



खनिज समाचार
KHANIJ SAMACHAR
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खनिज समाचार

KHANIJ SAMACHAR



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Asteroid mining? Not now, says ISRO

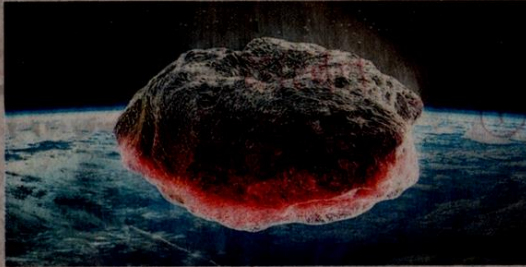
NASA's Psyche spacecraft aims to explore the Psyche asteroid, believed to contain valuable metals

M Ramesh
Chennai

On October 5, the US space agency will shoot off the 'Psyche' spacecraft onboard a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket to check out an asteroid of the same name. Psyche will travel 3.6 billion km to reach the asteroid Psyche, which is believed to contain precious metals of unspeakable value.

The spacecraft will reach the asteroid in 2029, after 26 months. The mission has kindled interest only because of the enormous wealth that beckons, something like \$27 quintillion.

The Psyche mission, however, is not to bring anything back but to check out the asteroid. "The mission will help answer fundamental questions about Earth's own metal core and the formation of our solar system," says NASA. Naturally, the question is — what about India? Can't we



NOT SO SIMPLE. ISRO is cautious about asteroid mining due to technical challenges, emphasising the need for space robotics and sample return missions

shovel something from the asteroid, bring it home, and turn rich overnight?

The short answer is 'no'. Indeed, when AS Kiran Kumar was ISRO Chairman, there were talks about an asteroid mission — again, just a probe and not mining — but those ideas seemed to have faded away.

"It is far away," ISRO's Chairman Sreedhar Somanath told *businessline*

when asked where asteroid mining was in ISRO's scheme of things.

"It needs space robotics of high level, mission management and ground infrastructure expansion, many trial missions for sample returns, for validation," he said.

However, there is no bar on dreaming. The many 'near-earth asteroids' that sometimes travel between the Earth and the moon are of in-

terest. Some near-earth asteroids are: Eros (visited by NASA's Shoemaker spacecraft in 1990s), Itokawa (studied by Japan's Hayabusa spacecraft in mid-2000s), Bennu (from which NASA's OSIRIS-REx mission returned with a sample in 2020), Ryugy (studied by Japan's Hayabusa-2).

THE PREREQUISITES

If we can land on the moon, we can land on an asteroid, right? Not so simple, says Chaitanya Giri, an astrochemist who teaches at the FLAME University, Pune and who has worked on European Space Agency's Rosetta mission to comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko.

A rendezvous with an asteroid calls for many things to fall in place, the first of which is a good ion propulsion engine and careful trajectory study.

Furthermore, "rendezvous is one thing, sample return is

another and commercial mining is yet another," notes Giri.

But Giri, while recognising that asteroid mining is far out into the future, is all for making a beginning now. "We must start developing a concept paper," he said, stressing that not all missions need to be spearheaded by ISRO, though ISRO would necessarily be a stakeholder in all the missions. "The private sector and the universities should begin work on this," he said, emphasising that developing a talent pool — which is absent today for asteroids — is a prerequisite.

Asteroid mining is not about gold or platinum, as is often understood. There are several rare earth elements on Earth in very small quantities; yet, they are valuable. Examples include neodymium, dysprosium, europium, yttrium, terbium, holmium, erbium, and thulium.

राज्यभरातील खनिजांचे जिल्हानिहाय होणार सर्वेक्षण

सहा महिन्यांचे नियोजन : प्रत्येक जिल्ह्यात येणार तीन शास्त्रज्ञ

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क
चंद्रपूर : भारतीय भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षण आणि खाण मंत्रालयाने राज्यातील प्रत्येक जिल्ह्याच्या खनिजांचे (मिनरल मॅपिंग) सर्वेक्षण करण्याचा निर्णय घेतला. हे सर्वेक्षण २३ सप्टेंबर २०२३ ते २४ मार्च २०२४ या कालावधीत करण्यात येणार आहे. भारतातील भूवैज्ञानिक संशोधनासंबंधीची ही आद्य संस्था असून, वयोमानाने जगातील तिसऱ्या क्रमांकाची आहे.

औद्योगिकीकरणस मूलभूत असणाऱ्या खनिज संपत्तीचा शोध घेणे, हे भारतीय भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षण संस्थेचे मुख्य कार्य आहे. १८२०-४५ या काळात दगडी कोळशासाठी भारतात काही



ठिकाणी भूवैज्ञानिक पाहणी केली. या तुरळक पाहणीचा परिणाम म्हणून ईस्ट इंडिया कंपनी सरकारने १८५१ मध्ये डब्लिन येथील भूविज्ञानाचे प्राध्यापक व आयर्लंड भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षण संस्थेचे प्रमुख टॉमस ओल्डॅम यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली या संस्थेची स्थापना केली.

५ हजार ३०० हून अधिक शास्त्रज्ञांकडून प्रत्येक जिल्ह्याचे सर्वेक्षण

देशभरात भारतीय भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षणच्या सुमारे ५ हजार ३०० हून अधिक शास्त्रज्ञांकडून प्रत्येक जिल्ह्याचे सर्वेक्षण केले जाणार आहे. भारतीय भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षण, खाण मंत्रालय यांच्या हैदराबाद येथील दक्षिण कार्यालयातील भूभौतिकी विभागाच्या राष्ट्रीय भूभौतिक मानचित्रण कार्यक्रमांतर्गत ग्राउंड ग्रॅव्हिटी-मॅग्नेटिक सर्वेक्षण प्रकल्पांतर्गत हे सर्वेक्षण होणार आहे.

अत्याधुनिक साधनांचा वापर

अत्याधुनिक मॅग्नेटिक आणि इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स साऊंडिंग उपकरणांचा वापर या सर्वेक्षणासाठी करण्यात येणार आहे. त्याद्वारे जिल्ह्यात कोणत्या परिसरात कोणती खनिजे आहेत, याचा शोध घेतला जाईल. या माहितीद्वारे जिल्ह्याचे मिनरल मॅपिंग होईल. यातून देशाची माहिती संकलित होईल. जिल्हानिहाय सर्वेक्षण सुरु असताना तसेच सर्वेक्षण करणाऱ्या शास्त्रज्ञांना नागरिकांनी सहकार्य करावे, असे आवाहन खनिकर्म विभागाने केले आहे.

Gold looks mixed and unclear

BULLION CUES. Silver can see a short-term rise within its range

Gurumurthy K
bl. research bureau

Gold and Silver began the week on a weak note. The prices fell, but managed to bounce back on Friday recovering all the loss and close marginally higher. On the global front, spot gold has closed at \$1,923.91 per ounce, up 0.25 per cent and silver at \$23.04, up 0.48 per cent.

The outcome of the US Federal Reserve meeting on Wednesday can be a major driver for the bullion prices this week. That could set the tone for gold and silver, going forward.

On the domestic front, gold futures contract on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) rose 0.17 per cent to close the week at ₹58,999 per 10 gram. Silver futures contract has closed at ₹72,165 per kg, up 0.84 per cent.

GOLD OUTLOOK

The level of \$1,900 is giving support as of now. However, strong resistance is around \$1,950. Gold has to breach this resistance to move up towards \$2,000 again. The bias is negative for the short term.

The chances are looking high



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

for gold to break \$1,900 and fall to \$1,875 and \$1,850 in the short term.

MCX Gold (₹58,999 per 10 gram): The MCX-Gold futures contract has been range bound between ₹58,000 and ₹60,000 for almost three months now. Within this range, the contract made a low of ₹58,354 last week and has risen back well. If this bounce sustains, the chances are high for the gold futures contract to rise towards ₹59,800 and ₹60,000 in a week or two.

Broadly, the contract will have to get a breakout on either side of ₹58,000-60,000 to give clarity on the next direction of move. Until then, the sideways consolidation

can continue.

A break below ₹58,000 will be bearish to see ₹56,300-56,000. On the other hand, a strong rise above ₹60,000 can see ₹61,500-62,000 on the upside.

Trade Strategy: We suggest traders to stay out of the market. Wait for the range breakout to get clarity and then take trades accordingly.

SILVER OUTLOOK

Silver has been stuck in between \$22 and \$25.25 per ounce since June this year. It made a low of \$22.30 last week and has risen back. The chances are looking high for the price to move up towards \$25-\$25.25 – the upper

end of the range in the coming weeks.

A trendline resistance is at \$25.45. So, silver has to rise above \$25.45 to become bullish. Only in that case, a rise to \$30 will come into the picture.

In case silver declines below \$22, it can fall to \$20. For now, the sideways range is still intact.

MCX Silver (₹72,165 per kg): The silver futures contract made a low of ₹70,062 and has risen back very well from there. The support around ₹70,000 has held very well.

The short-term outlook is bullish. The silver futures contract can rise to ₹75,000-75,200 in a week or two.

Broadly, ₹72,000-75,000 looks likely to be the trading range for now. A breakout on either side of this range will determine the next move.

Trade Strategy: Traders with high-risk appetite can go long at current levels. Accumulate on dips at ₹71,200. Stop-loss can be placed at ₹69,850. Trail the stop-loss up to ₹72,600 as soon as the contract moves up to ₹73,100. Move the stop-loss further up to ₹74,100 when the contract touches ₹74,650. Exit the long positions at 74,980.

