The Moscow Times
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Siberian Film Festival to Be Dedicated to Oil

By The Moscow Times

February 19, 2014

Over half of Russia's oil production takes place in Khanty-Mansiisk.

The "Spirit of Fire" film festival, held annually in the west Siberian city of Khanty-Mansiisk, has announced that this year's theme will be "Man and Oil."

"The role that oil plays in the lives of every individual, the government, the planet — this is an important and substantive discussion," Khanty-Mansiisk Governor Natalya Komarova said, RIA Novosti reported.

Komarova also noted the large impact that oil has had in Khanty-Mansiisk region, adding that "hundreds of thousands of people in several generations" had contributed to the oil industry there. As of 2011, over 51 percent of all oil gathered in Russia came from Khanty-Mansiisk, giving the region huge economic influence.

Once an underpopulated backwater, the population of the region has more than doubled since

the early '80s, and the influx of oil wealth has resulted in grandiose building projects such as a bridge across the Irtysh river and the "Crystal Tower," a 280-meter skyscraper designed by British celebrity architect Norman Foster that will be one of the tallest buildings in Russia when complete.

Khanty-Mansiisk has also seen a growth in cultural offerings, including the "Spirit of Fire" film festival, which has been held yearly since 2003.

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