

China's Tibet crackdown clouds Olympics

by UPI

BEIJING - Concern about China's crackdown in Tibet threatens Beijing's efforts to hold the Summer Olympics without controversy, dissidents and others said. With the world attention focused on the Tibetan unrest, the Games, instead of showing China in a favorable light, could become a reminder the Communist country's Leninist policies still remain in place, The Washington Post reported. "This is exactly what the party leaders didn't want," Li Datong, an editor fired in 2006 after an essay in his magazine challenged the party's official history, told the newspaper. Li said the government should be prepared for protests over Tibet, Darfur, human rights and other causes before and during the Games, both inside and outside China. "It's over," he said. "The Olympic Games have already been kidnapped by the Tibet issue." "The leadership could be riding a real tiger with the Tibet issue, in terms of foreign opinion," said David L. Shambaugh, director of the China policy program at George Washington University. "Various and sundry non-governmental human rights activists smell blood, and they will all be using Tibet to press their causes as well." Concerned about protests, Chinese Olympic officials in Beijing are not even disclosing the route of the Olympic torch, the report said.

© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

China's Tibet crackdown clouds Olympics by UPI