'Tata Steel Plan for Port Talbot to Lead to Huge Savings'

Tata Steel's resolution for its Port Talbot plant will see the UK government making one of the largest ever investments in the steel industry as they collectively move towards sustainable production. Asia's oldest steel-maker will be setting up a three-million-tonne electric arc furnace at Port Talbot, which will not only significantly cut down on carbon emissions, but will also be high on profitability. Tata Steel will save as much as £150 on every tonne of steel that it makes at this plant, which in turn, will boost its operating profits to 8-10%, chief financial officer and executive director Koushik Chatterjee told Nikita Perwal. Edited excerpts:

CAPITAL EFFICIENT

We have reconfigured the project to be more capital efficient so that we retain parts of assets that can be upgraded...

Tata Steel was initially looking at a support of about 50% of the capital expenditure along with some operational expenditure from the UK government. Is the current proposal satisfactory?

The original configuration that we were looking for was a much larger capital expenditure.

Two things have happened. We have actually reconfigured the project to be more capital efficient so that we retain parts of assets that can be upgraded, and capex can be made smaller. The grant also became higher. So, we have bridged the gap to make it more viable.

There is support in the form of policies as well. For example, the carbon border adjustment mechanism was not on the table initially. But in our conversations and on the government's own initiative, the government has moved on the consultation in March 2023, and has started the ball rolling. That also has a big impact as far as the viability of the project is concerned.

What savings you are looking at once the plant becomes operational



KOUSHIK CHATTERJEE
CFO, TATA STEEL



In three-four years?

On a current cost to a steady state cost, we see about £150 per ton of cost-saving, which is huge. And our estimate for the Ebitda margin in this project is 8-10% from the current negative levels. So that's a very significant swing in the profitability, because 8-10% in an EAF is actually the top quartile of profitability, which is what we want to become.

This implies a lot of cash flows coming in. Where will this be utilised?

We will take that call as the cash gets generated, because it is important for this business to create value for the people who are putting in the money, which is the shareholders. And for the government, it is the sustainability of the site because it's coming as a grant.

How do you plan to fund the

remaining 60% cost of the project, and what about the restructuring?

The 60%, as of now, we will bring in as equity. As for the restructuring, that's exactly what we are engaging with the unions on because they are a very important stakeholder, and we want to take them through the risk and opportunities that lie ahead for Tata Steel UK.

How will this capex impact your leverage and can the cost of financing be a risk if the steel cycle were to turn adverse?

So, in all our assumptions, we have taken a mid-cycle assumption. It will be fair to say that we had factored in the capex in our long-term planning. For example, our net debt to Ebitda threshold is at about 2.5 times on a long-term average basis, we will maintain it because all our growth is based on financial prudence. And we need to ensure that our balance sheet continues to be healthy, strong. It is important that all challenging businesses are converted into profit-making ones.

By the time this plant is up and running, what is your expectation of demand in this region and what is the IRR that you are targeting?

The IRR needs to be higher than the cost of capital, and for this project it is at around 15-16%, compared to the cost of capital of around 11-12%. The market in the UK has been steady at about 9 million tons. And if there is more infrastructure spend and industrialization, then steel demand will remain robust. UK anyway imports about 55% of that steel that it needs as a country. So if we are competitive, we will ensure that we will sustain profitably. The global decarbonisation process will be material and steel intensive and, therefore we think that the demand will remain robust.

Is the new plant that's coming up the lowest in terms of carbon emissions globally?

The carbon emissions will be comparable to any other best-in-class EAF project, which is 0.4 tonnes per tonne of crude steel. There are opportunities to further reduce it.

SAVINGS & MARGINS

...We see £150 per ton of cost-saving, which is huge. And our estimate for the Ebitda margin in this project is 8-10% from the current negative levels

COMPANY PHOTO

Mining activity upswing in Gadchiroli worries activists

Dr Bang Sees Impact On Tribal Culture, Forest Cover In Long Run

Soumitra Bose
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Nagpur: The possible collateral damage to the local tribal population and their culture due to increased mining activities in Gadchiroli have left activists like Padma Shri awardee Dr Abhay Bang a little worried.

The public hearing on Zendepar iron ore mining project in Korchi taluka is scheduled for October 10, but

CAUSE OF CONCERN

locals and activists have already voiced concerns about its impact on forest cover of north Gadchiroli. In 2017, the locals of Korchi had opposed and successfully stalled a public hearing on the Zendepar project. In 2011 too a strong protest was witnessed in Zendepar, which is also the seat of century-old tribal socio-religious festival of 'Rao



Villagers of Korchi taluka protesting against Zendepar mining

Path Yatra'.

Dr Bang, who has provided healthcare in this tribal belt for decades, says across the globe mining has led to the common problems such as displacements of natives, destruction of forest and deterioration of health of local population. "The overall situation is worrisome," said Dr Bang, who was honoured with the Maharashtra Bhushan Award for his contributions to the tribal and rural health and eradication of various social ills.

Though Dr Bang has worked in villages away from the Zendepar site, he expressed fears about the likely negative impact of mining. "There is an apprehension of inevitable interference in tribal culture, impact on habitat, forest cover and health in the long run," said Dr Bang, who has received several international awards.

Dr Bang feels that voices of the tribals may not get heard. "The locals could not stop Surjagarh mining. The protests in Gadchiroli would

not make any difference to people in power in Delhi or Mumbai," said Dr Bang.

Another activist, Dr Satosh Gogulwar, who runs an NGO in Korchi, said that the government gave land rights to the local community as per the Forest Rights Act, but on the other hand, leased out vast regions for mining. "We are not against development but mining should be done where the locals favour it," said Gogulwar. "Not only human health, mining can negatively impact livestock, crops and the overall environment," said Gogulwar.

Activist Kranti Kerami, who heads a coalition of the anti-mining platform, said he has witnessed the damages caused to the environment and public health in Surjagarh in Etapalli region of Gadchiroli. "Some villagers want mining for livelihood while others are opposing it," said Kerami.

गोल्ड ईटीएफ में 16 माह का रिकॉर्ड निवेश, अकेले अगस्त में आया 73%

बिजनेस संवाददाता | मुंबई

गोल्ड ईटीएफ (गोल्ड एक्सचेंज ट्रेडेड फंड) में बीते माह 1,028 करोड़ रुपए का निवेश हुआ। ये



गोल्ड ईटीएफ में 16 महीनों का रिकॉर्ड निवेश है। इससे पहले अप्रैल 2022 में रूस-यूक्रेन युद्ध के कारण इस श्रेणी में 1,100 करोड़ रुपए का निवेश हुआ था। इस साल अमेरिका में ब्याज

दरें लगातार बढ़ने से रिस्क बढ़ने के चलते गोल्ड ईटीएफ में निवेश बढ़ा। म्यूचुअल फंड कंपनियों के संगठन एम्फी के आंकड़ों के मुताबिक, गोल्ड ईटीएफ में 2023 में अब तक 73.40% निवेश सिर्फ अगस्त में आए। इस साल में अगस्त तक इसमें कुल 1,400 करोड़ रुपए का निवेश हुआ। जुलाई में गोल्ड ईटीएफ में 456 करोड़ रुपए आए थे। अप्रैल-जून में इस श्रेणी में 298 करोड़ का ही निवेश हुआ था। इससे पहले लगातार तीन तिमाहियों में गोल्ड ईटीएफ में बिकवाली देखने को मिली थी। जनवरी-मार्च 2023 में इस श्रेणी से 1,243 करोड़ रुपए, अक्टूबर-दिसंबर 2022 में 320 करोड़ रुपए और जुलाई-सितंबर 2022 में 165 करोड़ रुपए की निकासी हुई थी। अप्रैल 2022 के बाद इस साल अगस्त में गोल्ड ईटीएफ में सबसे अधिक मासिक निवेश हुआ।

लोहखाणीवरून मंत्री धर्मरावबाबा आत्राम यांना पुन्हा नक्षल्यांची धमकी

गट्टा परिसरात पत्रक : जावयासह भाऊ व अन्य लोकांची नावे

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क

गडचिरोली : एटापल्ली तालुक्यातील सूरजागड येथे सुरू असलेल्या लोह खाण प्रकल्पावरून राज्याचे अन्न व औषध प्रशासन मंत्री धर्मरावबाबा आत्राम यांना नक्षल्यांनी दोन महिन्यांपूर्वी धमकी दिली होती. दरम्यान, गट्टा (ता.एटापल्ली) परिसरात धर्मरावबाबांसह त्यांचे जावई व अन्य काही लोकांच्या नावे धमकीचे पत्रक आढळल्याने एकच खळबळ उडाली आहे.

सूरजागड येथे अडीच वर्षांपासून लोह खनिजाचे उत्खनन सुरू आहे. याला नक्षल्यांचा सुरुवातीपासूनच तीव्र विरोध आहे. यासाठी राज्याचे अन्न व औषध प्रशासन मंत्री धर्मरावबाबा आत्राम जबाबदार असून त्यांना किंमत चुकवावी लागेल, अशाप्रकारची धमकी देणारे पत्रक गट्टा परिसरात १८ सप्टेंबरला आढळून आले. हे पत्रक

विरोध करे ! कटिबंदी करे !
सूरजागड स्थित खनिज खाणीचे
माध्यम व सूरजागड येथे लोह
खाणी प्रकल्प मंत्री धर्मरावबाबा
आत्राम यांना दोन महिन्यांपूर्वी
धमकी देऊन त्यांच्या जावई व
अन्य लोकांच्या नावे धमकीचे
पत्रक आढळल्याने एकच खळबळ
उडाली आहे. यासाठी राज्याचे
अन्न व औषध प्रशासन मंत्री
धर्मरावबाबा आत्राम यांना
किंमत चुकवावी लागेल, अशा
प्रकारची धमकी देणारे पत्रक
गट्टा परिसरात १८ सप्टेंबरला
आढळून आले.



