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Indian Mining & Exploration Updates

India's Exploration & Production policy should be liberalised for metals, minerals: Anil Agarwal

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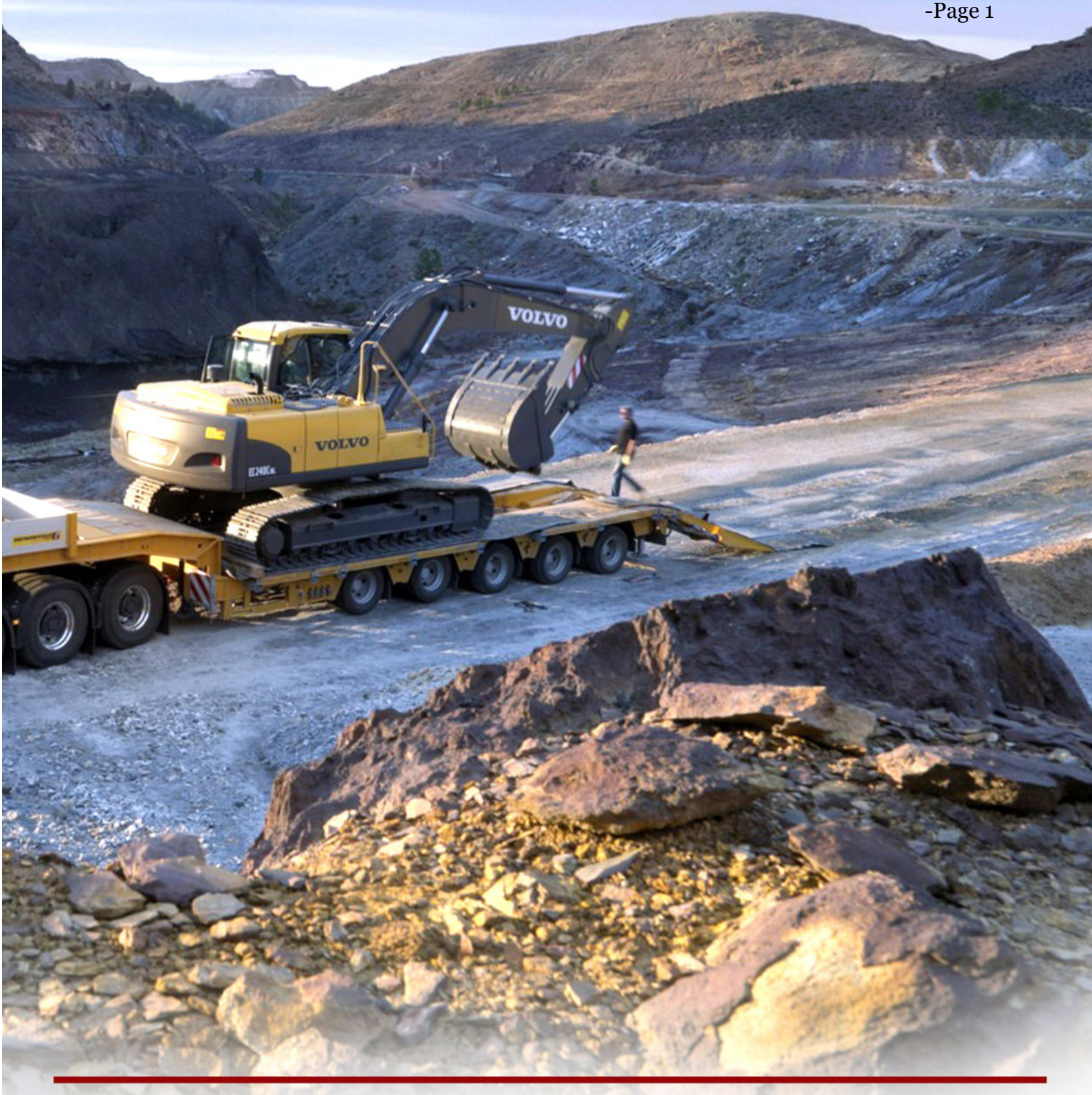


India's Exploration & Production policy should be liberalised for metals, minerals: Anil Agarwal

The country continues to pay hefty import bills year after year even as the nation is gifted with significant reserves of metals and minerals, the metals and mining magnate noted.

Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal on Monday said that India's exploration and production policy should be liberalised for a wide range of metals and minerals.

The country continues to pay hefty import bills year after year even as the nation is gifted with significant reserves of metals and minerals, the metals and mining magnate noted.

"It is becoming critical for India to liberalise its exploration and production policy for a wide range of metals, rare metals, minerals, and hydrocarbons," Agarwal said in a statement.

Robust domestic production will also insulate India from any global crisis, encourage entrepreneurship, create a large number of jobs and create a vibrant ecosystem, he said.

India, he said, can produce oil at one-fourth of the import price similar to Cairn providing oil at USD 26 to the government.

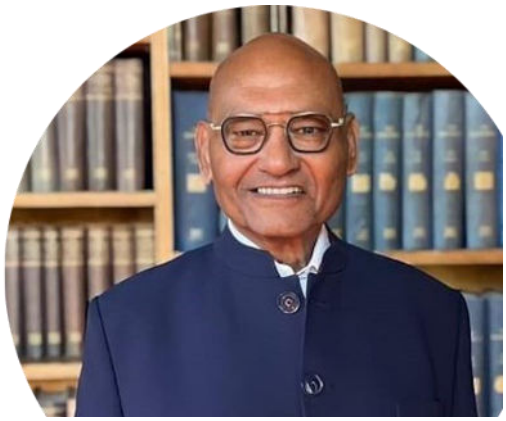
The country's import bill from crude oil to copper has risen sharply this year due to a rise in global commodity prices as well as depreciation in the rupee.

The country, he said, is a powerhouse of talent and on the path of making advances in the world of technology, research, and innovation.

"Our economic growth is powered by a combination of legacy industries and start-ups. Encouraging our start-ups & entrepreneurs to put their energy on the work without fear and hurdles will create massive jobs and massive revenue for the government.

"They can be encouraged to do exploration with the latest technologies like artificial intelligence, automation, and data analytics, by receiving funding from private equity and selling their licenses post-discovery. This can also lead to affordable oil and gas in India in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision."

This is the time when all the mine leases should be granted for a minimum of 50 years for better planning and execution by the companies, Agarwal said.



All existing mines, which were explored by the private sector but where work has been stopped, should be given back to them.

"... we cannot afford to stop production. A well-functioning mines and minerals sector will have a big role to play if we want to realise our dream of not just 5 trillion dollars but a 15-20 trillion-dollar economy in the next two decades," he said.

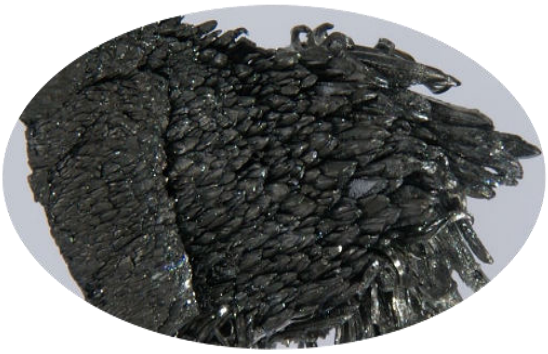
Source: Energyworld.com

Resource race by Developed nations is a treat for Countries like India

On 14 June 2022, the US government's state department put out a press release on the formation of an international Mineral Security Partnership (MSP). The MSP countries are Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, the UK, US and the European Commission. The partnership was announced at the world's largest mining event, held in Toronto. The MSP's stated goal is to ensure that critical minerals are produced, processed and recycled in a way that supports the ability of countries to realize the full economic development of their geological endowments. But, let us see how many global producers of critical minerals are part of the alliance.

According to a report released by the International Energy Agency in 2021 that was updated in March 2022, the major producers of critical minerals globally are Chile, Indonesia, Congo, China, Australia and South Africa. When it comes to processing, China dominates by a long stretch. Others are Indonesia, Chile and Japan. In the MSP, none of these countries, except Japan and Australia, are represented.

So, clearly, the MSP is not about the sustainable exploration, production and processing of critical minerals. It is more than that. It is about ensuring the availability of these minerals to MSP countries for their net-zero and energy



transition goals. It is something for many developing countries, including India, to ponder over.

Industry Opinion

Voice of Mines & Mineral Sector

Odisha: 15 more mineral blocks to be auctioned in 2022-23

As per the provisions under Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957 and the Rules framed there under.

