



KHANIJ SAMACHAR

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खनिज समाचार

KHANIJ SAMACHAR



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'New National Critical Mineral Mission bolsters self-reliance'

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

India has launched an ambitious National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) in 2025 to secure its supply of critical minerals essential for clean energy technologies and national security, with enhanced focus on domestic exploration, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during his Independence Day address.

Spearheaded by the Geological Survey of India (GSI), the mission aims to conduct 1,200 exploration projects from 2024-25 to 2030-31.

The mission targets minerals such as lithium, cobalt and rare earth elements (REEs) to reduce import dependency and strengthen India's position in the global energy transition.

"Over 1,200 exploration projects for critical minerals are underway," the Prime Minister said during his Red Fort address.



The GSI has hit the ground running, initiating 195 exploration projects in the 2024-25 field season, including 35 in Rajasthan, to identify deposits of critical minerals vital for solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles (EVs), and energy storage systems.

India's NCMM, aimed at self-reliance, also plans to auction over 100 critical mineral blocks. Notably, 24 of the 30 critical minerals identified by the Ministry of Mines in November 2022 are now under the Central government's exclusive auction authority, as per the Mines

and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.

To accelerate efforts, the government is introducing a fast-track regulatory approval system and a new exploration licence to boost private sector participation. Offshore exploration for polymetallic nodules containing cobalt, REEs, nickel, and manganese is also on the horizon.

GREEN PUSH

Additionally, the mission promotes recycling from secondary sources like fly ash and tailings, with an incentive scheme targeting 400 kt of recovered minerals by 2030-31.

Beyond domestic efforts, NCMM is expanding India's global footprint.

The NCMM also prioritises innovation and infrastructure, with plans for 1,000 patents, 10,000 skilled workers, four mineral processing parks, and three Centres of Excellence by 2030-31.



Amitava Mukherjee

NMDC eyeing 55 MT iron ore output in FY26: CMD

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

State-owned NMDC is eyeing a record 55 million tonne (MT) iron ore output in the current fiscal.

In 2024-25, the company's output of the key raw material for steel stood at 44.04 MT, while in the previous fiscal it touched a record 45.2 MT. For the quarter ended June in FY26, the production was more than 30% higher year-on-year at 11.99 MT.

"We are firmly targeting 55 million tonne in FY26. By reaching this milestone we can stay on course for our 100 million-tonne goal by 2030," CMD Amitava Mukherjee told a gathering on the occasion of Independence Day celebrations at its corporate office here.

August, for NMDC Steel, he said, was turning out to be a month of milestones with the firm producing 11,205 tonne of hot metal in a single day; reporting ₹25.7 crore profit after tax for June quarter and successfully rolling out 1.2 mm thick hot rolled coil.

"NSL has inherited this deep sense of responsibility to the people and the planet from NMDC," Mr. Mukherjee said about the demerged entity.

State-owned NMDC Q1 net increases a tad to ₹1,967 crore

State-owned miner NMDC reported a marginal increase in the consolidated net profit for the June quarter to ₹1,967.46 crore against ₹1,963.35 crore in the corresponding period of previous fiscal. The total income of the company, which is India's largest iron-ore producer, increased nearly 22% to ₹7,038.97 crore (from ₹5,779.07 crore last year). For the quarter ended March, NMDC had posted a net profit of ₹1,483.18 crore and total income of ₹7,497.17 crore.

U.S. has no alternative to India in diamonds, say industry leaders

Abhinav Deshpande
AHMEDABAD

Already grappling with job losses and a slowdown in orders, Gujarat's diamond sector has been dealt with another setback as the U.S., its largest export destination, raised import duties to 25% with an additional tariff of 25% coming into effect from August 27, taking the total to 50%.

The hike, announced by U.S. President Donald Trump, has raised concerns among exporters who warn the rates are "unsustainable" for long-term trade.

Mounting challenges

It comes at a time when the industry is still struggling with the fallout of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the growing presence of cheaper lab-grown diamonds in global markets.

Despite the grim statistics, some leaders are urging calm. "This is a temporary phase. The U.S. has no viable alternative to India for loose and jewellery diamonds," said Jagdish Khunt, president, Surat Diamond Association.

"Yes, tariffs are a blow, but it will eventually push prices up in the U.S. and buyers there will have to absorb the difference because sourcing from India remains unavoidable," he told *The Hindu*.

Industry estimates show the U.S. alone accounts for more than 30% of India's gem and jewellery exports, making it the single-largest overseas buyer. In Gujarat, where almost 90% of natural diamonds imported to India are cut and polished, trade bodies say more than



Top client: The U.S. alone accounts for over 30% of India's gem and jewellery exports, making it the single-largest overseas buyer. AFP

one lakh workers have lost jobs since April this year.

In May, the Gujarat government rolled out a relief scheme aimed at helping diamond artisans and small units hit by a global slowdown. More than one lakh former workers from the sector sought assistance under the programme offering ₹13,500 a child of affected families.

"Nearly 90% of India's supply is processed here. What other alternatives do they have? We have the best 'ratnakalakars' (diamond artisans) in the world, and a customer buying diamonds will never compromise on quality," says Mr. Khunt.

He compared the American affinity for diamonds to the Indian love for gold, noting just as Indians continue to buy gold despite soaring prices, U.S. consumers were steadfast in preference for diamonds.

Choosing diamonds

"No matter the circumstances, they pick diamonds over gold. We expect the market to steady ahead of Christmas and New Year, with fresh orders starting to flow in," he said, adding over 7.5 lakh artisans are working in

3,500 small, large units.

Data from the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), India's apex body for the industry, shows in 2024-25 fiscal year, India shipped cut and polished diamonds worth \$4.8 billion to the U.S. The U.S. market thus accounted for over a third of India's total diamond exports amounting to \$13.2 billion for the year. As per GJEPC, India's rough diamond imports fell sharply in 2024-25 to \$9.52 billion, down from \$14.26 billion in the previous fiscal.

