

Joint Chinese-Indian team to study Himalayan glaciers

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(AP) A joint Indian-Chinese team plans to chart remote Himalayan glaciers that scientists fear are rapidly melting because of global warming, threatening the great rivers that give life to South Asia's fertile Gangetic Plain. The two expeditions being planned as part of the project will take scientists into some of the most remote and isolated regions of Tibet to explore the sources of the Sutlej and Brahmaputra Rivers, said H.P.S. Ahluwalia, who runs the Indian Mountaineering Foundation. *"The melting of the ice sheets and the glaciers is a crisis in the Himalayas"*, he said at a news conference with colleagues from China's Institute of Geology and Geophysics, which is organising the Chinese side of the project. Both expeditions are to get under way in September 2007. The expedition teams plan to gather samples from the glaciers to try to determine the rate at which they have been retreating over the last few decades. One team is to explore the glaciers around Mount Kailash, looking for the source of the Sutlej; the other will venture to the region around Mount Luenpo Kangri to pinpoint the source of the Brahmaputra.

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