vote and return the State ballot. If both ballots are received by the deadline, only the State ballot will be counted. Insert the sealed security envelope and the Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation into the mailing envelope and mail your FWAB directly to your local election official.

### Qualifications:

To be qualified to vote an absentee ballot, you must meet one of the following criteria:

- You are a member of the U.S. armed forces, merchant marines or the spouse or a dependant family member, OR
- A U.S. citizen whose permanent residence is in Arkansas but is temporarily living outside the territorial limits of the United States.

### Receive Your Ballot

Ballots will be mailed out on September 23, 2011 if requested by this date.

### Vote and Submit Your Ballot

Voted ballots **must be postmarked** no later than Election Day and received by the local election official by 5:00 p.m., November 18, 2011.

No witness or notary is required on voted ballots.

Civilians residing outside the U.S.: Contact your closest U.S. Embassy or consulate for specific instructions on how voted ballots, with proper domestic postage attached, can be returned to the United States from any U.S. embassy or consulate. To locate your nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, visit: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>.

### Tracking your Ballot

To find out the status of your absentee ballot request, contact your local election office or refer to Arkansas’ voter registration verification website at: [www.voterview.ar-nova.org/](http://www.voterview.ar-nova.org/).

### Questions

Please contact your local county clerk with any questions about the absentee voting process. You can also contact the Arkansas Secretary of State’s office with any questions or concerns at: [voterservices@sos.arkansas.gov](mailto:voterservices@sos.arkansas.gov).

### Additional Information

State specific information on precincts, candidates, elections, and voting is available at the Arkansas website: <http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections>.

FVAP can be contacted at 1-800-438-8683. Citizens may reach FVAP toll-free from 67 countries by using the toll-free numbers listed on the FVAP web portal: <http://www.fvap.gov/contact/index.html>. Questions regarding the above may also be referred to the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, Department of Defense, 1777 North Kent Street, #14003, Arlington, VA 22209-2162, [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov) and on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.fvap.gov>.

## News: Expat Pension Deductions Not Set

*(from Global Times, Sep. 23, 2011, by Jin Jianyu)*

Beijing has yet to detail the regulations on how to include expatriates in China's social security system.

Foreign employees in China and local companies who employ expatriates will be asked to put into social security insurance, including the pensions, medical insurance, work injury insurance, unemployment insurance and maternity insurance. Deductions started October 15, according to a notice issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security on September 8.

All non-Chinese nationals legally working in China and paying the insurance could acquire a social security card issued by local authorities just as Chinese citizens have, the notice said.

Companies, units, foundations, firms and social groups registered in China will face a penalty if they did not cover the insurance for their foreign staff, the notice said.

"We have not yet stipulated the details of the regulation," said an employee from the public relations office of the Beijing Human Resources and Social Security Bureau who refused to identify herself.

She said the bureau will further illustrate the details of the regulation at an upcoming press conference, the date of which has not yet been set.

The South China Morning Post said, according to an authority in Beijing, the government may have to delay the regulation taxing expats while it develops a system to do so.

The source also said foreign workers might have to pay up to 11 percent of their monthly salary for the insurance, adding that citizens from Hong Kong Special Administration Region (SAR), Macao SAR and Taiwan Province are exempt from the new tax.

"I'd like to pay for the insurance as I can draw the money out when I retire," said Thierno Dious, a French man who works in Beijing.

Dious said that having a social security card makes him feel more like a citizen in China.

Employers in China are asked to register the names of their foreign employees for social security insurance within 30 days after preparing their work permit, according to the notice.

The personal inheritable insurance account of a foreign worker, who leaves China when they can draw their pensions at retirement, could be reopened and their premium payment years could be accumulated if they work in China again. They can also hand over a written application to terminate the deduction, the notice said.

Mo Ting contributed to this story.

## News: Passengers Face Tighter Security At Airports

*(from Shanghai Daily, Aug. 29, 2011, by Zha Minjie)*

China's civil aviation authority yesterday raised security levels at airports. Passengers are now asked to remove shoes and belts during security checks and more luggage is opened. The Civil Aviation Administration of China didn't give any reason for the increased security and passengers hadn't been notified in advance but there was speculation the move was related to the recent discovery of knives and other banned items at an airport in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regions in the country's northwest. Similar security measures were put in place during the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the World Expo in Shanghai last year.

The sudden imposition of stricter checks caused problems at Beijing Capital International Airport with long queues, arguments and even scuffles breaking out among passengers having to wait a much longer time to get through the security checks. "The longest journey in the world is from the security checkpoint to the boarding gate and the most painful thing in the world is that you finish the journey but the plane door has closed," one passenger complained on his microblog. He missed his flight and had to wait for the next one. Photos posted online showed the airport crowded with passengers in scenes that were described as like a

"busy and noisy railway station during the annual spring rush." Passengers said it took them more than an hour to get through security and about half of them had their luggage opened and subjected to detailed inspections.