The Odisha government has proposed to grant mining leases to fifteen mineral blocks through an e-auction process in 2022-23 financial year, the Union Minister of mines and coals, Pralhad Joshi told the Lok Sabha while replying to a question by BJD member Chandrani Murmu.

As per the information provided by Govt. of Odisha, a Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for auction of 4 mineral blocks has been issued on 29 March 2022 and the State Government further proposes to auction 15 mineral blocks during the year 2022-23, the union minister Joshi said.

The mineral blocks which were auctioned in March 2022 are Koira, Kadodihi Iron ore Block in Sundargarh of value of estimated resources (Rs 24969.49 crore), Orahuri Manganese & Iron ore Block in Sundargarh of Rs 4071.06 crore, Kusumdihi Manganese & Iron ore Block in Sundargarh of Rs 35.65 crore value and Kedesala North East Iron ore block in Sundargarh of Rs 14304.5 crore value

The percentage and value of money earned by the Odisha Government from auctioning of mines is being utilized for development of displaced persons in mining areas and local area development around mines in the last five years, particularly in districts of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj.

As per the provisions under Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957 and the Rules framed thereunder, the State Governments are empowered to grant mineral concessions for the minerals located within their respective jurisdiction and to collect the revenue generated there upon. Since the establishment of District Mineral Fund (DMF) till May 2022, the Keonjhar district has earned DMF revenue to the tune of Rs 8191.04 crore while Mayurbhanj has earned Rs. 107.68 crore

Source: The Statesman

Govt releases Natural Resource Accounting to track mineral, energy deposits

The asset accounts would help identify alternate economic and energy-based resources, and aid in developing an ecosystem for containing illegal mining

The Government Accounting Standards advisory board (GASAB) has come up with a Natural Resource Accounting (NRA) for tracking and maintaining the natural resources of India. GASAB had prepared templates for the asset accounts for mineral and energy resources which were field-tested and reviewed by the experts in the consultative committee. As on date, all 28 states and one Union Territory (J&K) have prepared the asset accounts for 2020-2021. The asset accounts captured details of 34 major minerals, 58 minor minerals and all four fossil fuels. A report of the asset accounts will be shortly published and an electronic dashboard with information will be hosted in the web.

GASAB has developed standard operating procedures to ensure automated collection and compilation of data from 2022-23. It would also suggest recommendations for end-to-end mapping of supply and use of resources which would help the states in mopping up due revenues from the resources.

Upon compilation, the asset accounts would enable multiple data such as a one-pager document on state-wise resources and compilation of physical and monetary values and analysis of revenue vis-à-vis market value/export value to assess and review the royalty rates and arrest windfall gains and protect state's revenue interest. They would also help identify alternate resources, both economic and energy, and aid in developing an ecosystem for containing illegal mining.

The formats of asset accounts have been designed in keeping with the prescriptions of System of Environmental-Economic Accounting central framework (SEEA-CF), which allows flexibility to embed country specific needs. For example, the asset accounts on mineral and energy resources incorporate information on illegal mining while the asset accounts of water resources require information to be provided separately for surface water and groundwater, taxed and untaxed water etc. The SEEA-CF prescribes seven resources; mineral and energy resources, land and soil resources, timber resources, aquatic resources, other biological resources (except timber and aquatic resources), and water resources.

Another recognised issue was the role of private players and bringing them under the overall framework of NRA by proposing specific reporting requirements, so that the entire spectrum of resource extraction and utilisation and management of residuals can be covered under one umbrella.

The concept paper envisaged by GASAB has also set up short-, medium- and long-term goals that span 10 years (2020-30) and converge with sustainable development goals (SDGs) set by the UN General Assembly (2015-30).

The short-term goals (2019-20 to 2021-22) are preparation of asset accounts on mineral and energy resources in states, initiation and preparation of a disclosure statement on revenues and expenditure related to NRA.

The medium-term goals (2022-23 to 2024-25) are about preparation of national asset accounts on mineral and energy resources, and in respect of other four resources namely water, land and forestry and wildlife resources in the states. They also entail preparation of functional accounts, recording transactions and other information about economic activities undertaken for environmental purposes.

