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# Mongolia to Open China, Russia Railways

By The Moscow Times

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HONG KONG — Mongolia said it plans to synchronize the openings of two export railways to Russia and China to accelerate coal sales from the Tavan Tolgoi mine, one of the world's biggest unexploited coal deposits.

It may complete the railways as soon as 2014, Yondon Manlaibayar, director general at Mongolia's Ministry of Roads, Transport, Construction and Urban Development, said in an interview in Hong Kong.

Mongolia last year approved plans to quadruple the domestic rail network to boost commodity exports. It initially planned to develop a Russian route first to reduce reliance on Chinese customers. The Soviet Union helped build Mongolia's rail network, and the Russian government still owns half of it.

Construction of the China rail link from the Tavan Tolgoi mine, 270 kilometers northwest of the Chinese border, was due to start at least a year after the commissioning of the Russian route, a more than 1,000-kilometer line stretching to the northeast tip of Mongolia.

A group led by Russian Railways is one of the finalists in a tender process to develop the West Tshanki part of the Tavan Tolgoi coal field, Otgonbat Sedbazar, an adviser to the Mongolian resource ministry, said Wednesday at a forum in Hong Kong.

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