Babu Vaghani, president, Lab-Grown Diamonds Association, shared Mr. Khunt's optimism, describing the current situation as "short-term crisis."

"Whatever the challenges, we must keep going until Diwali. Even if it means trading on smaller margins, work has to continue for the sake of lakhs of people who depend on it for their livelihood," he added.

Mr. Vaghani pointed out more than half the artisans outside Surat, particularly in Bhavnagar, Botad, Mehsana, and other districts, were women. "In rural areas, women play a major role in diamond polishing," he added.

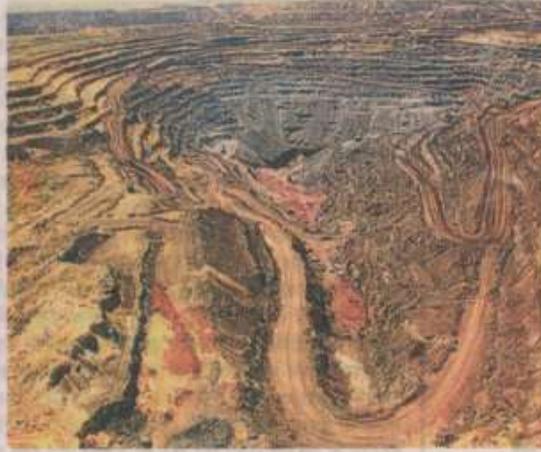
चीन को जवाब देंगे भारत के समुद्री राज्य रेयर अर्थ के मोर्चे पर काम शुरू

■ संतोष ठाकुर @ नवभारत
दिल्ली. कार से लेकर मोबाइल फोन और कई अन्य इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरण बनाने के लिए रेयर अर्थ उपकरण की जरूरत होती है. यह ऐसे उपकरण हैं, जो बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण होते हैं. लेकिन इनका उत्पादन प्राकृतिक तत्वों की उपलब्धता के आधार पर ही होता है. जिसकी वजह से इनकी उपलब्धता आसानी से नहीं होती है. इस समय दुनिया में रेयर अर्थ का सबसे बड़ा आपूर्तिकर्ता या सप्लायर चीन है. लेकिन हाल के समय में उसने भारत को रेयर अर्थ उपकरण देने को लेकर जिस तरह की आनाकानी की. उससे भारत में इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उत्पादन बड़े स्तर पर प्रभावित हुआ. इससे निपटने के लिए अब भारत ने स्वयं अपने स्तर पर रेयर अर्थ के उत्पादन की योजना पर काम शुरू कर दिया है. भारत के समुद्री तट वाले राज्यों में सरकार ने अपना कार्य भी शुरू कर दिया है.

देश में मिले गए आरईई भंडार

खनन और रिफाइनरी क्षमता को बढ़ाकर ही होगा चीन से आई चुनौती का सामना

■ दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता. दुर्लभ पृथ्वी खनिजों (आरईई) पर चीन की निर्यात पाबंदियों से उपजे वैश्विक तनाव के बीच भारत ने खनन के लिए नए केंद्र खोजे हैं, लेकिन निकट भविष्य में खोज से ज्यादा अहम कूटनीति होने जा रही है. अरुणाचल प्रदेश की पहाड़ियों से बहती दो अपेक्षाकृत अज्ञात नदियां पापुम और पारे जल्द ही राष्ट्रीय सुविधियों में आ सकती हैं. इन नदियों के नाम पर रखे गए पापुम पारे किले को भारत के दुर्लभ पृथ्वी खनिजों की खोज में एक नए मोर्चे के रूप में देखा जा रहा है. जून में जारी खनन मंत्रालय की बुकलेट ने इस क्षेत्र में विशेष रूप से उच्च नियोडिमियम की मौजूदगी के बारे में बताया है, जो इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों और उन्नत इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स का अहम घटक है. यदि इन भंडारों का दोहन होता है तो ये एक दिन गुडगांव से पुणे और चेन्नई तक के ईवी और ऑटो हब को ऊर्जा दे सकते हैं. इसके अलावा असम के कार्बी आंगलोंग में भी आरईई समृद्ध मिट्टी की पहचान हुई है, जबकि मेघालय की सुंग वैली में बॉक्साइट-आरईई की पट्टी मिली है. गृहमंत्री और कोयला एवं खनन मंत्री जी किशन रेड्डी ने हाल ही में संसद को बताया कि मध्य प्रदेश के सिंगरीली कोयला क्षेत्रों में भी उम्मीद जगाने वाले नए भंडार मिले हैं. ये खोजें एक बड़े बदलाव की ओर संकेत करती हैं. जिनकी सुरक्षा के लिए दुनिया संघर्ष कर रही है ऐसी रणनीतिक धातुएं सिर्फ आंध्र प्रदेश, ओडिशा, तमिलनाडु, केरल, पश्चिम बंगाल, गुजरात और महाराष्ट्र की रेत और तटीय इलाकों तक सीमित नहीं हैं. ये भारत के आंतरिक



किसके पास कितना आरईई

देश	भंडार का हिस्सा % में
चीन	49
ब्राजील	23
भारत	08
ऑस्ट्रेलिया	06
रूस	04
अन्य	10

जंगलों, पहाड़ियों और कोयला क्षेत्रों में भी छिपी हैं. चीन की पाबंदियों से उपजी चिंता के बीच भारत ने इन नए हॉटस्पॉट्स की पहचान तो कर ली है, लेकिन निकट भविष्य में आपूर्ति सुरक्षा की कुंजी कूटनीति होगी, खोज नहीं. भारत की चीन पर निर्भरता चौकाने वाली है. भारतीय ऑटो कंपनियां चीन पर निर्भरता से हिली हुई हैं.