The long-term goals (2025-26 onwards) are about supply and use of tables in physical and monetary terms showing flow of inputs, products and residuals; and preparation of the economic accounts highlighting depletion adjusted economic aggregates.

Source: Busniess Standard

Explained: What Is Minerals Security Partnership? Which Countries Are Part Of It And Why?

The Minerals Security Partnership was announced in June 2022, with an aim to strengthen critical mineral supply chains. Also know what are critical minerals, and why they are so important.

Rare Earth Elements include 17 elements. These are Yttrium, Scandium, and the Lanthanide Series. Rare earth minerals are a type of critical minerals that are essential for clean energy and other technologies (Image Source : Agricultural Research Service via American Geosciences Institute

The Minerals Security Partnership (MSP) is an ambitious new initiative to bolster critical mineral supply chains, announced by the United States (US) and key partner countries in June 2022. During the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto, the largest mining event in the world, the US and key partner countries made the announcement.

However, India is not a part of this partnership.

According to a statement released by the US Department of State, the goal of the MSP is to ensure that critical minerals are produced, processed, and recycled in a manner that supports the abilities of countries to realise the full economic development benefit of their geological grants.

Critical minerals are essential for clean energy and other technologies, and the demand for these minerals is projected to expand significantly in the future.

The partnership will help catalyse investment from governments and the private sector for strategic opportunities that adhere to the highest environmental, social, and governance standards, across the full value chain, the statement said.

Which Countries Are Part Of The Mineral Security Partnership?

Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Commission are part of the partnership. The MSP partners are committed to building robust, responsible critical mineral supply chains to support economic prosperity and climate objectives, the statement said.

India is not a part of the 11-member group committed to strengthen critical mineral supply chains, and reduce dependency on China.

What Are Critical Minerals?

Critical minerals are mineral resources that are essential to the economy, and whose supply may be disrupted, and the 'criticality' of which changes with time as supply and society's needs change.

Critical minerals such as copper, lithium, nickel, cobalt and rare earth minerals are essential components in the rapidly growing clean energy technologies such as wind turbines and electric vehicles. As clean energy transitions gather pace, the demand for these minerals will grow quickly, according to the International Energy Agency.

A critical mineral is a metallic or non-metallic element that is essential for the functioning of modern technologies, economics, or national security, has a supply chain at risk of disruption, and is used to manufacture advanced technologies, according to Geoscience Australia, an agency of the Australian government carrying out geoscientific research.

The advanced technologies which can be manufactured using critical minerals include mobile phones, computers, tablets, semiconductors, fibre-optic cables, and defence, aerospace and medical applications.

Critical minerals are also used in low-emission technologies such as electric vehicles, wind turbines, solar panels, and rechargeable batteries, and could be used for common products such as stainless steel and electronics.

Many critical minerals, including rare earth minerals and metals such as lithium, gallium,

tellurium, and indium are central to high-tech sectors, according to the American Geosciences Institute.

Based on the relative importance of particular minerals to the industrial needs of a country, and the strategic assessment of supply risks, individual countries develop their own lists of critical minerals.

The 11-member MSP group will aim to bolster the supply chains of critical minerals such as cobalt, lithium, nickel, gallium, and 17 Rare Earth minerals.

What Are The Risks To Critical Mineral Supply Chains?

When production of critical minerals is dominated by individual countries or companies, critical mineral supply chains might be at risk, limiting availability. Market immaturity, social unrest, political decisions, mine accidents, natural disasters, geological scarcity, war, and pandemics are other factors which pose a risk to critical mineral supply chains.

What Is The Role Of Critical Minerals In Clean Energy Transitions? What Are The Challenges?

The critical minerals used in electric vehicles to improve battery performance include cobalt, manganese, and graphite. Permanent magnets used in wind turbines and electric vehicle motors require rare earth minerals. A huge amount of copper and aluminium is needed for the construction of electricity networks. Copper is the cornerstone of all electricity-related technologies, according to the International Energy Agency.

A clean energy technology-powered energy system is different from a system fuelled by traditional hydrocarbon resources. A large number of minerals are required to build solar photovoltaic plants, wind farms, and electric vehicles.

According to the International Energy Agency, an electric car requires six times the mineral inputs of a conventional car, and a wind plant requires nine times more mineral resources than a gas-fired plant.