गडचिरोली जिल्हाचा विकास व्हावा, इथल्या बरोजगारांच्या

हाताला काम मिळावे यासाठी माझे प्रयत्न आहेत. सूरजागड लोहप्रकल्पामुळे हजारो लोकांना रोजगार मिळाला आहे. अशा धमक्यांना मी महत्त्व देत नाही.

- धर्मरावबाबा आत्राम, अन्न व औषध प्रशासन मंत्री

गट्टा परिसरात आढळलेले नक्षलपत्रक

मंत्री धर्मरावबाबा आत्राम यांना सध्या ब्रेड दर्जाची सुरक्षा आहे. सुरक्षेबाबत आम्ही योग्य ती खबरदारी घेत आहोत. धमकीपत्रकाबाबत अधिक तपास सुरू करण्यात आला आहे.

- नीलोलपल, पोलिस अधीक्षक गडचिरोली

पश्चिम सब झोनल ब्युरो श्रीनिवास यांच्या नवे असून यात आत्राम यांचे जावई, त्यांचे भाऊ व कंपनीत कार्यरत काही लोकांची देखील नावे आहेत.

वर्षभरात आत्राम यांना तिसऱ्यांदा नक्षल्यांनी धमकी दिली आहे. हिवाळी अधिवेशनात देखील अशाप्रकारची धमकी मिळाली होती.

Diamond Trade in the Rough, Exporters Now Look to China to Accelerate Sales

Expect demand from Chinese buyers at the HK Jewellery & Gem Fair that starts today

Sutanuka.Ghosal
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: With G7 countries putting constant pressure on the Indian diamond trade on the origin of rough diamonds that the country cuts and polishes, exporters are now seeking to step up sales to China, which has slowed down its diamond purchases in the past eight months. Cut and polished diamonds are a major foreign exchange earner for India.

India's diamond exporters are expecting demand from Chinese buyers for the country's cut and polished diamonds at the Hong Kong Jewellery & Gem Fair, which is being held from September 20-24. Exporters



ters are all set to negotiate prices with Chinese buyers as they want to clear the inventories, said industry executives.

A rough diamond that was selling at

\$2,500 per carat at the start of 2022 is now being sold around \$1,750, they said, adding that this has forced diamond manufacturers to sell polished stones at lower prices.

China buys diamonds ranging from 1.2 to 10 carats. "We will be having dialogues with the Chinese buyers as China is the second largest destination for Indian cut and polished diamonds," said Kirit Bhansali, vice-chairman, Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

The council is also organising roadshows in Vietnam, Saudi Arabia and South America so that Indian diamonds sell in these countries which in turn can save two million jobs in the diamond hub of Surat. There are other smaller cutting and polishing centres across Gujarat, such as Saurashtra, Amreli and Bhavnagar, which are also suffering due to less demand from the global markets.

Traders said the Indian diamond trade is facing huge problems in the US, where high-profile luxury jewellery players, including Richemont and LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, have told suppliers they wouldn't buy Russian stones, putting the onus on suppliers to disclose the provenance of the gems.

India tapping new markets for coking coal: Steel Secretary

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

India's steel mills are exploring alternatives as they diversify coking coal sourcing.

Sourcing from Australia is down to 50 per cent — from 70 per cent, in the first few months of this fiscal, while India continues to explore the possibility of tapping into Mongolia for supplies.

Australia is the largest supplier of coking coal to India's mills. Met coke price (FOB-Australia) was at \$314 per tonne as on Friday.

According to Nagendra Nath Sinha, Union Steel Secretary, Indian mills have increased sourcing from alternate countries like the USA, Russia, Canada, Indonesia, New Zealand and Singapore. Increased sourcing from these countries have led to multiple options for mills here.

NEW SUPPLIERS

"Mongolia continues to be a country with which we are engaging for coking coal. On the other hand, Indian mills seem to keen to tap into new supplier countries like Russia. And mills are also experimenting with different coal



Nagendra Nath Sinha,
Union Steel Secretary

grades for blending, which is a good sign," Sinha told *businessline*.

Indian coking coal imports in FY23 was over 56 mt and nearly 52 per cent of this (approximately 35 mt) was from Australia as compared 70 per cent in FY22 when 57 mt was imported.

The trend has continued this year too. In the first couple of months, India imported 9.9 million tonnes of coking coal — a key steel making feedstock — of which nearly 4.9 mt was from Australia (around 50 per cent).

Russia, as per DGFT data, is the third largest supplier to India at 1.65 mt (April-June 23); while the USA is the second largest supplier at 1.96 mt. Mozambique is

another key supplier, but high ash content has led to restricted demand for offerings from the African country.

Despite being the world's second largest producer of crude steel, the country remains import dependent on coking coal — a key raw material.

TALKS WITH MONGOLIA

Sinha said discussions have been on with Mongolia for some time.

While ash content of Mongolian coal is a concern, a second issue that has cropped up involves evacuation or transport of that coal. Mongolia is a landlocked country with China and Russia being its largest and key neighbours.

"We are told that Mongolia is building evacuation facilities on the Russian port side and we are watching this development," Sinha said.

"Mongolia is also setting up processing and washing facilities at its mines and logistics issues therein. We have been engaged with them to explore the possibility of sourcing coking coal. So once these facilities come on-stream, we could tap into that market," he added.

National Mineral Exploration Trust approves 309 projects

Our Bureau
New Delhi

The National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) has approved 309 projects with an estimated cost of ₹2,100.14 crore for regional and detailed exploration across the country.

Out of the 309 approved projects, 151 projects have been completed and the remaining 158 are in various stages of progress.

Eleven blocks have been auctioned by respective State Governments generating revenue of ₹1.69-lakh crore, the according to the Ministry of Mines.

EXPLORING MINERALS

The NMET is also funding projects for generation of baseline geoscience data which includes multi sensor aero-geophysical surveys under National Aero-Geophysical Mapping Program and National Geophysical



Out of the approved projects, 151 projects have been completed and the remaining 158 are in various stages of progress

Mapping Programme. These are being carried out by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) which will help in identification of potential areas including concealed and deep-seated target areas for further mineral exploration.

Further, the NMET is also funding the development of National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR) Portal of GSI. The NGDR portal will be launched shortly, it added.

Chairing the Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Coal and Mines meeting

earlier this week, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said the Centre is extending substantial financial and technological assistance to State governments "to further promote mineral exploration" and make India self-reliant in the segment.

According to Joshi, efforts are also underway to speed up auction process of critical minerals in India.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

"The NMET has formulated and circulated schemes to provide financial assistance for procurement of ma-

chinery, equipment, instruments, upgrade existing software and other latest technology and instruments in Central government organisations and State DGMs (Directorate of Geology and Mining) aimed at strengthening technical infrastructure," he said.

It was also decided that 25 per cent of the project cost will be declared as incentive for deep-seated and critical mineral exploration.

No new nickel mining quotas, says Indonesia



Amsterdam: Top nickel producer Indonesia will not approve any new mining output quotas this year, a government official told Reuters, a move likely to further tighten supplies of nickel ore. Prices of nickel ore in Indonesia have surged in recent weeks, local buyers say, with production affected by the delayed quotas. REUTERS

Go short on zinc futures

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Zinc futures on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) began an upswing in mid-August after taking support at ₹210. Last week, after marking a high of ₹227.6, the September contract has now moderated to ₹221. Therefore, the resistance at ₹225 remains true and so does the range of ₹210-225.

COMMODITY CALL.

On the back of the barrier at ₹225, we might witness a fall in zinc futures in the coming sessions. The downswing might drag the contract to ₹210 from where there might be a rebound.

In case the contract regains positive momentum and ral-



lies past the hurdle at ₹225, it can quickly rally to ₹250.

On the other hand, if the support at ₹210 is breached, the bears might pull the contract down to ₹180.

TRADE STRATEGY

Over the last couple of weeks, we suggested shorting zinc futures at an average price of ₹223. Stop-loss was recommended at ₹230. Retain this trade. Going forward, when the contract falls to ₹215, tighten the stop-loss to ₹220. Book profits at ₹210.

Diamond Houses Nudge Global Miners to Halt Sale

Cite low demand from West, tight monetary policy, craze for lab-grown stones among reasons for the move

Sugata Ghosh & Sutanuka Ghosal

Mumbai | Kolkata: Indian diamond houses have reached out to De Beers, Alrosa, Rio Tinto and other leading miners to persuade them to temporarily halt the sale of rough stones amid dwindling demand from affluent markets, tight monetary policy, unsettling geopolitics and sanctions, and a new craze for cheaper lab-grown diamonds that is nibbling into the market for the natural stones.

Indian diamantaires, whose skilled craftsmen cut nine out of ten stones mined in the world, had made a similar move in 2008 to stabilise the market in the wake of the global financial meltdown.

