

SCIENCE

Second Wind for Siberian Science

For a long time, Siberia developed much more rapidly than the economy of the country as a whole. The extraction and refining of oil and natural gas, the introduction of new technology and the intensive development of machine building are the 'calling card' of today's Siberia. Historically, its powerful scientific potential has been a kind of catalyst for the industrial-economic, social and cultural processes evolving here. However, in recent years a number of problems have accumulated in Siberian science which are having a negative impact on the rate of development for the entire region. The concept for the development of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Siberian Branch should help to give Siberian science a second wind.

In his address, Academician V.A. Koptug, Chairman of the Siberian Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, noted that the important and ever-increasing role of the eastern regions in the economy of our country is widely known. Intensive development of these regions calls for thorough scientific grounding and accompaniment. A decisive step in developing the required scientific potential within Siberia has taken in 1957 when it was agreed to create the Siberian Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences as a complex of separate regional scientific centres closely linked to a system of higher education. The experience of the Siberian branch in organizing the Far Eastern and Urals branches of the USSR Academy of Sciences served to further the development of academic science in those nationally important regions of the Russian Federation. The significance of these steps is realized clearly today in connection with the current need to improve the economic and administrative independence of the regions.