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Shipping Container Movie Theaters to Tackle Russian Cinema Shortage

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The project is aimed at supporting domestic cinema and providing access to the movie theaters to the residents of small Russian towns.

Russia's Teterin Film company will launch a chain of budget movie theaters made out of cargo containers, its chief executive told The Moscow Times.

One hundred prefabricated movie theaters built using shipping containers will be installed around the country in Russian towns with a population of less than 100,000 by September next year, Oleg Teterin said earlier this month.

The first building will be erected in Lyudinovo, a small city in the Kaluga region southwest of Moscow.

The project is aimed at supporting domestic cinema and providing access to the movie theaters to the residents of small Russian towns.

The construction of a five-screen shipping container movie theater will take two weeks and cost 19.5 million rubles ($295,000) — several times less that the building costs of theaters belonging to existing large cinema chains, Teterin said.

The cheap setup will help the company sell tickets for 2 1/2 times less than traditional movie theaters.

The new chain plans ticket prices of 99 rubles ($1.50) to 160 rubles ($2.40).

Teterin said one-third of the Russian population has no access to movie theaters. There are no cinema screens in 668 Russian towns with a combined population of 50 million, and 370 Russian towns have only one movie theater, he said. Russia has a total population of some 143 million.

According to market analysts Movie Research, Russia at the end of last year had 1,128 movie theaters with a total of 3,787 screens. The United States, whose population of about 320 million is a little over double Russia's, had 39,956 movie screens in 2014, data from the Washington-based National Association of Theatre Owners showed.

The containers will screen both foreign and Russian films, but the number of international movies will be limited, Teterin said.

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