The first to respond to the recent

Missing Sparkle

Demand for natural diamonds has plunged in the US, China

Shift in buyers' preference, rise of lab-grown stones also hurt demand

A lower release of roughs could stabilise prices

The Indian diamond lobby has a say in the global trade

appeal is the Russian miner Alrosa. On Tuesday, Alrosa communicated to the industry body of diamantaires and jewellers its decision to stop the allocation of rough diamonds in September and October 2023. "We can understand the de-

mand-supply situation and will fully cooperate with the industry," Jim Vimadalal, Alrosa's India head, told ET from Hong Kong. A week ago (on September 13), industry officials also held a meeting with De Beers, the world's largest miner, to put across their point.

"UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION"

Indeed, the letter of Vipul Shah, chairman of the diamantaire lobby, Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), earlier this month, to the miners, captures the current plight of natural diamonds, long considered as 'man's last luxury'. A slew of factors, including a shift in consumer preference and Covid-induced restrictions in China (the world's second largest market for certified polished diamonds) among others "have precipitated a loss of con-

fidence in the product."

"This is unprecedented in the history of the diamond industry," said Shah. De Beers is understood to be examining GJEPC's proposal. Responding to ET's queries, Paul Rowley, executive vice-president, Diamond Trading of De Beers, said, "De Beers will continue to take a responsible approach to rough diamond sales, supplying to demand, and will focus on additional supply flexibility as necessary to meet sight-holders' evolving requirements."

Sight-holders are De Beers' contractual diamantaires who have to meet certain criteria for assured supply from the miner. Diamonds are allocated to them every month according to an old, quaint custom where diamantaires are each offered a box containing a mix of stones of varying qualities.

TO PART PAY \$3.2 B BONDS MATURING BETWEEN '24 AND '25...

Vedanta Resources Taps Credit Funds for \$1 b Loan

Nehal Challawala & Deborshi Chaki

Mumbai: Vedanta Resources, the London-based parent of Vedanta Group, is in advanced discussions with a clutch of global private credit funds including Cerberus Capital, Bain Capital, Ares SSG Capital and Davidson Kempner, among others, to syndicate a short-term loan of \$1 billion, which will be used to part pay \$3.2 billion bonds maturing between 2024 and 2025, said two people in the know.

The company has \$1 billion 13.875% bonds due in January 2024, \$1 billion 6.125% bonds due in August 2024 and \$1.2 billion 8.95% bonds due in March 2025.

The conglomerate is simultaneously in

talks with its bondholders to exchange a sizable portion of \$3.2 billion bonds on different terms. At a recent roadshow held in Hong Kong, Singapore and London with bondholders, senior officials from Vedanta Resources proposed prepaying 30% of bonds upfront while rolling over the remaining 70% over three years, a third person said.

The proposed fundraise from private credit providers will be used to make upfront payment to bondholders, the people cited above said. Vedanta Resources also informed bondholders during the roadshow that the group aims to raise funds by divesting its steel and mining assets and has initiated talks with potential buyers for the same.

Naveen Jindal's Vulcan Steel in talks for investing in Nigeria

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

Naveen Jindal-owned Vulcan Green Steel is planning a \$3-billion investment in Nigeria where it intends to set up a three-million tonne per annum (mtpa) steel plant.

In an official communication earlier this month, Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu said that Jindal Group has committed to investing in the African nation.

Incidentally, sources aware told *businessline* that the investment will be made through a promoter group entity Vulcan Green Steel. Details of the project are yet to be finalised. As per people in the know, Vulcan will set up a hot-rolled coil mill in Nigeria.

"Nigeria has a population of 22 crore and steel demand is expected to grow at 8-10 per cent year on year over the next few years. There are no

Vulcan Green Steel will commence work on setting up the proposed 5-mtpa green hydrogen-ready steel complex in the SEZ at Duqm in Oman

major players and it gives us a scope to invest in the market," people close to the development said.

OMAN PROJECT

Meanwhile, Vulcan Green Steel will commence work on setting up the proposed 5-mtpa green hydrogen-ready green steel complex in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm in Oman. The invest-

ment is expected to be in the \$3-billion range and discussions are on with ECAs for fund raising.

The facility will produce premium-quality, auto-grade flat products catering to the auto, wind turbine and domestic appliances for industries across Europe, Japan and other countries.

"We expect about 7-9 gigawatts of renewable energy to be required to run the facility at full capacity, including the electrolyzers and the electricity needed for the steel manufacturing facility," sources said.

Those in the know said Vulcan Green Steel is in advanced discussions with multiple developers to secure the energy requirement. "The company, in due course, will evaluate the optimum mix of debt and equity to maximise shareholder value and minimise the cost of capital," sources said.

India to finalise acquisition of five lithium blocks in Argentina

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

India is close to finalising five lithium blocks in Argentina and is likely to sign an agreement "over the next few days". Agreements are to be signed through Kabil, the State-owned joint venture formed to scout for minerals overseas.

An official in the Mines Ministry, with direct knowledge of the matter, told *businessline* that groundwork has been carried out and things are in the final stages now.

KABIL JV

Kabil is a joint venture between the National Aluminium Company (Nalco), Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd. (MECL), and Hindustan Copper Ltd. (HCL). It was formed for the identification, acquisition, development, and processing of strategic minerals overseas for use in India.

India, among the world's top greenhouse gas emitters, has been pursuing overseas pacts to secure key minerals



LITHIUM HUNT. Kabil is also eyeing acquisition opportunities for lithium across other Latam nations like Chile and Brazil REUTERS

in resource-rich countries such as Australia, Argentina, and Chile.

PACT WITH ARGENTINA

"Kabil is close to making acquisitions in Argentina and will shortly sign an agreement to secure a few lithium blocks, most probably five or so. May be another month or so before the details are locked in," the official said.

According to the official, Argentina has in principle agreed to allot lithium blocks

for exploration to India, and details of the lease are being worked on. Mines could be procured via direct acquisition, long-term revenue sharing, or partnership pacts.

LITHIUM TRIANGLE

Argentina, together with Chile and Bolivia, form the so-called "Lithium Triangle" and is currently the fourth largest producer. It has the world's third-largest lithium reserve.

India imports all major components that go into lith-

ium-ion cell manufacturing. The country's lithium-ion import bill for FY23 was ₹23,171 crore.

In FY22, imports for lithium-ion were ₹13,673.15 crore.

OVERSEAS AGREEMENTS

Ministry officials said Kabil will continue to be the front for such overseas pacts that include getting into agreements with governments overseas.

Apart from Argentina, Kabil is exploring tie-ups and acquisition opportunities for lithium across other Latam nations like Chile and Brazil.

It is also open to other alternate structures like partnerships, long-term leasing of mines or lithium blocks, or investment in these mines.

In Australia, Kabil is said to have entered into MoUs for the exploration of two lithium blocks and three cobalt blocks.

"Lithium, copper, and cobalt are among some of the key minerals that are being tapped at the moment," another official said.

WGC members to disclose output details to enhance transparency

Our Bureau
Mumbai

The World Gold Council members, who represent the majority of the global large-scale gold mining industry, have committed to provide enhanced transparency in the gold supply chain.

All 33 WGC members with operating mines, who collectively produce 1,300 tonnes of gold per annum, will publish the names and locations of their refining partners on an annual basis, including the source of primary revenue from gold production.

All members have also committed to joining the Gold Bar Integrity platform and supplying, on a confidential basis, "core data" on the



gold they have produced to their refining partners.

This ensures gold enters the Gold Bar Integrity platform "at source" and is a major step in the digitalisation of gold across the supply chain.

TRUSTED ASSET CLASS

It will provide the gold industry with a robust and veri-

fiable ledger of responsibly mined gold, which will create significant opportunities for new product development and increase gold's attractiveness as a trusted asset class for existing and new investors and customers.

David Tait, CEO of WGC, said that pursuing enhanced supply chain transparency is good for the companies, as they get assurance that the gold they are using is produced and traded responsibly.

The move comes close on the heels of India implementing mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery with a unique identification (HUID) number. The digitally generated HUID helps customers to trace back the jewellery producer and assures the purity of gold.

Tread cautiously

BULLION CUES. Gold and silver might consolidate

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Gold remained flat last week, whereas silver prices rallied. In terms of dollar, the former ended with a marginal gain of 0.1 per cent at \$1,925 per ounce, whereas the latter appreciated 2.3 per cent to end the week at \$23.5 an ounce.

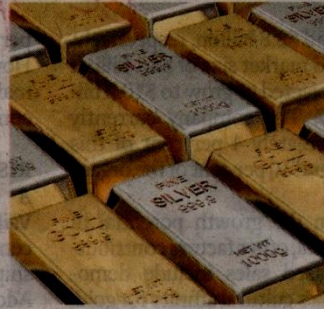
Similar trend was seen in the domestic market. On the MCX, gold futures was down 0.1 per cent, as it ended the week at ₹58,946 (per 10 gram); silver futures gained 1.6 per cent to close at ₹73,337 (per kg).

MCX-GOLD (₹58,946)

The price action since July shows that gold futures (October expiry) has been forming lower highs and higher lows leading to the formation of a triangle pattern. Hence, the next leg of trend depends on the direction in which the contract moves out of this pattern.

If it breaks out on the upside, it will open the door for a rally to ₹60,350. But if gold futures slip below the rising trendline, we might see a decline to ₹57,500.

Trade strategy: Since there is no clarity on trend, we recommend staying out of the market. Traders can initiate positions along the direction of the break of



the triangle pattern.

MCX-SILVER (₹73,337)

Silver December futures, after marking a low of ₹70,062 on September 14, saw a rebound in price. The contract extended the upside last week, giving some hope for the bulls.