The average amount of minerals required for a new unit of power generation capacity has increased by 50 per cent since 2010.

Countries are accelerating their efforts to reduce emissions, and hence, must make sure that energy systems remain resilient and secure. Since the importance of critical minerals is rising in a decarbonising system, it has become essential for energy policy makers to expand their horizons.

Clean-energy technologies are becoming the fastest-growing segment of demand as energy transitions gather pace.

According to the International Energy Agency, critical minerals' share of total demand, in a scenario that meets the Paris Agreement goals, rises significantly over the next two decades to over 40 per cent for copper and rare earth minerals, 60 to 70 per cent for nickel and cobalt, and about 90 per cent for lithium. Electric vehicles and battery storage have become the largest consumer of lithium, displacing consumer electronics. By 2040, they are set to displace stainless steel to become the largest end user of nickel.

What Are Rare Earth Minerals?

Rare earth minerals are a set of seventeen metallic elements which include the scandium, yttrium, and the fifteen lanthanides on the periodic table.

According to the American Geosciences Institute, rare earth minerals are an essential part of many high-tech devices. These minerals are necessary components of more than 200 products across a wide range of applications, especially high-tech consumer products such as computer hard drives, cellular telephones, flat-screen monitors and televisions, and electric and hybrid vehicles.

According to the United States Geological Survey, the significant defence applications of rare earth minerals include electronic displays, guidance systems, laser, and radar and sonar systems.

The amount of rare earth minerals used in a product may not be a significant part of that commodity by weight, value of volume, but can be necessary for the device to function.

For instance, only a small amount of rare earth minerals is used in magnets, but the spindle motors and voice coils of desktops and laptops would not function without those minerals.

Mineral Security Partnership Aims To Decrease Dependency On China For Critical Minerals

China is responsible for around half of the worldwide production of rare earth minerals.

According to the US Geological Survey, 38 per cent of world production of rare earth minerals in 1993 was in China, 33 per cent in the US, 12 per cent in Australia, and five per cent each in Malaysia and India.

However, China accounted for more than 90 per cent of the world production of rare earth minerals in 2008. By 2011, China accounted for 97 per cent of world production.

Since 1990, supplies of rare earth minerals became an issue because the Chinese government began to change the amount of rare earth minerals it allows to be produced and exported, and also started limiting the number of Chinese and Sino-foreign joint venture companies that could export rare earth minerals from China.

The MSP is aimed at reducing dependency on China for rare earth minerals, according to media reports.

In 2019, the Democratic Republic of China (DRC) and the People's Republic of China

(China) were responsible for about 70 per cent and 60 per cent of global production of cobalt and rare earth minerals z respectively.

China's share of refining is 50 to 70 per cent of lithium and cobalt, around 35 per cent for nickel, and nearly 90 per cent for rare earth minerals.

Chinese companies have made investments in overseas assets in Chile, Indonesia, and Australia. According to the International Energy Agency, complex supply chains could increase the risks that might arise from trade restrictions or other developments in major producing countries.

China is one of the major producing regions subject to extreme heat or flooding. This poses greater challenges in ensuring reliable and sustainable supplies.

Both the MSP and the Australia-India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership are aimed at unlocking the benefits of the critical minerals sector.

What Is The Australia-India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership?

The Australia-India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership is an investment partnership that is set to unlock mutual benefits for India and Australia from Australia's world-leading critical minerals sector. In March 2022, the Australian Government allocated $5.8 million to the three-year Australia-India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership.

In a statement released by the Department of Industry, Science, and Resources, a department of the Australian Government, Keith Pitt, the Minister for Resources and Water, said that Australia and India are natural partners sharing mutual strategic and economic priorities and the partnership will support further Indian investment in Australian critical minerals projects. He added that the partnership is the "first of its kind", and that the combined capabilities of the two countries will take on the challenge of resourcing the emerging technologies used in sectors such as defence, automotive, aerospace, telecommunications, renewable energy and agritech.

Pitt also said that Australia and India will work together closely to identify potential critical minerals investment opportunities.

According to a statement released by the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, Australian companies and institutions will partner with India to supply critical minerals, export services and technology to process, refine, recover, and recycle critical minerals, help with mineral exploration in India, carry out joint research projects, and support India's mining-related environmental management.

