

Gazprom Neft Extracts First Oil in Iraq

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Gazprom Neft, the oil-producing arm of top Russian gas firm Gazprom, said it had produced first oil in well testing at its Badra oil field in Iraq and planned to start commercial production there this year.

"With well testing completed we are one step closer to beginning commercial production at the Badra field," Vadim Yakovlev, Gazprom Neft first deputy chief executive, said in a statement late last week.

In November, the company said it was postponing initial production at Badra until 2014 due to safety concerns and logistical problems.

Large-scale production at the Badra field is now likely to begin as early as later this year, Yakovlev said.

Recent violence in Iraq, in part a spillover from neighboring Syria, has increased concerns about security, even while the government is hoping that this year will bring the biggest

annual rise in oil exports in a decade.

Gazprom Neft said successful testing at the BD4 appraisal well took place at the end of December, with a daily natural flow rate of 7,000 barrels.

Badra's output is expected to reach 170,000 barrels per day of crude oil by 2017, or about 8.5 million tons per year, and is expected to remain at this level for seven years, the company added.

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