**07KATHMANDU1069**

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VZCZCXRO9842 PP RUEHCI DE RUEHKT #1069/01 1501211 ZNY CCCCC ZZH P 301211Z MAY 07 FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6110 INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5390 RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1314 RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 6084 RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5777 RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 4109 RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1517 RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 3522 RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1668 RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2712

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 001069 SIPDIS SIPDIS E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/30/2017 TAGS: PREF PTER PHUM ASEC PREL PGOV BT NP SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR URGES HOME MINISTER TO HOLD MAOISTS ACCOUNTABLE REF: A. KATHMANDU 1059 [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#parB) B. KATHMANDU 1036 (NOTAL) Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty for reasons 1.4(b/d). Summary ------- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par1) 1. (C) In a May 30 meeting with Home Minister Krishna Prasad Sitaula, the Ambassador sharply criticized the Maoist-affiliated Young Communist League (YCL) for attacking his vehicle in Jhapa on May 25 and for threatening and intimidating Nepalese with impunity across the country. The Maoist leadership had to be held accountable for the YCL's abuses. The Ambassador asked Sitaula to obtain assurances from Maoist Chairman Pushpa Dahal (alias Prachanda) that the YCL would not target U.S. officials or citizens. He also urged the Government of Nepal (GON) to take firm action against YCL cadre found breaking the law. Similarly, the GON needed to increase security in and around the Bhutanese refugee camps in Jhapa District to prevent the Communist Party of Bhutan (CPB) from threatening and intimidating other refugees in the run-up to a U.S. resettlement program. Sitaula suggested that the eight political parties might soon agree to hold Constituent Assembly elections in mid-November. He complained that the UN was delaying verification of Maoist combatants and asked the Ambassador for his support during this difficult time. Young Communist League Attack in Jhapa Unacceptable --------------------------------------------- ------ [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par2) 2. (C) In a meeting May 30 with Home Minister Krishna Prasad Sitaula, the Ambassador condemned the May 25 attack on his vehicle by Young Communist League (YCL) cadre in Jhapa District (Refs A, B). The YCL cadre had appeared unexpectedly minutes prior to the Ambassador's scheduled arrival at the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) sub-office in Damak, suggesting that the attack was well-planned. The Ambassador appreciated the efforts of the Nepal Police to prevent the YCL from approaching the vehicle. However, for the Maoist-affiliated league to openly attack a foreign diplomat demonstrated the group's belief that it could act with impunity. (Note: UNHCR Resident Representative Abraham Abraham and Embassy RefCoord were also present in the vehicle. End Note.) Unless the Government of Nepal (GON) took this incident seriously, the YCL would continue to see what it could get away with. This time they had thrown rocks, the next time they could fire a bullet, he added. Sitaula expressed regret over the incident and noted that five YCL leaders in Jhapa District were in police custody under "public disturbance" charges. The Home Minister commented that he had told Maoist Chairman Pushpa Dahal (alias Prachanda) May 25 that the YCL needed to desist from these activities. Dahal had lied and had claimed that the incident did not involve the YCL. YCL Activities Must Be Brought Under Control -------------------------------------------- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par3) 3. (C) The Ambassador said that the Maoist leaders had created the YCL intentionally to intimidate the Nepali people and political parties. The League might destroy the government if not brought under control, he added. Although no one was injured on May 25, the YCL had tried to cause bodily harm. If the GON could not protect foreign diplomats or Nepali citizens, Nepal ran the risk of becoming a failed state. He expressed dismay that the GON had a coalition partner, a member of the interim government, that was getting away with an active policy of intimidation and violence. The Ambassador noted that YCL leaders had publicly bragged about participating in police assassinations as members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), but had faced no consequences. According to the arms management agreement and peace accords, all PLA combatants were supposed to be in the cantonment sites. He urged Sitaula to hold the Maoists accountable for these violations. KATHMANDU 00001069 002 OF 003 Maoist Chairman Pushpa Dahal Ignored His Commitments --------------------------------------------- ------- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par4) 4. (C) The Ambassador pointed out that in his meeting with Sitaula in February, following Pushpa Dahal's allegation of a royalist plot to assassinate U.S. officials, the Ambassador had asked the GON to obtain assurances from the Maoist chairman that Maoist cadre would not view the plot allegation as an opportunity to