But note that the silver futures is now held within a broad range of ₹70,000 and ₹76,600. Within this range, the contract is now trading at ₹73,337. It has a resistance at ₹74,000.

So, for the rally to continue, the hurdle at ₹74,000 should be breached. In such a case, it can move back up to ₹76,600. On the other hand, if the contract drops, it can find support at ₹71,050 and ₹70,000.

Trade strategy: Risk-reward is not favourable for longs even though there is a chance for a rally. Hence, refrain from trading.

Gold Buyers Take a Shine to Monthly Schemes

Some jewellery retailers see 50% rise in purchases via this route

Sutanuka Ghosal & Writankar Mukherjee

Kolkata: Consumers might be buying less gold amid record-high prices, but top retail chains are seeing a surge in jewellery purchased through deferred or monthly payment schemes. Some of the big jewellery retailers saw over a 50% rise in purchases through monthly schemes.

Tata Group's Tanishq received Rs 3,890 crore in FY23 through the deposit scheme, up 44% from Rs 2,701 crore in the preceding fiscal year.

Reliance Retail received Rs 282 crore as per its latest annual report, rising from Rs 184 crore a year earlier.

Typically, the retailer offers some discount on instalments as an incentive to depositors. For instance, Tanishq's Golden Harvest offers a discount of up to 75% of the first instalment in a 10-month scheme.

Even regional chains have latched on to monthly deposit schemes. Pune-based PNG Jewellers, which operates 42 stores in Maharashtra and Goa, got Rs 700 crore in FY23, up 27% from FY22.

Kolkata-based Senco Gold received Rs 192 crore in deposits last fiscal year, an 89% increase from a year earlier.

"Covid had impacted the gold jewellery purchase scheme, but it has picked up now. In the April-June quarter of this fiscal, enrolment in the scheme went up by 50% compared to the same period last fiscal," said Ajoy Chawla, CEO, jewellery, Titan Co., which runs the Tanishq chain.

Last fiscal, jewellery purchase plans accounted for 19% of Tanishq sales and is expected to go up to 21% this year, said Chawla. The jewellery purchase scheme allows consumers to accrue gold jewellery over a period of time through a fixed amount deposited with the jeweller every month.

Vedanta Resources Faces Investor Resistance over Bond Restructuring

INVESTORS SEEK BETTER TERMS Co needs approval of at least two-thirds of bondholders

Shilpy.Sinha@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Vedanta Resources' (VRL) bond restructuring plan has met with some resistance from investors seeking better terms. The proposed plan suggests making a 50% upfront payment for the \$1 billion January 2024 bond, a 15% payment for the August 2024 bond, and a 10% upfront payment for the March 2025 bonds, with the remaining amounts to be restructured.

However, VRL needs the approval of at least two-thirds of the bondholders for this plan to proceed.

Initial feedback from investors in Singapore and Hong Kong reveals discomfort with the proposed restructuring, raising the possibility of opposition from a group of bond investors, two bondholder sources said.

"A group of bondholders could oppose the proposed restructuring, setting the stage for a potential showdown," a source said. "VRL needs to achieve a 2/3rd quorum for the bondholder vote, and within that quorum, they need a 2/3rd approval

rate to proceed with the restructuring."

Despite this, bond prices have displayed signs of recovery in recent days, with January 2024 bonds quoted at 91/92, up from a low of 87 the previous week. Similarly, August 24 bonds, previously at a low of 62, were quoted at 65/66 on Friday.



Vedanta Resources' bond prices have displayed signs of recovery in recent days

Davis, the President of Strategy, conducting meetings in London. The company had previously discussed the potential extension of bonds maturing in 2024 and 2025 during meetings in Hong Kong and Singapore.

As of the end of June 2023, Vedanta

Resources Limited's total aggregated holdco debt amounted to \$5.9 billion, with \$3.7 billion in bonds. S&P Global Ratings has issued a warning that changes in Vedanta Resources' financial strategy regarding debt transactions could lead to a potential downgrade in its credit rating.

A group of bondholders, primarily Oaktree Capital Management and Avenue Capital, has appointed London-based Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP as their legal advisor, as reported by ET on September 22. Vedanta Resources has also entered discussions with global private credit funds, including Cerberus Capital, Bain Capital, Ares SSG Capital, and Davidson Kempner, to collaborate on a \$1 billion short-term loan intended to partially cover the repayment of \$3.2 billion in bonds maturing in 2024 and 2025, as reported by ET on September 21.

Vedanta Resources is exploring various options to meet its financial obligations and prevent defaults, including considering a partial bond exchange with upfront payments.

China emerges top stainless steel supplier to India in April-August; trade concerns linger

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

China has emerged the largest seller of stainless steel to India for the April-August period of FY23, at 0.35 million tonnes (mt) — a multi-year-high, and the second largest seller of finished steel at 0.80 mt.

Stainless and alloy steel shipments accounted for 44 per cent of the total imports from China, which rose by nearly 70 per cent year-on-year, per a report of the Steel Ministry, accessed by *businessline*.

According to government officials, imports from China are amongst the highest in recent times.

VALUE UP

In value terms, finished steel shipments coming into India (from China) were valued at \$936 million, up 28 per cent YoY, while semi-finished steel shipments increased 500 per cent YoY to \$21 million



LEADER IN IMPORTS. China is also the second-largest seller of finished steel at 0.80 million tonnes

for the period under review.

Cold rolled coils and strips - across alloys, stainless and finished steel segments - were the highest shipped item at 0.21 mt, 25 per cent of the total imports, provisional data of the Ministry said.

“Increasing steel shipments from China have been a concern that the in-

dustry has been raising for some time - both for steel and stainless steel. As steel prices firm up, we hope the situation will change,” a trade source said.

IMPORTS FROM OTHERS

Korea continues to be the largest importer despite shipments dropping 9 per cent YoY to 0.83 mt; accounting for 33 per cent of

the total steel shipments coming in. Stainless steel and alloy steel imports were 0.21 mt.

Japan (0.37 mt), Taiwan (0.06 mt) and Vietnam (0.17 mt) are the other large sellers of steel to Indian mills and trade.

The YoY increase in shipments from these countries stood at 63 per cent, 645 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively.

Incidentally, Vietnam has historically been a key buyer of Indian steel (large export market) but has over the last few months turned to importing / shipping steel here after prices fell in its domestic market.

Overall imports of total finished steel was 2.5 mt, up by 22.4 per cent, for the first five months of the fiscal.

“Volume-wise, hot rolled coil and strip (0.92 mt, up by 53.5 per cent) was the item most imported, accounting for 36 per cent share in total finished steel,” the report mentioned.

**Gloomy demand outlook
hammer copper price**



London: Copper prices dropped on Monday, approaching close to four-month lows hit last week, with sentiment dominated by concern over Chinese demand, rising stocks and a stronger dollar. Benchmark copper on the London Metal Exchange (LME) was down 1 per cent at \$8,140 a tonne. REUTERS

Go short on copper futures; stop loss at ₹710

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Copper futures on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) has witnessed a sharp fall over the past few sessions. It fell off the resistance at ₹740 more than a week ago and the contract slipped below a support at ₹720 last Friday. It also declined below a rising trend-line support last week.



contract recovers and rallies past ₹720, the bias might change positive, leading to a possible upswing to ₹740, a resistance. However, as it stands, the chances for such a rally is slim.

COMMODITY CALL.

This has increased the odds of further fall in price, likely to the support band of ₹695-700 in the coming sessions. That said, the copper futures, currently trading at around ₹712, might retest the support-turned-resistance level of ₹720 before touching ₹700.

On the other hand, if the

TRADE STRATEGY

Short copper futures now at ₹712 and add more shorts in case the price moves up to ₹718. Place initial stop-loss at ₹724.

When the contract falls to ₹700, exit half of the shorts and tighten the stop-loss to ₹710 for the remaining positions. Exit the balance at ₹695.

Meena opens continuous miner in WCL's Tawa mine

■ Business Reporter

AMRIT Lal Meena, Secretary, Ministry of Coal, Government of India, on Tuesday inaugurated the Continuous Miner in Tawa underground mine of Pathakheda area of Western Coalfields Limited (WCL) through video conferencing. AT the outset, Chairman and Managing Director of WCL Manoj Kumar welcomed the guests. In his address, he explained in detail the importance of mechanization in underground mines and the utility of continuous miner in society.

He said that 2.89 million tonnes of coal was produced in the year 2022-23 through

underground mining in WCL, which will be increased to 10 million tonnes per year by the year 2030.

Amrit Lal Meena in his address congratulated WCL for this technical initiative. He said that only 4 per cent of coal is produced in India through underground coal mining, which needs to be increased.

In his address, Chairman of Coal India Limited, P M Prasad said that increase in coal production can be achieved through extensive mechanization.

J P Dwivedi, Director Technical - WCL; Tarun Kumar Srivastava, CMD's Technical Secretary; and others were also present.



Capacity Additions to Weigh on Cement Cos' Profitability

Players will benefit in the near term from rising demand, falling input prices: Analysts

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Mumbai: While the recent uptick in prices and lower input costs is seen shoring up the operating profit of Indian cement makers in the near term, profitability is seen capped over the medium term as companies are unable to take significant price hikes amid capacity additions, analysts said.

India is expected to consume around 440 million tonnes of cement this year, as it clocks in a strong double-digit growth in volumes. With demand expected to grow in double digits or at least high-single digits over the next few years, most cement makers have also announced large capacity expansion plans.