आरईई पर एक नजर

- 85-90% मैंगनेट आयात चीन से ही आता है.
- चीन की पाबंदियों का असर परिवहन उपकरण, घातू, मशीनरी, निर्माण और इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स समेत कई क्षेत्रों पर पड़ रहा है.
- आरईई कुल 17 तत्वों का समूह है, इसमें हल्के और भारी दोनों हैं.
- हल्के आरईई (नियोडिमियम, प्रसीओडिमियम) ईवी मोटर्स और पवन टरबाइन में अहम हैं.
- भारी आरईई (डिस्प्रोसियम, टर्बियम) उच्च प्रदर्शन वाले रक्षा और एयरोस्पेस सिस्टम्स में बेहद जरूरी हैं.
- लिथियम और कोबाल्ट ईवी इकोसिस्टम के लिए अनिवार्य हैं लेकिन आरईई परिवार का हिस्सा नहीं.
- 195 आरईई खोज परियोजनाएं शुरू की हैं जीएसआई ने 2024-25 में
- असली चुनौती आपूर्ति भूखला है क्योंकि खेल में चीन का दबदबा है.

दुनिया में आरईई खनन

देश	खनन % में
चीन	69
अमेरिका	12
म्यांमार	08
ऑस्ट्रेलिया	03
भारत	01
अन्य	07

वैकल्पिक उपाय

- चीन से बनी हुई मोटर का आयात
- रॉटर को चीन भेजकर मैंगनेट लगवाना और फिर आयात करना
- वैकल्पिक इंजीनियर्ड मटेरियल्स का इस्तेमाल
- लेकिन ये सभी समाधान जटिल और महंगे हैं.

आसान नहीं है आगे का रास्ता, कड़े उपाय करने होंगे

- घरेलू उत्पादन बढ़ाना चाहिए (भारत के पास 8.52 मिलियन टन भंडार)।
- संसाधन-समृद्ध देशों (चिली, पेरू, ऑस्ट्रेलिया, अर्जेंटीना) से कूटनीतिक साझेदारी।
- विज्ञान और नवाचार पर निवेश—नए वैकल्पिक मटेरियल विकसित करना।
- सरकार इलेक्ट्रिक मोटरों पर कस्टम ड्यूटी घटाने पर विचार करे.
- अब निर्यात रोककर घरेलू आपूर्ति पर ध्यान.
- वेदाता और हिंदुस्तान जिक: खनन में सक्रियता को तेज करें
- लंबी अवधि में विज्ञान, नवाचार और घरेलू उत्पादन ही भारत की दिशा तय करेंगे.

Higher Sales Realisation, Volume Growth Boost Cement Cos' Earnings in June Qtr

Press Trust of India

New Delhi Driven by increased government spending on key infrastructure projects, leading cement manufacturers reported a solid performance in the June quarter with a double-digit volume growth and higher sales realisation. Cement makers expect the trend of an overall improvement to continue in FY26.

Moreover, lower input costs, such as a decline in coal and petcoke prices, along with stable diesel costs, also helped in improvement on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation (Ebitda) terms, which faced a rough patch in FY25.

Leading cement maker UltraTech Cement reported a volume growth of 9.7% to 36.83 million tonnes (MT), helped by acquisitions of India Cements and the cement business of Kesoram Industries. Similarly, Adani Group firm Ambuja Cements also reported its highest-ever cement sales volume of



18.4 MT and its highest-ever quarterly revenue at ₹10,000 crore.

Sales volume of Birla Corp rose 9.36% to 4.79 MT, and Nirma Group firm Nuvo-co Vistas Corp reported a sales volume of 5.1 MMT in Q1. JK Lakshmi Cement's sales volume increased nearly 10%.

However, some companies, like Shree Cement, saw their volumes decline due to geopolitical tensions in the northern region. Dalmia Bharat's sales volume fell 5.8% to 7.4 MT, impacted by the discontinuation of tolling volumes

from Jaypee, while Ramco Cements reported a 7% decline due to early monsoon rains in Kerala.

In the earnings conference call, Ambuja Cement CEO Vinod Bahety said momentum is built on various factors, including strong value focus, robust volume growth, price improvement and deeper channel engagement. He expected the trend of price improvement and overall volume improvement to continue.

UltraTech CFO Atul Daga in the earnings call said: "The government capex programme has shown a marked improvement in the first two months of this quarter on the low base of April-May 2024. We are seeing rising state government spending. States like Bihar, Andhra, Gujarat, and Maharashtra are doing much better than the other states year-on-year".

The industry was also supported by the cement price increase.

The all-India average cement price increased by 7% year-on-year in June 2025 to ₹355 per 50 kg bag.

CIL pushes ahead with evacuation amid Q1FY26 slowdown in coal demand

COAL India Ltd (CIL) is pressing ahead with its production and evacuation infrastructure plans under its capital expenditure programme for the current fiscal, even as coal demand remained sluggish in the first quarter of FY 2025-26.

The company has earmarked the largest share of Rs 5,622 crore - about 35 per cent of the total proposed Rs 16,000 crore capex in FY26 - for coal transportation and evacuation infrastructure, including rail sidings, corridors, coal handling plants, silos and roads.

The investments are critical to ramp up mechanised coal evacuation capacity from the present 151 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) to 994 MTPA by FY 2028-29 under first mile connectivity, an official told PTI.

The state-run miner, which accounts for over 75 per cent of domestic coal output, reported

a decline in performance in the June quarter, with production falling 3 per cent to 183.32 million tonnes and offtake slipping 4 per cent to 191 million tonnes.

Already, there are signs of demand improvement after Coal India carried out various reforms for coal consumers, the official said. Despite this, CIL said it remains committed to its long-term roadmap of achieving 1 billion tonnes of production by FY 2028-29.

"The Indian growth story remains intact and we are positioning ourselves for future energy requirements," the official said.

In addition to evacuation infrastructure, the miner continues to invest in land acquisition, heavy earth moving equipment, washeries and renewable projects, aiming to ensure supply reliability while gradually diversifying its portfolio.

