

Chinese professor claims global warming threat to railway

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(Kyodo; Xinhua) Thawing permafrost, the result of global warming, could threaten the Golmud-Lhasa railway within 10 years' time, according to research by the government-backed Chinese Academy of Sciences. Warmer ground could destabilise the 1,956-kilometre railway, Wu Ziwang, a professor from the academy's Desert Institute said. The academy had previously found that the plateau's weather began warming in 1984, with the average temperature predicted to increase by 1 C by 2050. Wu also claims engineers used outdated technology, particularly on 100 km of causeways, to build the railway. *"We use a lot of technology that other countries don't use"*, said Wu, 71, a permafrost engineering researcher for 40 years. Xinhua said builders of the railway could build bridges and *"minor"* environmental protection projects along the route to combat the threat of warming. Wu said he did not plan to tell government officials directly about his findings.

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