

# Travel Warning

United States Department of State  
Bureau of Consular Affairs  
Washington, DC 20520

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## NEPAL

### May 11, 2006

This Travel Warning is being issued to alert American citizens that the Department of State has authorized the lifting of the Ordered Departure Status for the Embassy and the Embassy has returned to normal operations. This Travel Warning also provides updated information on the security situation in Nepal. This supersedes the Travel Warning issued on April 24, 2006. The Department of State remains concerned about the security situation in Nepal. Despite the announcement of a ceasefire, Maoist extortion and abductions continue. Maoists are now free to roam about the countryside, sometimes still openly bearing their weapons. Travel via road in some areas outside of the Kathmandu valley continues to be dangerous and should be avoided. There have been attacks in the countryside involving foreigners. Trekkers and other individuals who resist Maoist extortion demands have been threatened, sometimes assaulted, and risk being detained. In March 2006, Maoists detained several Polish trekkers after the trekkers refused to pay extortion.

The Embassy has periodically received information that the Maoists might attempt to attack or take actions specifically against U.S. citizens, particularly in regions of the country where Maoists are active. On a number of occasions, Maoists have burned or bombed tourist resorts after the foreigners staying there were given short notice to evacuate. The Maoists have also periodically detonated bombs within Kathmandu itself. On September 10, 2004, two bombs exploded at the American Center compound. There were no injuries, but the blasts damaged the facility. The suspension of Peace Corps activities, which was announced on September 14, 2004, will continue until further notice.

While widespread protests have abated, the potential for demonstrations and disruptions remains. During recent demonstrations protestors used violence, including burning vehicles, throwing rocks during street demonstrations and burning tires to block traffic. Government security forces responded with teargas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition to quell the demonstrations. Given the nature, intensity and unpredictability of disturbances, American citizens are urged to exercise special caution during times when demonstrations are announced, avoid areas where demonstrations are occurring or crowds are forming, avoid road travel and maintain a low profile. American citizens are urged to consult media sources and the Embassy's website (<http://nepal.usembassy.gov>) for current security information.

U.S. citizens are advised to avoid road travel outside the Kathmandu Valley. During recent road closures, Maoist cadres attacked commercial trucks, buses and private vehicles defying their blockades, sometimes killing or severely injuring drivers. In April 2005, two Russian tourists were injured when a bomb exploded on the highway near their taxi while driving east toward Jiri, Dolakha district. During announced road closures in the past, the Embassy received widespread reports of Maoists forcibly blocking major roads throughout the country, including roads to Tibet, India, Chitwan, Pokhara, and Jiri. During some closures, some districts were blockaded without warning. In March and April 2006, Maoists forcibly blocked all traffic coming into and out of the Kathmandu valley. U.S. citizens are encouraged to contact the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu for the latest security information, and to travel by air whenever possible.

Because of heightened security risks, U.S. official personnel do not generally travel by road outside the Kathmandu Valley. All official travel outside the Kathmandu valley, including by air, requires specific clearance by the Regional Security Officer. As a result, emergency assistance to U.S. citizens may be limited. Active duty military and Department of Defense contractors must obtain a country clearance for official and unofficial travel to Nepal.

Although the Government of Nepal has removed its own terrorist tag from the Maoists, the Department of State designation of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" organization under the "Terrorist Exclusion List" of the Immigration and Nationality Act and under Executive Order 13224 remains. These two designations make Maoists excludable from entry into the United States and bars U.S. citizens from transactions such as contribution of funds, goods, or services to, or for the benefit of, the Maoists.

Although the rate of violent crime is low in Kathmandu, street crime does occur and has increased there as well as in other areas frequented by foreigners. Solo trekkers have also been robbed by small groups of young men, even on some popular trails. Although attacks against foreigners are rare, in late 2005 two European women were murdered in Nargarjun Forest, a popular tourist destination. The two murders occurred within weeks of each other and both involved women hiking alone. The body and valuables of one woman were recovered and theft did not appear to be the motivation behind the crime. Both crimes remain unsolved and no culprit(s) has been identified.

U.S. citizens who travel to or reside in Nepal despite this Travel Warning should factor the potential for violence into their plans, avoid public demonstrations and maintain low profiles while in Nepal. U.S. citizens are urged to register with the Consular Section of the Embassy by accessing the Department of State's travel registration site at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> or by personal appearance at the Consular Section. The Consular Section is located at the Yak and Yeti Hotel complex on Durbarmarg Street. The section can be reached directly at (977) (1) 444-5577 or through the Embassy switchboard. The U.S. Embassy is located at Pani Pokhari in Kathmandu, telephone (977) (1) 441-1179; fax (977) (1) 444-4981, website <http://nepal.usembassy.gov>. The Consular Section can provide updated information on travel and security.

U.S. citizens should also consult the Department of State's Consular Information Sheet for Nepal and Worldwide Caution Public Announcement via the Internet on the Department of State's home page at <http://travel.state.gov> or by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States, or, for callers outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).



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