DGTR proposes three-year steel import safeguard duty

PROTECTIVE MEASURE. Recommends staggered levy of 12% in first year, 11.5% in second, and 11% in third with a review clause

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has recommended a three-year, staggered safeguard duty on imports of hot-rolled flat products of non-alloy and other alloy steel, after finding that the surge in inflows has caused "serious injury" and poses a "grave threat" to the domestic industry.

The proposed safeguard duty rates, as mentioned in the final findings report, will be levied at 12 per cent in the first year, 11.5 per cent in the second, and 11 per cent in the third, with a built-in mid-term review clause.

This follows a 12 per cent provisional safeguard duty imposed in April 2025, which remains in effect until November.

Among the affected countries are China, Vietnam, and Nepal, depending on the type of the imported product.

It has been suggested that hot rolled coils, sheets and plates imported from developing countries — excluding China and Vietnam — may be exempt, while cold rolled coils, sheets and colour-coated sheets imported from developing countries — excluding China and Nepal — may also qualify for exemption.

The recommendation cov-



IMPORT FLEXIBILITY. Exemptions suggested for certain developing country imports to balance trade BLOOMBERG

ers a broad product basket: hot-rolled coils, sheets and plates; plate mill plates; cold-rolled coils and sheets; metallic coated steel (galvanised, aluminium-zinc, zinc-magnesium); and colour-coated coils and sheets. Excluded are stainless steel, electrical steel, tin mill products, and API line pipes.

The DGTR's analysis found that India's imports of these flat products have surged in both absolute numbers and as a share of domestic consumption.

THE PRICE COLLAPSE

The spike has coincided with global overcapacity, especially from China, Korea and Japan, being redirected to India.

The findings reveal a dramatic erosion of global steel

prices. DGTR concluded that such inflows "significantly undercut" Indian producers, suppressing prices and wiping out profitability even as companies ramped up capacity.

INDUSTRY PUSHBACK

But downstream users, especially car-makers, strongly opposed the move.

Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai Motor India, and the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) made representations during hearings, warning that the duties will drive up costs and disrupt supply chains.

SIAM stressed that critical automotive-grade steels—high-strength cold-rolled and coated products — are either unavailable or insufficiently produced in India.

Govt may set up corpus for strategic deepwater exploration

SUDHEER PAL SINGH
New Delhi, 17 August

The government is planning to set up a corpus under the National Deepwater Exploration Mission to support strategic oil and gas exploration efforts in deep-water and ultra-deepwater areas.

The exact contours of the plan are yet to be finalised, including the size of the corpus and its sources.

The Prime Minister has emphasised upon the National Deepwater Exploration Mission where a corpus is identified

by the Government of India for a focused and concerted strategy-driven exploration in deep-water and ultra-deepwater areas and Oil India Ltd (OIL) remains committed to this clarion call," OIL Chairman and Managing Director Ranjit Rath said in an address to employees.

Under the ninth round of the Open Acreage Licensing Policy bidding, OIL has already secured 40,000 square kilometre area in deepwater and ultra-deep-

water exploration acreages in Mahanadi and KG Basins, and it is going to launch the seismic 3D and 2D data acquisition very soon, he said.

Rath added that PM Modi has stressed upon the National Critical Mineral Mission, under which a corpus has already been

identified to enhance exploration and production and also overseas assets acquisition with identified PSUs, in which OIL is also reflected. The company is

pursuing such diversified alternatives aligned with national priorities.

"We have recently diversified to critical minerals. We have bagged two blocks, including a graphite and a vanadium block in Arunachal Pradesh, and a potash block in Rajasthan. We are also looking at acquisition of overseas assets of critical minerals," he said.

Rath said the company is on track to meet production targets, but more needs to be done. OIL operates primarily in upper Assam where the market for natural gas is still constrained. He congratu-

lated the OIL team managing the Rajasthan asset for achieving the fastest monetisation of the Bakhri Tibba Discovered Small Field (DSF) block.

"We are supplying 30,000 standard cubic metres of natural gas towards power generation from that field. A similar call of duty is emerging in Tripura. I would call upon the Tripura asset team to ensure that by March 31, 2026, or before, we are able to monetise the Tulamara DSF where we have already done the first well and we intend to drill three more wells soon," he said.

THE EXACT CONTOURS OF THE PLAN ARE YET TO BE FINALISED, INCLUDING THE SIZE OF THE CORPUS AND ITS SOURCES

India bats for import tariffs for 3 years on some steel products

Reuters

India has recommended a three-year import tariff of 11%-12% on some steel products to curb shipments from top producer China.

The levy, if imposed, will start at 12%. It will be eased to 11.5% in the second year and to 11% in the third year, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) said in a notification dated August 16.

"The Authority concludes that there is a recent, sudden, sharp and significant increase in im-

ports," the notification said, adding that this could cause serious injury to the domestic steel sector.

The DGTR also said due to 50% tariffs on steel imports into the U.S., coupled with similar steps by other countries, a bulk of steel volumes are lying with manufacturers across the world.

"Therefore, safeguard duty must address, not only the serious injury suffered by the domestic industry... but also the threat of serious injury likely to arise in the future."

JSW Steel Plans 6 MT Plant with Korean Co Posco

Mumbai: JSW Steel is likely to set up its integrated steel plant in partnership with South Korean steel major POSCO in Odisha, the company said on Monday. "Given its natural resource base and logistical advantages, Odisha is among the key locations being considered," JSW Steel said.



The two companies have signed a non-binding Heads of Agreement to explore setting up a six million tonne integrated steel plant in India. This is more than the five million tonne integrated plant that the two companies were considering when they had signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in October last year. **Our Bureau**

Ambuja's Dahegaon coal mine promises jobs

Ryots fear impact on agriculture

VIJAY PINJARKAR
NAGPUR:

The proposed Dahegaon Gowari underground coal block in the Walani area of Nagpur district has set the stage for a fresh debate between development promises and farmers' apprehensions. The MPCB has called a public hearing to seek environmental clearance for the mine on September 10.