On July 3, 2022, the Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Pralhad Joshi, and four other senior Indian government representatives visited Australia as part of a six-day tour to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries. As part of its larger mission to transition to clean sources of energy, India is set to move a step closer to realising its ambition to develop secure, robust, and commercially viable strategic critical minerals, a statement released by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India, said.

Joshi visited mineral-rich sites of Tianqi Lithium Kwinana processing facility, Greenbushes Mine, CSIRO Australian Resources Research Centre, and Western Australian Geological Survey Core Library in Australia, during the visit.

According to the statement, the Australia-India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership envisages joint investment for viable lithium and cobalt projects in Australia. These steps are critical for India's transition towards clean energy ambitions, and will complement India's mineral security for electric vehicle initiatives and other sectors that make use of critical minerals.

The delegation visit to Australia marked the first milestone in the Australia-India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership.

What Are The Eight Priority Critical Minerals?

There are eight critical minerals that matter the most to Australia and India, according to the Australian Government. Based on their end-use industries, the minerals are divided into three groups, namely traditional, sunrise, and mixed use.

Titanium and vanadium are the traditional minerals, lithium is the sunrise mineral, and cobalt, nickel, graphite, light rare earth minerals, and heavy rare earth minerals are the mixed use minerals.

Source – New ABP Live

Formation of mining conglomerate to enhance capacity: Hindustan Copper

Hindustan Copper CMD Arun Kumar Shukla suggested this to the government at a round-table discussion held during the 6th National Conclave on Mines and Minerals

Hindustan Copper CMD Arun Kumar Shukla has pitched for the formation of a large mining conglomerate with a basket of minerals to ensure the country's self-reliance in strategic minerals.

Shukla suggested this to the government at a round-table discussion held during the 6th National Conclave on Mines and Minerals.

"I, from my 37 years of mining experience, recommend formation of a large Indian mining conglomerate having multi-mineral portfolio, which will enhance the capability of the country in respect of geostrategic reach, sustainability, socio-economic development of the backward mining areas..." he said.

He said with the setting up of a large company, the sector will be able to ensure "ESG compliance, smooth transition to climate-neutral economy, profitability and resilience to withstand the ever-changing dynamic global market situation".

Besides, "more virgin mines will come into production and will give a huge boost to India's GDP," he added.

Shukla is of the view that the key to success of global multinational mining firms like Rio-Tinto and BHP is having a basket of minerals under one company. He said the formula has been working successfully world over and is time-tested.

In the proposed concept, he explained, the existing domestic mining PSUs (Public Sector Undertakings) like MOIL, HCL, KIOCL and NMDC, which own mines and operate in only certain minerals having a large pool of expertise of human resources in the field of mining and exploration, can be further strengthened through amalgamation.

This, he said, would maintain sustainable sourcing of important minerals from within the country as well as from overseas through acquisition of foreign mining assests.

PSUs like SAIL and Nalco, which have their processing plants, can be given mines for their captive use. On the other hand, the proposed mineral conglomerate will supply raw materials to the efficient manufacturing units that do not have sufficient mining rights or captive mines, he suggested.

According to Shukla, the setting up of a large Indian mining conglomerate will give a boost to exploration and mining sector's contribution to the country's gross domestic product.

Source – The Economic Times

Pvt cos may get to mine lithium in reforms push

Six key amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, are proposed to be introduced in the monsoon session of Parliament, an official aware of the development said

The government plans to introduce several changes to mining laws, including allowing companies to sell half of their output from captive mines without end-use restrictions and eliminating the onerous forestry clearance process for prospecting operations.

Six key amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, are proposed to be introduced in the monsoon session of Parliament, an official aware of the development said. “The amendments aim to get more investments in the mining sector and allow the country to become self-reliant in several minerals and boost production," the official said, requesting anonymity.

The official added that stakeholder consultations for the proposed changes were almost complete, and the mines ministry would soon send a final note on the amendments for Cabinet approval.

Among the changes proposed by the mining ministry is removing lithium-bearing minerals, a key raw material for batteries, from the restricted list of atomic minerals, allowing the government to auction mining concessions to the private sector.

The change is expected to boost production of lithium-ion battery manufacturing in the country, helping the country’s fast-growing electric vehicle industry.

The proposal also aims to remove lithium from the list of atomic minerals where permission to mine could only be granted by the Centre to state-run companies.

