

Muslim protests surface in China

by UPI

BEIJING -- China, already in the grips of widening Tibetan unrest, faces additional ethnic unrest from Muslims in its northwest Xinjiang region, authorities say. Authorities say the Uighur Muslims protested against Chinese rule last month even as the Tibetan riots were going on, The New York Times reported. The report said one of the Uighur protests, which may have been quickly put down, occurred March 23 in the town of Hotan. Chinese officials blamed Islamic separatist groups for the protest. Human rights groups say the Uighurs, as in the case of Tibetans, have been demanding greater religious freedom and more autonomy. Their actions along with those of the Tibetans point to the extent of China's troubles with its ethnic and religious minorities, The Times report said. These problems are surfacing as China prepares to host the Beijing Summer Olympics in August, an event seen as a coming out party for modern China.

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