attack Americans and blame it on the palace. The GON had sought and received these assurances: the Maoist Chairman had claimed that he had instructed all cadre not to attack U.S. officials or citizens. However, Dahal had either ignored this commitment or he had lied. The GON needed to criticize Dahal publicly for continuing to use terror to accomplish his political objectives; it was a mistake for the GON to allow any political party to operate outside the law. The Ambassador asked Sitaula to tell Dahal to bring the YCL under control. If not, the GON needed to provide assurances of its own in this regard. Not only did YCL actions represent a threat to himself and other U.S. officials, but all other Americans in Nepal, the Ambassador added. Sitaula agreed to discuss this problem with Dahal. The Home Minister also volunteered that, at a planned Nepali Congress rally in Jhapa District on June 2, he intended to criticize publicly the YCL abuses. Security For Bhutanese Refugees Also a Must ------------------------------------------- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par5) 5. (C) Home Minister Sitaula expressed concern about the security situation in the Bhutanese refugee camps and at the Indo-Nepal border at Mechi Bridge. He noted that Indian security forces had killed one refugee on May 29. The Home Ministry had issued a statement requesting that the refugees return to the camps, while district-level political party leaders were also working to calm the situation. Sitaula indicated that the GON had asked Maoist leader Dahal why he was encouraging this movement. At the eight party meeting on May 31, Sitaula said, he would raise the refugee issue with Dahal again. He also planned to travel to Jhapa in the next day or two to visit the refugee camps. The Ambassador acknowledged that the police had been overwhelmed and chased outside the refugee camps, but stressed that they needed to begin patrolling inside the camps to provide security to the refugees. The Ambassador urged Sitaula to take action against Communist Party of Bhutan (CPB) activists who were threatening refugees known to support third-country resettlement. More Security Needed for U.S. Resettlement Program --------------------------------------------- ----- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par6) 6. (C) Sitaula agreed that the majority of the refugees were interested in resettlement. He asked about the USG timeline for resettlement. RefCoord explained that processing would begin in September with the first departures in January 2008. Sitaula worried that more security problems would arise in the camps during the interim period. The Ambassador responded that the Embassy would work closely with the Home Ministry to ensure that additional security in and around the camps was in place to allow resettlement activities to proceed. Sitaula opined that most Bhutanese refugee political leaders were democratic, not aligned with the Maoists, and could be persuaded to support resettlement. The Ambassador noted that as the Bhutanese community in the U.S. grew, it would more easily make its voice heard on the need for human rights and democracy in Bhutan. Election Dates and Verification of PLA Combatants --------------------------------------------- ---- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par7) 7. (C) Sitaula mentioned that the eight parties were close to an agreement on dates for the Constituent Assembly election. Most likely, the election would be held in the third week of November, he said. The Ambassador welcomed this news; the U.S. would support any GON decision on election dates. He KATHMANDU 00001069 003 OF 003 informed Sitaula that the USG had decided to provide an additional USD 3 million for security sector reform, primarily for police infrastructure and training. Sitaula expected the second phase of PLA combatant verification to begin o/a June 9, but complained that the UN was moving too slowly. The Ambassador commented that the UN believed it needed a more explicit agreement from the Maoists to proceed. Sitaula said that, if this were the case, then the UN should say so publicly. Noting the many challenges he faced as Home Minister, Sitaula requested the Ambassador's support. "The government's position on the Maoists has become tougher, putting me in a more difficult position with them," he said. The Nepal Police had arrested Maoists in five districts, including most recently for a murder case in Humla. "The Maoists have become tougher on me, too," Sitaula added. Comment ------- [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/07kathmandu1069#par8) 8. (C) The good news from this meeting was that Sitaula was for the first time unambiguous in acknowledging the need to crackdown on Maoist abuses. He heard the message loud and clear that the U.S. expected the GON to hold the Maoist leadership responsible for the May 25 attack on the Ambassador's vehicle. He also seemed to understand the need to extract assurances from Maoist chief Dahal that the Young Communist League would not target U.S. officials or citizens in the future. That said, we have little confidence in Sitaula's ability to hold the Maoists' feet to the fire. With both the Prime Minister and Home Minister scheduled to attend, the Nepali Congress rally on June 2 in Jhapa District may help to calm tensions with the Bhutanese refugees and to improve security in and around the camps. Election dates and verification of combatants are important steps forward, but will mean little without a contemporaneous improvement in Maoist behavior. MORIARTY