This will lead to around 40 million tonnes of cement capacity being added each year between FY24 and FY25, which compares to an addition of 20 million tonnes each year between FY18 to FY23.

"A focus on retaining market share amid capacity additions will test the industry's pricing power despite the growing demand," Fitch Ratings said in a note.

CAPACITY ADDITIONS

While Adani Cement plans to double its capacity in five years, the country's largest producer Ultra-Tech Cement has targeted raising its capacity to 200 million tonnes

On Profit Path

Indian cement makers see profit rise due to high demand and lower costs

Capacity to increase by 40 million tonnes annually between FY24 and FY25, up from 20 million tonnes yearly between FY18 to FY23.

Despite 15-20% demand growth this year, cement prices remain subdued.

Operating profit set to recover by 26% in the current fiscal year.

Expect price hikes of ₹10-35 per bag in October



from 132 million tonnes currently. Dalmia Bharat, JK Cement and Shree Cement are among the other producers which have announced capacity expansion plans.

The fervent pace of capacity addition will also prevent margins from improving to the extent that was seen in FY21, when lower prices of energy aided the profitability even though the impact of Covid-19 had weighed on demand, the rating agency said.

Cement prices, in fact, have been on a soft footing for most of this year even despite demand having grown in the range of 15-20% so far in the current financial year. This is because companies have been focusing on pushing volumes to retain market share, analysts said.

In the current financial year, though, the profitability of these companies is set to recover from multi-year lows helped by a sustained growth in demand on the back of a surge in government's infrastr-

structure spending, and a fall in key input costs.

A sharp jump in fuel and power costs had seen the operating profit of cement makers shrink to their lowest level in eight years to around ₹770 per tonne in 2022-23 (April-March).

INPUT COSTS

Helped by prices remaining stable and the lag impact of using lower-priced fuel, this profitability is set to recover by as much as 26% or ₹200 per tonne in the current fiscal, Crisil Ratings said in a recent note.

"Power and fuel costs, which constitute 30-35% of the total production cost, will follow the trend of falling pet coke and coal prices with a lag effect. For this fiscal, power and fuel costs are likely to be lower by ₹200-250 per tonne on-year," Naveen Vaidyanathan, director at the firm said.

While cement prices have been tepid over the last few months, companies have been able to take some price hikes recently, helped by the government's spending on infrastructure ahead of the general elections in 2014, which has stirred demand.

COMMODITY CALL.

Initiate short positions in aluminium

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau



China picks cheap Indian iron ore to trim steel costs

COST CUTTING. Removing hefty export tax imposed last year has boosted India's exports

Bloomberg

Iron ore exports have surged this year as steel mills, mainly in the biggest buyer China, switched to lower-grade, cheaper feed in the face of dwindling profits.

Combined outbound shipments of iron ore and pellets from the South Asian nation more than doubled in the first eight months of 2023 to almost 28 million tonnes from a year earlier, according to researcher and rating agency ICRA Ltd, far surpassing the total exports of 2021 and 2022. India will continue to sell about 3 million tonnes a month to global markets for rest of the year, CRU Group said.

"Chinese mills prefer cheaper Indian iron ore to reduce their input costs when steel margins are low," said Lalit Ladkat, an analyst at CRU. Indian ore is currently being offered at around \$70 a tonnes, free-on-board, he said.

The steelmaking ingredient is currently trading near



GOING STRONG. Increased inflows from India will help Chinese mills maintain production despite the country's economic slowdown ISTOCK

\$115 a tonne on the Singapore exchange, the global benchmark. The increased inflows from India will help shave some costs for Chinese mills that are maintaining production despite the country's economic slowdown.

HARD HIT

The steel industry has been hit hard, with profits at ferrous metals producers dropping 91 per cent over the first seven months of the year. Iron ore prices

have risen 20 per cent in the past year. These purchases are 'opportunistic buying' by Chinese mills which generally lean to ward purchases of lower-grade ore during periods of subdued mill margins, according to ICRA's Vice-President for Corporate Ratings Priyesh Ruparelia. Greater availability of railway rakes to move the ore to ports also aided shipments, he said.

Exports are also being bolstered by the Indian government removing a hefty

export tax it had imposed last year to curb a rise in local steel prices. Foreign sales bounced back rapidly thereafter, with tonnages in 2023 already exceeding last year's volumes by over 40 per cent, according to ICRA.

On the production side, this year's lacklustre monsoon season, which is typically a lean period for iron ore extraction in India, led to increased output, resulting in a surplus in the local market and boosting exports, according to Ladkat.

Steel exports could remain under pressure due to global headwinds

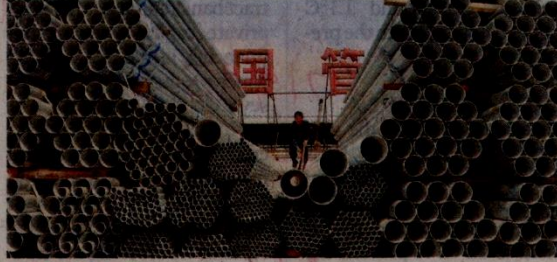
Abhishek Law
New Delhi

A steel ministry report has pointed out to continuing "southbound steel prices" in global markets and recessionary pressures in Europe's housing market, thereby raising concerns about continued pressure on exports (steel).

In Europe, the construction sector, particularly the residential sub-segment, is experiencing a slowdown and "is likely to enter recession this year, which affected the sentiment".

Concerns about oversupply are pressuring finished steel prices in the US amid weakened buying in a typically slow part of the year, the report, accessed by *business-line* showed.

The report states that while in China, prices



MAJOR HIKE. Steel majors increased prices by 2-8% across categories like hot-rolled coils, rebars and cold rolled coils

showed a marginal improvement in August compared to the previous month; weak property sector continues to impact construction-related manufacturing and steel demand there. Output cuts did lead to temporary rally in steel prices, but these were short-lived.

Price in India, "eased significantly" in August; and the reason was pegged on "geopolitical issues" and season-

ality-monsoons being a lean period for commodity demand.

Incidentally, India's steel majors increased prices by 2-8 per cent across categories like hot-rolled coils and rebars (used mostly in construction sector), and cold rolled coils beginning September in what is being seen as the first major price hike that was initiated since April.

For April-August, India's steel exports was near flat (rising at over 1 per cent) at 3.01 million tonnes (mt). European nations were the highest buyer of Indian steel accounting for over 40 per cent of the exports for the period under review. Italy was the largest buyer of Indian steel, at 0.67 mt, up 34 per cent y-o-y, followed by Spain with 0.27 mt, up 105 per cent y-o-y, while Belgium saw a 12 per cent decline in purchases to 0.27 mt.

The big Asian export markets for Indian steel mills were Nepal — which bought 0.25 mt witnessing a y-o-y rise of 23 per cent; and UAE — where shipments dropped by 33 per cent y-o-y to 0.2 mt.

Vietnam, one of the largest buyers of Indian steel, is now one of the top five importers (selling to India). Exports (to Vietnam) was less than 0.1 mt.

जम्मू के लिथियम भंडार होंगे नीलाम

3,000 अरब के खजाने से सरकार होगी मालामाल

■ श्रीनगर, एजेंसियां. भारत सरकार अगले कुछ हफ्तों में जम्मू-कश्मीर में लिथियम रिजर्व की नीलामी शुरू कर सकती है. खास बात है कि इसकी नीलामी के लिए कुछ विदेशी माइनर्स से बात भी चल रही है. खान और खनिज संशोधन विधेयक, 2023 को हाल ही में संसद से मंजूरी मिली है जिसके बाद नीलामी की प्रक्रिया शुरू करने की कोशिशें तेज हो गई हैं. इलेक्ट्रिक व्हीकल्स और मोबाइल समेत ज्यादातर इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरणों की बैटरी बनाने के लिए लिथियम सबसे महत्वपूर्ण रॉ-मटेरियल है. जम्मू कश्मीर में 59 लाख टन लिथियम की खोज के बाद भारत दुनिया का 7वां सबसे बड़ा लिथियम भंडार वाला देश बन गया है. भारत में भंडार मिलने से पहले यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स जियोलॉजिकल सर्वे के अनुसार दुनियाभर में 9.8 करोड़ टन लिथियम का भंडार था लेकिन अब भारत में मिले लिथियम के भंडार के बाद ये आंकड़ा बढ़कर 10.39 करोड़ टन हो गया है. रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक चीन में एक टन लिथियम की कीमत करीब 50 लाख रुपये है. भारत के जम्मू में 59 लाख टन लिथियम मिलने की संभावना है. इस हिसाब यहां इसकी कीमत करीब 3,000 अरब रुपये आंकी जा रही है.



■ 'जम्मू-कश्मीर के जल संसाधनों और खनिजों को अपने कब्जे में लेने के बाद भारत सरकार ने जम्मू के लिथियम भंडार पर अपनी नजरें गड़ा दी हैं. राज्य द्वारा उत्पादित बिजली दूसरों को (मुफ्त में भी) आपूर्ति की जाती है जबकि हम खुद अंधेरे में रहते हैं. अब इन लिथियम भंडारों का दोहन किया जाएगा और इसे भाजपा के करीबी पूंजीपतियों को उपहार में दिया जाएगा.
- मन्वबा मुफ्ती, अध्यक्ष, पीडीपी

Steam Coal Imports Dip 6% to 61 mt in April-July

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New Delhi: India's steam coal import fell 6% year-on-year between April and July with Indonesia's volume dipping by almost a fourth. Trade data showed total steam coal imports at 60.7 mt from the start of the financial year till July end. Lower imports from power units than the same period last year, cheaper domestic supplies for the non-power sector, and better fuel planning led to the drop, as per industry experts and officials.