The coal block, part of Kamptee Coalfield, was awarded to Ambuja Cements Limited through competitive bidding under the Ministry of Coal's commercial mining process. This is the company's second underground coal project in the district after Gondkhairi, 20 km from Nagpur.

Spread across a lease area of 1,562 ha, the mine will utilize only 24 ha for operations and green belt development. Importantly, officials clarified that the underground mining method requires no rehabilitation or resettlement and, as per studies by CIMFR Dhanbad, will not cause surface subsidence.

According to Ambuja Cements, the project will generate 700 direct and 1,600 indirect

Quick facts

Production Capacity	1 MTPA
Net Geological Reserve	89.74 MT
Mineable Reserve	79.537 MT
Extractable Reserves	46.19 MT
Minimum Working Depth	100 Metres
Maximum Working Depth	590 Metres
Life of Mine	50 years
Lease Area	1562 ha



Surrounding Villages: Tondakhari, Borgaon Khurd, Belorie, Khairi, Gowari, Sindhi and Jhunki in Kalmeshwar, and Walni, Khandala and Pardi in Nagpur tehsil.

jobs, creating significant opportunities for local youth and ancillary industries. During the construction phase, indirect employment will also arise from the hiring of vehicles, tractors, and excavators. In addition, the mine is projected to boost revenue for the state through taxes and royalties, while CSR initiatives are expected to improve social infrastructure such as education, healthcare, sanitation, and rural facilities.

A company spokesperson said the project is designed on a zero-effluent discharge system. "Mine water will be recycled for underground operations, while excess water will be treated before being released into natural watercourses. This water can be used by local farmers for agriculture. There will be no blasting, hence no ground vibrations, and noise levels will remain unaffected,"

the official assured. Ambuja also committed to afforestation by planting 5,000 saplings in the first two monsoon seasons, developing green belts, adopting rainwater harvesting, and building solar streetlights in villages.

However, local voices remain cautious. Kishore Domke, sarpanch of Tondakhairi, said farmers in villages located within 1 to 3 km of the site fear the project may lower groundwater levels. "Even if the mine is underground, water availability for borewells and nearby dams will be affected. We have seen this in other mining areas. Farming here depends on both Kharif and Rabi crops, including oranges. A gram panchayat meeting will be held at the month's end to raise these issues with company officials. The job promise by the company is exaggerated," he stated.

NMDC Steel cuts year-end borrowings, short-term debt up

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

Even as State-run NMDC Steel Ltd remains on the government's divestment radar, in FY25, its first full year of operations, total borrowings were down 11.3 per cent at ₹5,897.64 crore from ₹6,651.77 crore in FY24 (nine-month period) as repayments and reduced long-term debt outweighed a rise in short-term working capital loans.

Long-term borrowings fell sharply to ₹3,289.31 crore (₹4,261.02 crore), driven by scheduled repayments on bank term loans and absence of major project loan additions.

DIVESTMENT PUSH

Short-term borrowings, however, increased to ₹2,608.33 crore (₹2,390.76 crore), reflecting higher working capital demand to fund operations during the ramp-up of the 3 mtpa



Nagarnar steel plant. The Directors' Report noted the disinvestment process is being undertaken by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM). "The company is extending full support in this regard," it mentioned.

In the annual report, the management further noted that the company continues to remain on the list of entities identified for divestment. "The timing and modalities of the proposed strategic sale are to be decided by the government, keeping in view market conditions and operational performance of the company," it said.

As per the preliminary Information Memorandum and Request for Expression of Interest invited, GOI had

decided to divest its 50.79 per cent shareholding.

"Additionally, GOI shall offer 10 per cent stake in NMDC Steel to NMDC Ltd after the strategic buyer has been identified through the bidding process," the company mentioned in its annual report.

BORROWINGS DETAILS

NMDC Steel reported a loss of ₹2,374 crore, even as it saw turnover jump substantially to ₹8,503 crore in FY25.

The long-term borrowings at present include secured term loans from banks: ₹2,487 crore; loans from financial institutions: ₹278 crore and non-convertible debentures (NCDs): ₹523.80 crore — transferred from NMDC Ltd at demerger and due for redemption in August 2025. The bulk of repayments are back-ended.

NMDC Steel's debt-to-equity ratio stood at 0.45 at the close of FY25, marginally higher than the previous year's 0.43.

जल्द होगी गोल्ड माइनिंग के लिए नीलामी, GSI की ताजा रिपोर्ट ओडिशा में 20 टन सोने का भंडार

■ भुवनेश्वर, नवभारत न्यूज नेटवर्क, खनिज संपदा से भरपूर ओडिशा की धरती अब सोने के भंडार के लिए भी चर्चा में है. जियोलाजिकल सर्वे ऑफ इंडिया (जीएसआई) की ताजा रिपोर्ट में राज्य के 6 जिलों की जमीन के नीचे करीब 10 से 20 टन सोना दबा हुआ पाया गया है. इस खोज के बाद सरकार ने खदानों की नीलामी की तैयारी शुरू कर दी है. जानकारी के मुताबिक सोने का यह देवगढ़ के अइस-रामपल्ली, सुंदरगढ़, नवरंगपुर, केंदुझर, अनुगुल और कोरापुट जिलों में होने की जानकारी जीएसआई की टीम के लम्बे सर्वे और परीक्षण के बाद मिली है. बताया जा रहा है कि इन क्षेत्रों में सोने की सांद्रता इतनी है कि यहाँ बड़े पैमाने पर खनन संभव हो सकेगा. खनन मंत्री विभूति



भूषण जेना के अनुसार, देवगढ़ के अइस-रामपल्ली, सुंदरगढ़, नवरंगपुर, केंदुझर, अनुगुल और कोरापुट जिलों में सोना पाया गया है. वहीं, मयूरभंज, मलकानगिरी, संबलपुर और बौद्ध में सोने की खोज

अभी भी जारी है. राज्य सरकार जल्द ही सोने की खदानों की नीलामी करने की तैयारी में है. इसके लिए प्रारंभिक प्रयास शुरू हो चुके हैं. देवगढ़ में स्थित खदान की नीलामी के लिए ओडिशा माइनिंग कॉर्पोरेशन (ओएमसी) और जीएसआई मिलकर काम कर रहे हैं. विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि अगर खनन सफल रहा तो राज्य की आय में भारी बढ़ोतरी होगी. स्थानीय युवाओं को रोजगार के नए अवसर मिलेंगे.