The proposed amendment also aims to include eight of the 12 atomic minerals, including lithium-bearing minerals, zirconium-bearing minerals, and beach sand minerals, titanium-bearing minerals, minerals of rare earth group containing uranium and thorium, into a new category—critical and strategic minerals. The Centre would be empowered to give concessions for these minerals to both public and private sector mining companies.

The reform proposals also include allowing states to grant composite licences without needing to secure approval from the Centre. This is expected to speed up the auctions of blocks containing composite minerals

A query sent to the ministry of mines remained unanswered till the time of going to press.

Increased spending on infrastructure development and demand from automotive companies are driving growth in the metals and mining sector in India. Demand for metal and metal products is also rising as India expands domestic manufacturing. The reform measures are also expected to address supply-side constraints, the official said.

The amendments also propose to raise and fix mineral-wise maximum area limits for mineral concessions to provide larger mining areas to investors.

Accordingly, for prime minerals such as iron ore, the maximum area for prospecting licence and mining lease has been doubled to 50 sq. km and 20 sq. km, respectively. This would allow private miners to get the same land area for mining as was being given to state-run companies earlier without the need for central approval.

Among other changes, the Centre has also decided to exclude duties and levies (ex-mine price) such as goods and services tax, export duty, royalty, District Mineral Foundation, and National Mineral Exploration Trust while calculating the average sale price of minerals.

This will restrict the charge of royalty over royalty and limit the tax burden on companies and improve realizations for the government in mineral concession auctions.

The proposed changes on the sale of minerals from captive mines would do away with the existing provision where the sale of 50% of minerals can start after the need of the end-use plant is met. This provision held up the development of mining operations as companies where end-use plants were shut or still under development could not mine minerals.

Another major restrictive provision was the need to get forestry clearance, including a forest diversion plan for mineral reconnaissance permit and prospecting licence, even though the activity involves only a survey of the mineral-bearing land before permission is granted for non-forestry activities.

OMECL Signs Agreement For Mineral Resource Mapping & Development Of Auctionable Blocks

Odisha Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd. (OMECL) – a wholly owned PSU of Govt of Odish – signed an agreement on 4th August 2022 with a consortium of MSA, South Africa & IDEPX (India) to optimise the exploration of mineral deposits resulting in inventory of auctionable blocks of different minerals in the state of Odisha.

The agreement signing programme was Chaired by D.K. Singh, Principal Secretary, Steel & Mines-cum-Chairman, OMECL in presence of Debidutta Biswal, Director Mines, Odisha, Balwant Singh, Managing Director, OMECL and delegates including Director of Geology, Odisha, officials from Geological Survey of India.

The exploration work program will ensure the effective use of legacy data from various exploration agency of the State of Odisha, followed by Airborne and Heliborne Surveys resulting in bringing out potential mineral blocks of different mineral commodity. The exploration programme will be conducted using latest technology as per international standards.

Singh said that, "Odisha is a mineral rich state. However, large part of the State is still unexplored. This exploration program will lead to the discovery of hidden mineral deposits across the state using the latest technology, which will help the state to utilise the mineral resources for the development of the State."

Balwant Singh, MD, OMECL, said that with this project State will get structured and comprehensive Mineral Resource Map in coming days. He requested Geological Survey of India, Directorate of Geology and all related agencies to extend necessary cooperation and support for the timely achievement of every milestone under this initiative.

The agreement was signed by SK Sinha, Director (Geology), OMECL, Dr. Ian Haddon MD, MSA and S. Karunakar Rao MD of IDPeX in presence of other delegates including B.B. Pani, Director (Finance), OMECL, officials from Steel & Mines Department, Govt. of Odisha and officials of the Strategic Technical Consultant (STC) team.

From the STC team Dr. Ashley Johnson, Mr. Craig Blane and Mr. Dhruba Jyoti Nath were present. Consortium of MSA, South Africa & IDEPX (India) is a joint venture of IGS (UK), Datacode, India & PGW, Canada.

OMECL was incorporated in 2016 with prime objective of mineral exploration in the State and to upscale the mineral exploration activities so that the potential of mining sector is achieved through scientific exploration of mineral resources.