There were no problems in Shanghai, however, as more security channels were opened and the checks went smoothly, airport officials said. They said the level of checks was raised according to the requirements of the civil aviation authority but "no passengers missed flights because of the checks." Security staff will not demand that all luggage be checked in order to maintain passenger flow, they said. Normally passengers need to wait no more than 10 minutes before passing through the checks at Pudong International Airport and no more than 15 minutes at Hongqiao International Airport, the officials said. However, airline companies are advising passengers to arrive at airports two to three hours ahead of their departure time rather than the previous one to two hours.

On August 3, security staff at Xinjiang's Urumqi airport found a knife hidden in a water bottle and another one in an umbrella a few days later. Around the same period, other banned items such as inflammable goods and electric shock devices were also seized from passengers.

## Forewarned Is Forearmed – SCAMS Endemic To Shanghai

(From Page 4)

**“Business Deal”** – You have been doing business with a Chinese company for some time and receive an email asking you to send the next wire transfer to a new account number. After wiring the money you are asked to resend the payment because it never arrived. After rewiring the payment you are again notified that the payment did not arrive and that you should try sending it to another account number. At which time you become extremely suspicious and discover the email address is slightly different from the company’s real e-mail address and/or the person who has been contacting you left the company a month before.

**“IRS scam”** – You received an email from the IRS claiming they cannot process your recent tax return because you did not include a photocopy of your state or federal ID. The IRS does NOT generally initiate fax or emails to taxpayers, nor does the IRS discuss tax account matters with taxpayers via email or fax. Moreover, the IRS never requests security-related personal information, such as your SSN or PIN numbers.

**“Diversity Visa”** – You receive an email congratulating you because you’ve won a Diversity Visa and although the Diversity Visa participation was free, U.S. law and regulations require every diversity visa winner to pay a visa processing fee of \$819. The email goes on to state the fee must be paid using a Western Union money transfer and will be processed by the U.S. Embassy in the United Kingdom.” UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should money be sent to anyone to participate in the DV Lottery. The Department of State’s Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) does not send email notifications to DV entrants informing them of their winning entries.

**“Real Estate” scam** – You sign a contract for an apartment you want to rent and hand over the deposit and first few months rent to who you believe is the landlord. Everything seems legitimate until you return home one night to discover the real landlord in the apartment demanding to know who you are and why you have moved into his apartment. You find that the person you signed the contract with has skipped town with your money and the real estate agent has no recollection of you.

**“Black Taxi”** – “Where do you want to go?” or “Taxi?” If you get in, make no mistake, you will be grossly over charged and potentially robbed in a secluded area by the driver’s friends. The same goes for motorcycle and moped operators charging for transportation.

**“Fake Police”** – You are stopped on the road (usually near an area frequented by expats) and asked to show your passport to a person claiming to be a police officer. When you cannot produce your passport, you are asked to pay an on-the-spot fine of RMB500. First, if they are real police they will have no problem with showing you their I.D. when requested. Furthermore, real police officers will go with you to their police station where you will be issued a receipt for the fine.

**“Pickpockets”** – Typically, a single man or a pair of women with babies strapped to their chests approach you from behind during your walk near a popular tourist area (Nanjing Rd). Unbeknownst to you, they unzip your bag and quickly steal everything that looks expensive. Remember to keep your bags in front of you and do not place valuables in your back pocket.

**“Child Beggars and Flower Sellers”** – “Money, money, money!” or “Flowers, Flowers, Flowers!” Money dropped into their cup will be taken by their adult handler (perhaps even their kidnapper) who is exploiting the child and your humanitarian nature. If you want to help, consider offering food instead.

**“Buy a Car” scam** – A Chinese based website states you can pay 30% of the total cost of the car now through Western Union and the balance upon delivery. In the end you never receive your car or see your money again.

**“Black Money”** - In order to prevent the theft of U.S. currency being shipped overseas, the U.S. government has a process to coat \$100 bills with a special ink (usually black). I have intercepted one shipment but need your help purchasing a special solvent to “clean” the bills. I am happy to share the proceeds with you. Of course, the process is bogus, and you will lose whatever money you invest.

**“Stolen Wallet”** – “Hi, my wife and I

(dressed nicely) are tourists and had our wallets stolen. Could you please loan us RMB100? When we return home we will send you the money back.” You will not receive any money back and have just been victimized by a con artist.

**“Dropped Metro Card” scam** – The taxi driver drops your transportation card as he attempts to hand it back to you in the backseat. The next time you go to use it you find the card has a zero balance. What happened to your money? The taxi driver saw that you had a lot of money on your card and dropped it by his feet to quickly switch it for an empty one. Circumvent this scam by placing a sticker or other clear identifying marker on your transportation card to confirm the card handed back to you is indeed your own.

### General Safety Advice

- Shanghai is a big city with big city problems.
- It is not a good idea at home; it is probably not a good idea here.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. Look at the people close to you and watch out for “accidental” nudging and touching.
- Think about leaving valuable and extra cash behind in a safe place when you go out.
- Don’t carry all your valuable, cash, credit cards, etc in one pocket or bag – distribute.
- Enter into your phone: 110 (police) and 962288 (bilingual assistance).