Bill allowing leaseholders to mine rare minerals passed

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha cleared the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill on Tuesday even as the Opposition members walked out.

The Bill, which the Lok Sabha had passed on August 12, empowers the Union government to promote development of market, including trading of minerals and its forms through mineral exchanges. It empowers mining leaseholders to add rare minerals such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel to their existing operations without paying additional royalty. The Bill amends the original Act of 1957.

Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy said the Narendra Modi go-

vernment brought "revolutionary reforms" in the mining sector by introducing transparency and accountability that boosted production of coal and minerals.

Huge demand

Replying to the debate, Mr. Reddy said the Centre has identified 24 critical and strategic minerals and launched the National Critical Mineral Mission with an outlay of ₹34,000 crore to increase domestic production, including from offshore areas. "India is a big market. From cell-phones to airplanes, laptops to space technology, and even in the agriculture sector, critical minerals are required. There is a huge demand. Our challenge is to increase production," Mr. Reddy said.

The National Mineral

Exploration Trust will now be known as the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust, he said. The Minister said that during the UPA regime, the sector was riddled with corruption and this Bill will strengthen the industry to grow further.

Earlier, soon after the House met at 2 p.m., Vice-Chairman Ghanashyam Tiwari invited Mr. Reddy to move the Bill. But Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge demanded a discussion on the special intensive revision of voters' lists in Bihar. Mr. Tiwari said the matter had nothing to do with the Bill following which the Opposition staged a walkout.

Left leader John Brittas said the Bill had "far-reaching" implications and it should be sent to a select committee.

SCCL first coal PSU to take up exploration of gold, copper

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has stepped into another area of business – venturing into the field of critical mineral exploration by securing a license for gold and copper blocks' survey in Devadurga area of Karnataka through the auction conducted by the Union Ministry of Mines and becoming the first coal company to do so.

Revealing this on Tuesday, Chairman and Managing Director of SCCL N. Balram stated that Singareni has emerged as the L-1 bidder by quoting 37.75% royalty in the online auction. He described this as a historic beginning for the coal mining company in the critical minerals exploration.

Singareni becomes first coal PSU to take up exploration of gold, copper in country

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

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He explained that exploration activities in the allot-



N. Balram

ted area would be completed within the next five years.

‘Kudos to SCCL’

Meanwhile, CM A. Revanth Reddy and Deputy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka congratulated SCCL on winning the exploration license for gold and copper, for the first time, through auction. They expressed confidence that Singareni would emerge as a leading company in the country in critical minerals exploration.

‘Agreements with other nations done’

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

India is facing a supply chain bottleneck given China’s imposition of export restrictions on rare earth magnets which has affected industries in India, including the manufacture of electric vehicles.

The Union government was responding to a question raised by Hyderabad parliamentarian Asaduddin Owaisi in the Lok Sabha on the recent imposition of export restrictions on key rare earth magnets by China.

Responding to the question, Minister of State

for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada pointed out that in an effort to take stock of the situation and find a solution, the government has been engaging with different stakeholders.

The Ministry has also entered into bilateral agreements with countries with rich mineral resources such as Australia, Argentina, Malawi, Mozambique, Peru and Argentina.

A joint venture called Khanij Bidesh India Limited has been set up so as to identify and acquire mineral assets overseas that ‘hold critical and strategic significance’.

What's so rare about rare earth magnets

To Be Self-Reliant In Production Over 3-5 Years, India Needs To Set Up A Value Chain

Pankaj Doval
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New Delhi: China has decided to lift the curbs on export of rare earth magnets to India, in a relief to industries, such as automobiles (especially electric vehicles manufacturing), renewable energy (wind turbines), consumer electronics, defence and aerospace, and healthcare.

What's the meaning of rare earth magnets?

Rare earth magnets are the strongest type of permanent magnets commercially available. Their high magnetic strength and resistance to demagnetisation make them indispensable in a range of applications, especially where weight and space are constraints. According to experts, these magnets are made primarily from rare earth elements like neodymium, praseodymium, and dysprosium — materials that allow for powerful magnetic properties essential in miniaturised and energy-efficient devices. They are typically made from alloys that contain rare earth elements.

The most commonly used rare earth magnet is the neodymium-iron-boron (NdFeB) magnet.

What's the China angle to rare earth magnets?

China is estimated to account for about 70% of global rare earth metals mining



Pic for representation

TOI Explains

and holds nearly 90% of the world's rare earth magnet production. Widespread usage of these rare earth magnets has started over the past six-to-eight years, owing to factors, such as their compact size, weight, high effectiveness and high thermal resistance in comparison to normal ferrite/traditional magnets.

One of the biggest reasons that China dominates the global rare earth magnet industry is its control over the entire supply chain, including:

- Mining of rare earth ores
- Separation and refining of rare earth elements (a complex and environmentally sensitive process)
- Alloy production and magnet manufacturing

In the Indian auto industry, about 870 tonnes of rare earth magnets are required to be imported in 2025-26 out of the country's estimated overall requirement of 3,600

tonnes.