Source: ommcomnews

FIMI raises concern over 50% export duty on low-grade iron ore

The recent imposition of a 50 percent export duty on low-grade iron ore has devastated the industry revival plan, especially in the state of Karnataka.

The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI), southern region has applauded the Supreme Court and the Karnataka state government for the recent policy amendments which will allow state iron ore miners to export surplus low-grade iron ore that are not feasible for domestic steel manufacturer's consumption.

The recent imposition of a 50 percent export duty on low-grade iron ore has devastated the industry revival plan, especially in the state of Karnataka. The mining industry was supported by much-needed relief after almost a decade by the removal of trade restrictions on sales and export, the new export duty regime will, however, make the situation worse and may lead to further piling up of low-grade iron ore industry in the state.

After a struggle of 11 years, the Apex court's order on May 5, 2022 lifted the restriction on the export of iron ore from Ballari, Chitradurga, and Tumakuru districts of Karnataka on the lines of the rest of the country and allowed direct sales as opposed to e-auctions only, has opened the doors for rejuvenation of the mining scenario in Karnataka, the imposition, yet again has once again majorly hit the industry across the country and brought it to a standstill including Karnataka.

The policy. now, will lead to massive forex

loss and piling up of inventory of low-grade iron ore at mining sites across the country. There is already a huge stockpile of around 145.47 MT across the country, which has been increasing over the years due to no uptake of the ore by the domestic steel industry. The imposition of export duty will not benefit domestic steel manufacturers as almost all of them have captive mines, also domestic steel-making operations can't utilise low-grade iron ore (below 58% Fe).

Khyum Ali, FIMI said "We strongly urge centre to re-look at the recent export duty imposition on iron ore and steel products which is counter-productive for the industry and country at large. We believe the imposition of export duty on low-grade iron ore will not at all support the domestic steel industry, but contrary will lead to the non-sustainable short-term selective mining of only high-grade ore which is against the concept of systematic and effective utilisation of mineral resources and hence export duty on low-grade iron ore should be abolished which will be a contributory step towards national interest."

SWASTHA

A GEMCOKATI EMPLOYEES INITIATIVE

Being (alone) in nature is good for you.

Unbelievable benefits goes along with it.

When day to day life demands takes a toll on your wellbeing, and you feel the need to get away, where do you go? If your instinct's forces you to head out doors, then you're absolutely on the right track. When the solitude time you are spending, happens to be in the midst of Mother Nature you are very much in a restorative phase of your life. Studies have again and again proved that nature has a set of qualities that end up being well-suited to our physical and emotional well-being.

Environmental psychologist Stephen Kaplan noted that being in nature, away from the sounds and sights of modern life, creates a sensation that he called "soft fascination," a state where we feel simultaneously transported, calm, and buoyant.

According to Kaplan, whose research established Attention Restoration Theory (ART), spending time in nature helps restore our focusa nd concentration when it's been overtaxed by directed attention (i.e. studying for exams, working on a project with a looming deadline). In nature, our minds are allowed to drift, gaze, wander, and be immersed in the moment. We aren't focused on one specific thing; rather, we experience the world using multiple senses – sights, sounds, smells, sensations – instead of working so hard to filter things out in the name of productivity.

Researchers identified reasons people seek solitude in the wilderness, the first , and not surprisingly perhaps, is to disconnect from their electronic devices. They called this the need to disconnect from excessive digital connectivity and the desire to experience life without everyday technologies, primarily email, text and social media. Today we also call it as digital detox.

In the modern age our attention resource's are increasingly devoted to our social world, work , family , friends and even news ,so , withdrawing into nature can be an antidote to our 21st century stressors.

Spending time in nature actually promotes positive body image, an effect that is directly opposite to what hours on Instagram can do.

We human beings are although called social creatures, it's important to periodically retreat from the larger culture and reconnect with our authentic selves.

Being in the midst of nature is not only essential for self –focus ,but it is also a place where we can be connected to something larger than ourselves. When we are connected with nature we are least likely to feel lonely, depleted or overwhelmed , but more likely to feel spiritually connected , compared to when we are alone in a public place , and it's rightly what scientific studies confirm – we're on the right track.

About Author:

Dr. Majo Joseph

Dr. Majo Joseph is an Ayurveda Consultant, & General Practitioner. He is also a Psychology And Counselling, Wellness Trainer.