Coal stock at power plants, both domestic and imported, did not deplete as much as anticipated towards the end of March, owing to favorable weather conditions. However, imports were still needed to meet the total requirement, a government official said. While February was hotter than usual, March to May

was cooler on average.

The government had directed electricity generators to import 6% of their fuel requirement in anticipation of higher demand in the summer months. However, the import by power generators for blending was less than 6%, the official said.

"This year Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab have not imported as much as compared with last year for blending purposes," the official said. "Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have imported."

While domestic coal supplies and increased captive coal output helped in maintaining sufficient stocks at power plants, blending of imported coal was still much needed. The power ministry earlier this month said that despite an increase in domestic coal supply during the first quarter of FY24, it is short of meeting the total requirement.

Cement Makers Hike Prices to Counter Rising Costs

Bold move amid seasonally low demand aimed at creating high price base to profit from post-monsoon recovery: Analysts

Rajesh Naidu@timesgroup.com

ET Intelligence Group: Cement manufacturers have raised prices sharply by around 12-13% over the past month amid rising input costs even though the post-monsoon increase in demand is yet to kick in. This is considered a bold move by sector trackers since cement companies were cautious over the past few months while deciding prices.

With the steep increase, the all-India average cement price has reached ₹382 per 50 kg bag. The sharpest rise was in the eastern region where the price rose to ₹400 from ₹326. Historically, the demand

for cement in the September quarter is weak due to the low pace of construction activities given the monsoon period. Generally, cement firms promptly reduce prices when their sales volumes are impacted due to low demand.

The bold stand to raise prices despite sluggish volume offtake is therefore unusual. Some analysts attribute this to the possibility of creating a higher price base to take advantage of a demand recovery once the monsoon is over.

In addition, prices have increased at a time when raw material costs have once again started rising. "Over the past three months, imported coal prices have increased by 15% and pet

High on Profitability

Company	EBITDA/tonne (₹)	
	2013	2014E
UltraTech Cement	1,000	1,257
Ambuja Cements	852	1,222
Shree Cement	925	1,192

EBITDA: Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortisation. E-estimated SOURCE: Centrum Broking

coke prices have increased by 28%. Even though, both coal and pet-coke prices are still lower on a year-on-year basis, operating costs for the sector are likely to rise from the March 2024 quarter onwards," said

Mangesh Bhadang, senior vice-president and cement analyst at Centrum Broking in a sector note. He expects that demand growth in FY25 will be weak amid higher costs, which may put pressure on the

margins of cement makers.

Some analysts estimate that if cement firms can sustain the recent price increase, they are likely to post EBITDA per tonne of ₹1,200-1,300 in the second half of FY24 from ₹800-900 in the past few quarters.

According to Ravi Sodah, cement industry analyst at Elara Capital, the benefit of the recent price increase will reflect fully in the December 2023 quarter when the margins of cement firms will improve.

Given these factors, large companies such as UltraTech Cement, Ambuja Cements, and Shree Cement, which have a strong market presence and strong balance sheets are likely to benefit in the coming quarters.



As stocks pile up, GJEPC asks members to stop importing rough diamonds

Suresh P. Iyengar
Mumbai

The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) and other leading associations have directed members to halt import of rough diamonds for two months from October 15, amid a steep rise in inventory of polished diamonds due to a sharp fall in exports.

Halting the import of rough diamonds will help the industry balance demand and supply, thereby protecting the value of assets and increasing consumer confidence, according to a statement from the industry bodies.

They have decided to review the situation in the first



week of December. Demand for loose polished diamonds and jewellery from large consuming economies such as the US and China has been affected over the last many quarters and fresh orders have slowed down.

The overall export of gems and jewellery dipped 27 per cent in the five months this

fiscal to \$12.06 billion (₹99,293 crore) against \$16.55 billion (₹1,29,234 crore) in the same period last year, according to GJEPC data.

Cut and polished diamond exports declined 30 per cent so far this fiscal to \$7.03 billion (₹57,844 crore) against \$10.08 billion (₹78,693 crore) last year.

Subsequently, inventories of polished diamonds have increased over the past few months and prices have softened.

BENEFITS OF BAN

Mining companies have been flooding rough diamonds into the market despite the fall in demand. Colin Shah, Man-

aging Director, Kama Jewelry, said with the concurrent downtrend in diamond exports for the last several quarters and the softening of prices, the voluntarily ban on diamond imports will help diamond traders to ease their inventories and derive a fair price.

The diamond industry has imposed voluntary bans in the past to bring stability in the overall demand-supply dynamics and foster economic growth of the country through robust exports.

This may have some impact on the Indian diamond polishing business in the short run; but will eventually benefit the industry in the long run, he said.

Steel mills want to tap Mexico for exports

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

The Indian Steel Association (ISA) - which includes the largest steel makers such as AMNS India, Tata Steel, JSW, SAIL and JSPL - has sought intervention of Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia to explore free trade agreement (FTA) so that Indian mills can tap into Mexico.

The association is also seeking help to see that exports from India to the LatAm market do not face a local levy (import duty in Mexico) thereby making shipments from India turn costlier by 25 per cent.

European nations are amongst the highest exporters of steel there and Indian mills have been trying to tap into it as a part of their entry into new overseas regions.

Incidentally, exports from India are already under stress with there still being a slowdown in offers across key markets such as West Asia and Vietnam.

DUTY ON SHIPMENTS

"In addition, India could explore FTA with Mexico for...committing investments in sustained, structured and bilaterally conducive terms," it said in a letter addressed to the Minister, and some senior bureaucrats in the Steel Ministry, earlier this month. (*businessline* has reviewed the letter.)

It has also been pointed out that the Latin American nation has imposed a duty on 392 items, of which 92 pertain to



EXPLORING OTHER AVENUES. Exports from India are already under stress with slowdown in offers across key markets such as West Asia and Vietnam

steel. Import duties are up from 10 per cent to 25 per cent.

Duty is imposed on items coming in from countries with which Mexico does not have an FTA. Effectively 59 nations, including the European Union nations, are excluded from the duty.

Post the levy, Indian shipments will be adversely hit and turn costlier by 10-25 per cent.

Exports to Mexico (from India) at present continue to be low, just about 0.1 million tonnes (mt). The LatAm nation is a net importer of steel (11 mt of imports versus 5.5 mt of exports), and the entire North American region reported around 54 mt imports in 2022.

Incidentally, the association has pointed out that the Centre had stepped in earlier when the US had imposed similar duties; which were subsequently revoked post intervention by the Ministry. "...

Mexico to reinstate import tariff for Indian steel at 10 per cent....offer an equitable trade treatment to Indian steel exports- at par with Mexico's other FTA countries," it said in the letter seeking Centre's intervention.

EXPORTS UNDER PRESSURE

Incidentally, Indian steel exports have been under pressure in view of global recessionary headwinds.

Consultancy firm Steel-Mint, in a report said, Indian mills have halted hot rolled coil export offers to South East Asia and West Asia due to limited allocations and higher prices in the domestic market. Demand in West Asia and Vietnam is slow.

In addition, Indian HRC export offers to Europe (including EU) remained stable with market participants in the EU postponing restocking until October and are waiting for import quotas.

Govt mulls use of bamboo as low carbon emitting alternative in steel-making

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

India's Steel Ministry is looking at the use of bamboo and other biomass sources as low carbon emitting alternatives in steel-making. Policy decisions could be worked on, if required, Secretary Nagendra Nath Sinha said on Thursday.

Biomass sources typically include wood and wood processing wastes; agricultural crops and waste materials; biogenic materials in municipal solid waste; animal manure and human sewage; landfill gas and biofuels made from biogenic alcohol.

Sinha said biomass can be considered as a low carbon-emission resource, thereby making it an attractive option to reduce emissions from iron and steel production.

The International Energy

Agency in a research paper noted that "bioenergy can be carbon neutral because the carbon that is released during combustion has previously been sequestered from the atmosphere and will be sequestered again as the plants regrow, i.e. if sustainably produced".

"This is one of the decarbonisation levers (use of biochar) that we said (the Centre) we should work on....there is a lot of availability of biomass; and there could be, for example, use of bamboo (as a source). But, this requires a lot of work in terms of policies like characterisation of biomass and so on," Sinha told *businessline* on the sidelines of the Indian Steel Markets Conference.

"We have take up this....and hopefully something (will materialise)," he added.

India's emission intensity

in the steel sector is around 2.55 tonnes of CO₂ per tonne of steel produced. Company wise break-up shows SAIL to have an intensity of 2.5, Tata Steel at 2.12, JSPL at 2.59 and JSW at 2.49.

EXPERIMENTS IN INDIA

Blast furnaces would need to substitute for a proportion of the coal used. Biochar — black carbon produced from biomass sources — can potentially be substituted for pulverised coal currently injected directly into blast furnaces, said a Steel Ministry official.

According to World Steel Association report, such a project was carried out with the 'Australian CO₂ breakthrough programme' that focussed on substituting coal used in pulverised coal injection (PCI) in the blast furnace with sustainable biochar.

BUSINESS LINE
DATE:30/9/2023 P.NO3

Hind Copper to ramp up production capacity

Kolkata: Hindustan Copper Ltd on Wednesday said it is implementing expansion projects to increase its mine production capacity from the current level to 12.2 million tonnes per annum by FY 2028-29. HCL Chairman and Managing Director Ghanshyam Sharma said the company has access to around 55 per cent of the copper ore reserves and resources in India with an average grade of 0.96 per cent.

