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ACTION NEA-11INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ADS-00 SMS-01 SS-15 SP-02  
HA-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SR-05 NSC-05 DODE-00  
IO-14 /091 W

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R 221242Z MAY 79  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9667  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMCONSUL MADRAS  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 12065: GDS 5/22/85 (MANGER, WALTER M.) OR-P  
TAGS: SREF, CH,IN, UR, MG  
SUBJECT: TIBETAN TRAVELS

REFS: (A) NEW DELHI 8034 (B) HONG KONG 8577 (NOTAL)

1. (U) SEVERAL PAPERS OVER THE WEEKEND CARRIED PRESS REPORTS (INCLUDING ONE FROM MOSCOW) THAT THE DALAI LAMA WILL VISIT THE SOVIET UNION AND MONGOLIA IN JUNE (REF B). WHEN QUERIED BY THE INDIAN WIRE SERVICE UNI ON THESE REPORTS ON MAY 21, TASHI WANGDI, SECRETARY OF THE DALAI LAMA'S NEW DELHI OFFICE, CONFIRMED THAT HIS HOLINESS WILL ATTEND A FOUR-DAY "ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE

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FOR PEACE" BEGINNING IN ULAN BATOR ON JUNE 16. WANGDI ADDED THAT "ON HIS WAY HIS HOLINESS WILL STOP OVER AT MOSCOW AND VISIT SOME OF THE FAMOUS MONASTERIES AND RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CENTERS IN THE SOVIET UNION." ASKED WHETHER THE DALAI LAMA WOULD MEET SOVIET OR MONGOLIAN POLITICAL LEADERS, WANGDI TOLD UNI: "THE VISIT IS PURELY RELIGIOUS." HE ADDED THAT THE DALAI LAMA WOULD LEAVE DELHI ON JUNE 12 OR 13 AND RETURN SOON AFTER THE ULAN BATOR MEETING. WANGDI ALSO SAID THAT HIS HOLINESS WAS INVITED TO THE BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE BY CONFERENCE PRESIDENT GONPOJAB.

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Charles Lahiguera, Senior Reviewer**

2. (U) IN A COMMENTARY ON THESE PRESS REPORTS, THE HINDU'S WELL-CONNECTED NEW DELHI BUREAU CHIEF, G.K. REDDY, WROTE ON MAY 19 THAT THE SOVIETS WERE BEHIND THE INVITATION TO THE DALAI LAMA TO ATTEND THE ULAN BATOR CONFERENCE. HE WROTE THAT FOR SOME TIME THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO OPEN A LINE OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE DALAI LAMA IN INDIA. THIS ATTEMPT WAS ALL PART OF "A DETERMINED EFFORT BY MOSCOW TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO BLOCK THE CURRENT CHINESE MOVES TO PERSUADE HIM TO RETURN TO TIBET." REDDY BELIEVED THAT THIS SOVIET ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT HIS HOLINESS AND TO INVOLVE HIM IN ITS DISPUTE WITH CHINA HAD PLACED INDIA IN A "HIGHLY EMBARRASSING POSITION."

3. (U) IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, IT NOW APPEARS THAT THE 18 TIBETAN REFUGEES WHO WERE PLANNING TO VISIT TIBET THIS SUMMER (REF A) MAY NOT GO AFTER ALL BECAUSE OF NEW CONDITIONS LAID DOWN BY PRC. A SPOKESMAN FOR THE GROUP TOLD REPORTERS IN DELHI MAY 20 THAT "ALL OF A SUDDEN THE CHINESE EMBASSY HAS SET CONDITIONS FOR OUR VISIT WHICH WE SIMPLY CANNOT ACCEPT. THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES NOW WANT US TO APPLY FOR VISAS AS CHINESE NATIONALS, SOMETHING THEY NEVER MENTIONED WHEN WE EXPLORED THE SUBJECT BEFORE." THE MAJOR HITCH, IT APPEARS, IS THAT THE CHINESE EMBASSY WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE TIBETANS' INDIAN IDENTITY CERTIFICATES AS TRAVEL  
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DOCUMENTS, CLAIMING THAT THE REFUGEES HAD NOT GIVEN UP THEIR ORIGINAL NATIONALITY AND AS SUCH WERE CHINESE.

4. (C) IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUERY, A CHINESE EMBOFF SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING THE EXILES' VISIT, SAYING THAT IT WAS "JUST A FORMALITY." ACCORDING TO THE EMBOFF, THE PROBLEM AROSE WHEN THE TIBETANS WERE ASKED TO STATE THEIR NATIONALITY ON THE VISA APPLICATION FORM. THEY WANTED TO STATE "TIBETAN REFUGEE" WHILE THE CHINESE WOULD ACCEPT ONLY "TIBETAN," "SINCE AS YOU KNOW TIBET IS A PART OF CHINA." THE TIBETANS ALBKE AT THIS AND REFUSED TO SIGN. THE EMBOFF SAID THAT THIS WAS WHERE MATTERS STOOD AT THE MOMENT BUT EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE 18 TIBETANS WOULD STILL MAKE THE TRIP SOMEHOW. GOHEEN

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