

Viewing cable 08NEWDELHI1562, INDIA URGED TO PRESS BURMA ON ALLOWING AID TO

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2082

INFO RUCNIND/ALL INDO COLLECTIVE

RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE

RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE

RUEHZJ/HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION COLLECTIVE

RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 1254

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

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RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 6495

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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 7764

RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [EAID](#) [BM](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: INDIA URGED TO PRESS BURMA ON ALLOWING AID TO REACH CYCLONE NARGIS VICTIMS

REF: STATE 59122

[1](#). (SBU) SUMMARY: A/PolCouns urged MEA Director (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma) I.M. Pandey on June 6 to press Burma harder to allow international aid supplies and workers to reach victims of Cyclone Nargis. Pandey cited India's difficulties in getting aid into Burma, noting that direct access to the Irrawaddy Delta had been denied and that the GOB had not allowed India a role in the distribution of the aid supplies it delivered to Burmese airports. Pandey defended India's decision to honor the strict conditions the GOB has placed on accepting aid, stating that "pressure and sanctions on Burma have never worked" and would only complicate relief efforts. Post expects the Indian

government will privately ask the Burmese government to fulfill its promises to cooperate fully with international relief efforts, but will not exert any real pressure. END SUMMARY.

INDIA ASKED TO BRING MORE PRESSURE ON BURMA TO ACCEPT AID

¶2. (U) A/PolCouns met with MEA Director (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma) I.M. Pandey on June 6 to deliver reftel demarche and to urge the GOI to press Burma harder to allow international aid supplies and workers to reach victims of Cyclone Nargis. Noting India's considerable influence with the GOB, A/PolCouns pressed the GOI to exploit that influence privately to urge the GOB to allow more access for international relief workers into devastated areas and also to make public statements designed to bring further pressure to bear on the GOB. Pandey stated that the GOI has asked the GOB to accept international aid, resulting in the GOB allowing several countries, including the U.S. and India, to fly in aid to selected airports. Pandey added that the GOB has allowed some foreign aid workers into Burma including two successive 24-person teams of Indian medical doctors, the most recent of which returned to India on June 5. Pandey noted that the GOI has requested, and has not yet received permission from the GOB for direct access to the Irrawaddy Delta. A/PolCouns asked the GOI to keep pressing the GOB on this request, on behalf of the entire international community.

GOI DESCRIBES BURMESE RESTRICTIONS ON AID

¶3. (U) A/PolCouns thanked the GOI for the large amounts of Cyclone relief it has provided to Burma, and requested a comprehensive, detailed description of India's aid to date, which Pandey agreed to forward to Post. Admitting that the GOI has no plans at the moment for sending further aid, Pandey briefly described the background of GOI relief efforts, explaining how immediately after Cyclone Nargis tore through Burma India's Embassy in Rangoon reached out to the GOB to offer help. The GOB, recounted Pandey, requested medicine, roofing materials and ready-to-eat meals from India, but it stipulated that the aid supplies should be released to the GOB at the airport, and that India would not be allowed a role in the distribution of aid. Pandey stressed that the GOI agreed without reservations to these conditions. Pandey emphasized that the GOI has and will continue to avoid pressuring the GOB, and is "sensitive" to the GOB's political wishes, and will comply with the GOB's conditions to not politicize any aspect of relief efforts. Pandey stated that the GOI does not support a strategy of applying pressure (such as sanctions) on the GOB, as it considers these counter-productive.

COMMENT: EXPECT PRIVATE NUDGING, AT BEST

¶4. (SBU) Pandey told us he had discussed our demarche with his boss, Joint Secretary T. S. Tiramurti, and suggested that Tiramurti acknowledged the Burmese government had not lived up to its promises to allow full access to international aid workers. However, Pandey reiterated that the Indian

government does not believe "pressure" is an effective way to influence the junta. Pandey did agree that India, for the benefit of the international community, could be helpful in

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pointing out to the GOB that it has not followed through on promises made to UN SYG Ban, or the Indian government. While Pandey was non-committal on actions the GOI would take, based on his acknowledgment that Indian relief efforts could benefit from a further opening of restrictions, Post expects India will make a low-level, low-pressure "request" to the GOB to live up to its commitments and allow full access for international aid workers. END COMMENT.

MULFORD

<http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2008/06/08NEWDELHI1562.html>