BUSINESS LINE DATE:30/9/2023 P.NO11

Amid decarbonisation, Steel Min calls for upskilling

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

One of the task force, set up by the Ministry of Steel to chart the decarbonisation process, has suggested that there will be creation of new roles as India's steel mills switch to use of green hydrogen and other low carbon emitting energy resources. However, at present, there is no scope of training or scope of skill learning for these new roles that are expected to come up.

NEW ROLES

Accordingly, arrangements for training are to be made for these new roles that will be coming up in future, the task force members said in a



presentation before the Ministry. The new openings include people who would track products from steel making to delivery; data analytics, specialised DRI kiln operators who can use hydrogen or natural gas; non coal based fuel injectors in blast furnaces, operator of synthetic gas producer, robotics operator, among others.

● JOB ALERT

The new openings include people who would track products from steel making to delivery; data analytics, specialised DRI kiln operators, robotics operator, among others

The skill development task-force headed by Sunita Sanghi, has in its report, pointed out that nearly 4.76 lakh of the existing 11.89 lakh manpower (nearly 50 per cent) in the sector would require reskilling and upskilling. (*businessline* has a copy of the report)

It has also mentioned that till the first phase of decar-

bonisation process is underway — which includes a 10-year period from 2023-2034, the incremental man-power addition required would be 10.6 lakh, of which 80 per cent of nearly 8.5 lakh is attributable to the decarbonisation and digitalisation process.

TRAINING COST

The cost of man-power training is pegged at around ₹7,000 - ₹10,000 per person. The estimated cost outlay for training close to 4,00,000 people is pegged anywhere between ₹265 crore and ₹379 crore.

The task force, which made a presentation before the Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia, said, there exists limited data on the skill gap from industries on decarbonisation.

Vedanta plans to spin off, list 5 entities as \$2bn debt looms

Group Hopes Demerger Will Fetch Higher Valuations, Investments

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Mumbai: In a sweeping overhaul of his commodities conglomerate amid a looming \$2-billion debt bill, billionaire Anil Agarwal plans to spin off five businesses — aluminium, power, oil & gas, steel & iron ore and copper & zinc — from the Rs 68,000-crore Vedanta into separate listed entities. For every share of Vedanta, shareholders will receive one share of each of the five newly listed companies.

Agarwal hopes the split will fetch higher valuations as the present structure loses attraction among Indian and foreign investors. According to Vedanta, the move would “open multiple doors” as the five separate entities can attract “big ticket investments”, which may help the group reduce liabilities. London-based Vedanta Resources (VRL), which owns 64% of BSE-listed Vedanta, has \$1 billion in bonds maturing each in January 2024 and August 2024.

With the restructuring,

POTENTIAL FOR FASTER GROWTH IN EACH VERTICAL: AGARWAL

Demerger will carve up the conglomerate into 6 companies:

- 1) Vedanta (currently listed)
- 2) Vedanta Aluminium
- 3) Vedanta Oil & Gas
- 4) Vedanta Base Materials
- 5) Vedanta Steel & Ferrous Materials
- 6) Vedanta Power

➤ For every share of Vedanta, shareholders will get 1 share of each of the 5 new cos

➤ Vedanta will continue to hold interest in Hindustan Zinc and will be an incubator for new businesses

➤ The demerger process, subject to regulatory and other approvals, is expected to be completed in FY25

➤ Anil Agarwal,

Vedanta chairman, said the demerger will ‘unlock value and potential for faster growth in each vertical’

➤ A few years ago, when it merged three cos into Vedanta, the group said the consolidation will create value for shareholders

➤ London's Vedanta Resources, which owns 64% of Vedanta, has \$2bn bonds maturing in 2024

➤ The co had attempted a similar rejig in 2021 too



Agarwal will have eight listed entities in the country, including Hindustan Zinc, in which Vedanta holds a 65% stake, and Sterlite Technologies, where he and his family own 54%.

On September 26, Moody's downgraded the “corporate family rating” of VRL, citing “elevated risk” of debt restructuring in the coming months. In August, VRL had raised \$500 million by selling a 4.3% stake in Vedanta to stave off some pressure arising from its imminent cash ne-

eds. But with its remaining shareholding in Vedanta as well as Vedanta's entire shareholding in Hindustan Zinc, which holds around two-thirds of the group's consolidated cash, already being pledged, it has “limited financial flexibility to raise financing”, said Moody's.

Vedanta's move has drawn flak from a proxy advisory firm. “Just a few years ago, Vedanta merged Sterlite and Sesa Goa and thereafter Cairn Energy, giving such arguments that it is in sharehol-

ders' interest to merge these cyclical businesses. Also, the merger ratios were favouring promoters and not minority shareholders of merging companies... The same board is now reversing its own business case with no apparent reason,” said Anil Singhvi, founder of advisory firm Ican Investment.

Agarwal's latest move comes two years after he scrapped a similar restructuring plan, saying the conglomerate structure was “optimal”.

CONGLOMERATE SEEKS GROWTH PUSH AMID SLUMP

Vedanta rejig to carve out 6 listed firms

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 29

IN A sweeping shake-up, metals and energy major Vedanta Friday announced plans to spin out its businesses into six listed entities as it fights to stave off a debt crunch.

In a statement to the exchanges, the Anil Agarwal-promoted company said the board has approved the demerger of diversified businesses to unlock 'significant value'. The pure-play, asset-owner business model will result in aluminium, oil and gas, power, steel and ferrous materials and base metals being demerged and listed separately, the regulatory filing said.

The demerger of the business is a vertical one. For every share of Vedanta, shareholders will receive one share of each of the five newly listed companies, the company said.

The overhaul of the business is seen as a move to reduce the group's multi-billion dollar debt load. Agarwal had indicated in late August that a break-up of the company into several entities was being contemplated so as to allow investors to bet on "pure plays". On Friday, he said in a release the demand for minerals, metals, oil and gas and power is expected to grow very rapidly and that Vedanta's businesses are uniquely positioned to service



THE SIX ENTITIES

- Vedanta Aluminium
- Vedanta Oil & Gas
- Vedanta Power
- Vedanta Steel and Ferrous Materials
- Vedanta Base Metals
- Vedanta Ltd

this rising demand and reduce reliance on imports. "Vedanta is also foraying into semiconductors and display glass which are of great strategic significance to India," Agarwal said.

The demerged entities will be: Vedanta Aluminium, Vedanta Oil & Gas, Vedanta Power, Vedanta Steel and Ferrous Materials, Vedanta Base Metals and Vedanta. The company said some of the "resulting companies" are in the process of incorporation.

While the Vedanta stock rose 6.8% on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) on Friday to close at ₹222.50, the Street has not been too enthused by the plans to split

S&P DOWNGRADES VEDANTA PARENT

Mumbai: S&P Global Ratings downgraded the rating of Vedanta Resources, parent of Vedanta Ltd, to "CCC" from "B-" on Friday and placed it on credit watch with negative implications. "We believe the likelihood has increased that Vedanta Resources will undertake a liability management exercise that we could consider distressed under our criteria," the agency said. **ENS**

up the business. Analysts at Kotak Institutional Equities wrote in early September, "The company is considering a separate listing of different businesses, which is unlikely to unlock much value, in our view. Divestment of other businesses or a further stake sale is last resort, with Vedanta and Vedanta Resources to address the FY2025E funding gap," they noted.

Vedanta's net debt to Ebitda (excluding Hindustan Zinc) stood at around 3.3X at the end of March, 2023. Ebitda refers to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation.

VRL's net debt at the end of March, 2023 was \$12.7 billion and it has been trying to bridge the funding gap with dividends, selling shares in Vedanta and brand fees. **WITH FE**

Restructuring at HZL too: Separate entities for commodities businesses

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 29

HINDUSTAN ZINC (HZL), in which Indian mining major Vedanta (VEDL) holds a majority stake, has initiated a restructuring exercise to create three separate legal entities and has authorised a committee of directors to evaluate the proposal.

The restructuring, however, is subject to a "detailed evaluation". The company is exploring options to demerge its three business verticals — zinc & lead, silver and recycling — to help it capitalise on "distinct market positions" and attract investors, HZL said in a regulatory update on Friday.

The board has authorised a committee of directors to evaluate and recommend such options and alternatives, while it will also appoint external advisors for the evaluation process, it said.

As of June 30, VEDL holds a 64.92% and the Indian government holds a 29.54% stake in HZL. The London-headquartered Vedanta Resources (VRL) holds a 68.11% stake in subsidiary

VEDL, according to BSE data. Apart from metals and recycling, VEDL's portfolio includes oil & gas, power and semiconductor display glass.

On Friday, HZL said the decision to review its corporate structure was based on the scale, nature and potential opportunities for various business verticals and to unlock value. This will also help in creation of businesses, which are positioned to better capitalise on their distinct market positions, deliver long-term growth and attract investors.

"In order to unlock potential value, there will be a separate legal entity for undertaking the zinc, lead and silver verticals and they all will come under the larger umbrella and the decision will be taken in the due course," HZL CEO Arun Misra told **FE**.

"We are targeting to present various options to the board in next four-eight weeks," he added.

For FY23, HZL had posted a net profit of ₹10,511 crore on revenues of ₹34,098 crore, compared with a net profit of ₹9,629 crore and revenues of ₹29,440 crore posted in FY22. **FE**

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