Auto industry has been hit the most by curbs imposed by China

Component suppliers in India have been importing these magnets as raw materials to manufacture components/sub-assemblies domestically for automotive applications. Such rare earth magnets are used across applications both for Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles and Electric Vehicles (EVs) for components like speedometer, electric motors, e-axle, electric water pump, automatic transmission kits, speakers, sensors and ignition coils in engines. As China placed restrictions and mandated a highly structured process for importing them (which no company could clear), most of the companies raised the red flag — saying that production will need to be stopped and launches will be delayed. The relaxation by China will bring massive relief to the industry, especially with high-demand festive season around.

India's plans to achieve self-sustainability

Till the time local mining, ore and magnets production arrangements are done, companies are requesting govt to facilitate import from non-China-based sources, such as from Vietnam, Brazil, and Russia.

Parlt passes Mines Amendment Bill 2025

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (PTI)

PARLIAMENT on Tuesday passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025, aimed at further liberalising and modernising India's mineral sector with a particular focus on critical and strategic minerals essential for the country's green energy transition.

The legislation, which amends the original Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and was earlier passed by the Lok Sabha on August 12, received approval from the Rajya Sabha through a voice vote.



Around 19 members participated in the debate. However, Opposition MPs staged a walk-out from the House.

Responding to the debate, Union Minister of Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy highlighted the Modi Government's transformative initiatives in the coal and

mining sector over the past decade.

"The current Government has brought revolutionary reforms, introducing transparency and accountability that has significantly boosted production of coal and minerals," Reddy said.

The minister emphasised the growing importance of critical minerals, noting that the Government has identified 24 critical and strategic minerals and launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) with an outlay of Rs 34,000 crore to increase domestic production, including from offshore areas.

LS passes bill to set up IIM in Guwahati

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (PTI)

THE Lok Sabha on Tuesday passed a bill to set up an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Guwahati with the Union Government providing capital support of Rs 550 crore.

The Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025 -- which was passed amid din in the Lower House -- will help set up the second IIM in the Northeast after Shillong.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan piloted the Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025, as the Opposition continued with its protest over the issue of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

After the passage of the bill through a voice vote, Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned for the day.

UltraTech to Achieve 200 MT Capacity in 2025, a Year Early

Cement giant aims to be largest global producer outside of China: Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla

Our Bureau

Mumbai: UltraTech Cement is set to cross 200 million tonnes of production capacity in the current year itself, a year ahead of its original target of fiscal 2027, chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla said on Tuesday.

The country's largest producer of the building material is also targeting becoming the largest producer of cement in the world outside of China, Birla said at the company's annual general meeting. The company is currently the third-largest in the world outside of China.

UltraTech currently has a production capacity of 192.28 million tonne for grey cement and 2.7 million tonne for white cement. Of this, it added 42.6 million tonne of capacity in fiscal 2025 alone, with 16.3 million tonne added through organic expansion and 26.3 million tonne added through strategic acquisitions, including that of India Cements and Kesoram Industries.

"We do not merely produce cement," Birla said in his address to shareholders. "We enable the highways that connect cities and communities, the homes that nurture families, the bridges that accelerate commerce, and the infrastructure that powers growth," he said.

Birla also said that the company's vision is closely aligned with India's aspirations for 2047 - which will be the centenary of the nation's independence. "Our efforts converge towards a singular and purposeful goal, to build a strong, self-reliant, prosperous, and globally competitive India," he said.



We do not merely produce cement, we enable highways that connect cities and communities, the homes that nurture families, bridges that accelerate commerce, and the infrastructure that powers growth

KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA
Chairman, Aditya Birla Group

In fiscal 2025, UltraTech's net revenue was ₹75,955 crore (\$8.9 billion), while earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation was ₹13,302 crore (\$1.6 billion).

Its sales volumes grew more than 14% on year to 135.83 million tonnes.

"As we look ahead to FY26 and beyond, our Company remains committed to being 'A Force for Good', a company driven by purpose, powered by performance, and rooted in sustainability," Birla said.

India is currently the second-largest producer of cement in the world, with an installed capacity of around 600 million tonne.

Parlt passes Mines and Minerals Amendment Bill

NEW DELHI

Parliament on Tuesday passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025 that aims to further liberalise, modernise and make India's mineral sector more dynamic, especially with a focus on critical and strategic minerals.

The bill, which seeks to amend the original Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, was passed in Lok Sabha on August 12.

Rajya Sabha passed it with a voice vote. About 19 members participated in the debate and shared some constructive suggestions. In critical minerals, the country is dependent on imports due

■ Rajya Sabha passed it with a voice vote. About 19 members participated in the debate and shared some constructive suggestions.

■ Replying to the debate on the bill, Union Minister of Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy said the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government has taken revolutionary reforms in the coal and mine sector in the last ten years.

to less reserves in India. With demand for critical minerals expected to rise further, the government is focusing on enhancing domestic production and exploring overseas market to secure the supplies, he added.

खींचतान में लटकीं लौह खदानें

केंद्र- राज्य के झगड़े में लगे ताले

■ चाईबासा, एजेंसियां. झारखंड का पश्चिमी सिंहभूम जिला लौह अयस्क (आयरन ओर) का भंडारघर माना जाता है. यहां की खदानों से देश की इस्पात उद्योग की बढ़ी जरूरत पूरी होती रही है लेकिन मार्च 2020 से अधिकांश खदानों पर ताले लटक के हैं. पट्टों की अवधि समाप्त होने के बाद राज्य सरकार ने इन्हें झारखंड स्टेट मिनरल डेवलपमेंट कॉर्पोरेशन (जेएसएमडीसी) को देने का निर्णय लिया, मगर केंद्र ने आरक्षण का विरोध कर नीलामी का मार्ग सुझाया. परिणामस्वरूप अब तक खनन कार्य शुरू नहीं हो पाया है. 18 अगस्त 2025 से टाटा स्टील की गोवामुंडी के घाटकुरी में स्थित विजया टू आयरन ओर माईंस में भी ताला लटक गया है.

