

China puts curbs on Tibet route to Everest

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(IANS) The China Tibet Mountaineering Association (CTMA) in Lhasa says it has negotiated with the China Mountaineering Association in Beijing for limiting the number of climbers in the Everest area in spring 2007 to prepare for the 2008 Olympic Torch Race. Mountaineers often prefer the Tibet route to access Mt Everest because of low fees and relaxed rules. Climbers and human rights activists describe the move as an effort by Beijing to keep negative publicity at bay, especially after mountaineers provided graphic materials on the shootings which resulted in the death of a 17-year-old nun at Nangpa in September 2006. The CTMA also said the costs of expedition fees would be increased in 2007, which might make some international expeditions return to the earlier popular route through neighbouring Nepal.

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