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INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 010347Z AUG 79
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
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INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING
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E.O. 12065: RDS-2, 4 8/1/99 (SHOESMITH, THOMAS P.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR, SREF, CH, IN
SUBJ: (S) DALAI LAMA'S TOP ADVISORS TO MAKE TWO-MONTH CHINA VISIT

REF: HONG KONG 10581

1. (S-ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. SUMMARY: A GROUP OF FIVE TIBETANS RESIDENT IN INDIA, LED BY A BROTHER OF THE DALAI LAMA, WILL DEPART HONG KONG AUGUST 3 OR 4 FOR AN UNPUBLICIZED TWO-MONTH VISIT TO BEIJING AND ETHNIC TIBETAN AREAS OF CHINA. BEIJING HAS PASSED WORD THAT THE VISITORS, WHO INCLUDE THE DALAI LAMA'S TOP SECURITY AND INFORMATION ADVISORS, WILL MEET WITH PREMIER HUA, VICE PREMIER DENG AND OTHER POLITBURO MEMBERS. THE DELEGATION APPARENTLY HAS NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED TO NEGOTIATE ON BEHALF OF THE DALAI LAMA, BUT THIS VISIT REPRESENTS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE TIBETAN EXILES AND BEIJING.
END SUMMARY.

3. HIGH RANKING MEMBERS OF THE DALAI LAMA'S
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SECRET

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Charles Lahiguera, Senior Reviewer

PAGE 02 HONG K 12802 021236Z

"GOVERNMENT IN EXILE" IN INDIA HAVE TOLD [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (STRICTLY PROTECT) THAT BEIJING HAS APPROVED THE PROPOSED TWO-MONTH VISIT TO CHINA BY FIVE TIBETANS LED BY LOBSANG SAMTEN, A BROTHER OF THE DALAI LAMA (REFTEL). THE GROUP IS SCHEDULED TO DEPART HONG KONG AUGUST 3 OR 4, ACCOMPANIED BY AN OFFICIAL OF THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY (NCNA). OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ARE THE HEAD OF THE EXILE "GOVERNMENT'S" SECURITY OFFICE, THE HEAD OF THE INFORMATION OFFICE, AND TWO YOUNG TIBETANS EDUCATED

B6
B6

IN SCOTLAND. THE LATTER TWO MEMBERS REPORTEDLY WERE CHOSEN BECAUSE THEY ARE MILITANT TIBETAN NATIONALISTS WHOSE VISIONS OF CHINA WOULD BE MORE CREDIBLE TO THE VIRULENTLY ANTI-PRC ELEMENTS IN THE TIBETAN EXILE COMMUNITY.

4. NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE GROUP'S VISIT WERE CARRIED OUT WITH HONG KONG NCNA BY GALO THUNDOP, ANOTHER BROTHER OF THE DALAI LAMA. DURING THUNDOP'S OWN VISIT TO BEIJING IN MARCH HE REQUESTED, AT THE DALAI LAMA'S SUGGESTION, MEETINGS WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF POLITBURO MEMBERS, BUT WAS ONLY GRANTED A SESSION WITH DENG XIAOPING. HONG KONG NCNA LAST WEEK INFORMED THUNDOP THAT BEIJING HAS APPROVED HIS REQUEST THAT THE FIVE-MAN GROUP MEET WITH PREMIER HUA, NPC CHAIRMAN YE JIANYING, VICE PREMIER LI XIANNIAN, AND POLITBURO MEMBERS WEI GUOQING AND HU YAOBANG, AS WELL AS WITH DENG. THE DALAI LAMA REPORTEDLY HAS NOT AUTHORIZED THE GROUP TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PRC LEADERS, BUT THE VISITORS HOPE TO GAIN SOME IMPRESSION WHETHER AMONG THE LEADERS THERE IS A UNANIMITY OF VIEWS TOWARD THE DALAI LAMA AND THE EXILES. HIS HOLINESS HAS ASKED THE DELEGATION TO CONVEY HIS GREETINGS TO THOSE

SECRET

PAGE 03 HONG K 12802 021236Z

LEADERS HE KNEW BEFORE HE LEFT TIBET IN 1959. DELEGATION MEMBERS ALSO ARE CONSIDERING RAISING WITH THE PRC LEADERS PRESS REPORTS OF A MASSACRE OF HUI MINORITY PEOPLE IN YUNNAN IN 1975, INQUIRING HOW SUCH AN INCIDENT COULD OCCUR IN CHINA.

5. BEIJING ALSO APPROVED MEETINGS WITH THE CCP FIRST SECRETARIES IN THE PROVINCES WHICH THE GROUP IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT -- TIBET, QINGHAI, SICHUAN, GANSU AND YUNNAN. THE GROUP'S ELABORATE ITINERARY INCLUDES VISITS TO VIRTUALLY EVERY MAJOR ETHNIC TIBETAN TOWN IN CHINA.

6. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION ON JULY 31 THE FIRST SECRETARY OF THE INDIAN COMMISSION HERE VOLUNTEERED TO A CONGENOFF THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS AWARE THAT A GROUP OF FIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DALAI LAMA WILL BE TRAVELLING TO BEIJING THIS WEEK. HE STRESSED THAT THE INDIAN COMMISSION HAS CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY INVOLVEMENT IN ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TRIP AND HINTEDTHOUT MENTIONING ANY NAMES) THAT HE WAS AWARE OF GALO THUNDOP'S ROLE.

7. [REDACTED] HAS COMMENTED TO US THAT MEMBERS OF THE GROUP, PARTICULARLY THE DALAI LAMA'S BROTHER, WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE RECOGNIZED BY TIBETANS IN THEIR NATIVE AREAS AND WORD OF THE

B6

DELEGATION PROBABLY WILL EVENTUALLY GET BACK TO THE EXILE COMMUNITY.

8. COMMENT: THIS VISIT REPRESENTS A MAJOR EFFORT BY BOTH THE EXILED TIBETANS AND THE PRC AUTHORITIES TO ESTABLISH BETTER COMMUNICATION. IN APPROVING THE VISIT THE DALAI LAMA KNOWS HE RISKS STRONG PROTESTS BY ELEMENTS WITHIN THE EXILE COMMUNITY WHO OPPOSE ANY CONTACT WITH BEIJING. ON BEIJING'S PART,
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 HONG K 12802 021236Z

APPROVAL DEMONSTRATES THAT THE PRC LEADERS' DESIRE TO WOO THE EXILES TO RETURN TO THEIR MOTHERLAND OVERRIDES THEIR ANGER WITH THE DALAI LAMA'S RECENT TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION. IN VIEW OF THE LARGELY NEGATIVE REPORTS BROUGHT BACK BY THE HANDFUL OF EARLIER TIBETAN EXILE VISITORS TO CHINA, BEIJING'S DECISION TO PERMIT THIS GROUP TO VISIT SOME OF THE MOST REMOTE AREAS OF THE COUNTRY MAY REPRESENT OVERCONFIDENCE THAT THE VISITORS WILL BE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY WHAT THEY SEE.
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