खदान मालिक एवं मजदूर असमंजस में : इस कारण जिले की अर्थव्यवस्था को भारी नुकसान उठाना पड़ रहा है. रोजगार और आय के स्रोत पर संकट गहरता जा

उत्पादन में आ रही लगातार गिरावट

खदान उद्योग के साथ जुड़े छोटे व बड़े व्यवसाय भी प्रभावित हो रहे हैं, जो स्थानीय बाजार को नुकसान पहुंचा रहे हैं. स्थानीय व्यापारी और मजदूर संघ सरकार से त्वरित कार्रवाई की मांग कर रहे हैं. उनका कहना है कि खदानों की बंदी से न केवल उनकी आजीविका प्रभावित हो रही है बल्कि जिले की समग्र विकास प्रक्रिया भी ठप पड़ गई है. वे प्रशासन से अपेक्षा रखते हैं कि फाइलों की जांच-पड़ताल में तेजी लाकर खदान संचालन पुनः शुरू कराया जाए. झारखंड के लौह अयस्क का 25.7% भंडार पश्चिमी सिंहभूम में है लेकिन खदानों के बंद होने से उत्पादन में लगातार गिरावट दर्ज की जा रही है.

रहा है, विभिन्न विभागों के बीच समन्वय की कमी, मंजूरी प्रक्रिया में देरी और कागजी फाइलों की लंबित स्थिति ने खदानों के संचालन में बाधा पैदा कर दी है. कई खदान मालिक एवं मजदूर असमंजस की स्थिति में हैं और उनकी आजीविका संकट में पड़ चुकी है. जानकारी के अनुसार, खदान संचालन के लिए आवश्यक पर्यावरणीय मंजूरी, खनन अनुज्ञप्ति तथा अन्य आवश्यक दस्तावेजों की जांच-पड़ताल लंबित है. इन फाइलों में अनावश्यक देरी के कारण खदानों पर



प्रतिबंध लग गया है. कई खदानें प्रशासनिक कारणों से बंद हो चुकी हैं. इससे हजारों मजदूरों की नौकरी खतरे में आ गई है. ओडिशा कमा रहा 50,000 करोड़ प्रतिवर्ष राजस्व : पश्चिमी सिंहभूम झारखंड का एक मात्र आयरन ओर रिजर्व वाला जिला है. वर्ष 2019-20 में ओडिशा और झारखंड का खनन राजस्व लगभग बराबर था परंतु वर्ष 2020-21 में ओडिशा में आयरन ओर माईंस का आविशन करके रेवेन्यू में 50,000 करोड़ प्रति वर्ष तक पहुंच गया है.

Stay out of aluminium

Gurumurthy K

bl. Research Bureau

The price of aluminium has recovered well in the past week. The aluminium futures contract traded on the MCX fell to a low of ₹248.15 per kg last week and has risen back well from there. It is currently trading at ₹253.50 per kg.



COMMODITY CALL.

Broadly, the contract has been oscillating in a sideways range for some time now. The trading range has been ₹246-₹256 since mid-June. Within this range, the contract is now moving up from near the lower end of the range. That leaves the chances high for the contract to test ₹256, the upper end of the range, in the near term.

Failure to breach ₹256 can take the contract down again. In that case, the sideways range will continue to remain intact.

A breakout on either side of ₹246-256 will only determine the next leg of the

move. A break below ₹246 can take the contract down to ₹244-243 initially. A further break below ₹243 will be very bearish. It will increase the danger of revisiting ₹230 levels on the downside.

On the other hand, if aluminium manages to breach ₹256, it can rise to ₹260-261. A decisive break above ₹261 will boost the bullish momentum. It will then have the potential to take the contract up to ₹275-277 over the medium term.

TRADE STRATEGY

Since the contract is stuck inside a range for a long time, we suggest traders to stay out of the market. Wait for the range breakout and take up trades accordingly.

Hindustan Zinc eyes opportunities in rare earth elements

Vedanta group firm Hindustan Zinc Limited is actively exploring opportunities in rare earth elements and seeking global partners for AI and drone-based exploration of critical minerals, Chairperson Priya Agarwal Hebbbar on Monday said. Rare earth elements are essential to modern technology. From smartphones and electric vehicles to wind turbines, defence systems, and advanced electronics, these minerals are the backbone of both civilian and military-industrial capabilities. "We have already floated international tenders for AI- and drone-led exploration, tapping advanced expertise from partners in Australia, South Africa, Chile, and even China," she explained. PTI

Demand to reinforce steel MSMEs

The Indian steel industry's demand is expected to grow 8.5-9.5 per cent in 2025-26 (FY26), exceeding the decadal compound annual growth rate of 7 per cent. While healthy demand from the infrastructure and construction sectors and reduced steel imports will fortify crude steel production, expected to grow 10-12 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y), the industry, specifically the mid and small steel manufacturers, may need to brace for rising costs.

A sizeable share of the infrastructure-related demand will emanate from the government's budgetary capex push through the core ministries — railways, roads, rural and urban development, power, renewable energy and civil aviation. This spending has intensified 11.6 per cent from the revised estimate of FY25 even as the roads, railways, and urban housing have increased their collective capex 9.8 per cent Y-o-Y in Q1FY26.

Given the infrastructure and construction push, demand for long steel is expected to grow 7-9 per cent in FY26. The production of long steel increased 8.7 per cent Y-o-Y in Q1FY26, with mid and small steel mills accounting for 72.4 per cent of this production.

As of FY25, secondary steel plants, including micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), accounted for about 47 per cent of India's crude steel capacity of 200.3 million tonnes, according to the Ministry of Steel's joint plant committee. However, it is noticed that several small mills have either expanded capacity or integrated upstream or downstream capacities, thus moving out of the MSME bucket.

Share of MSMEs in steel capacity



Note: Data for FY25
Source: JPC, Crisil Intelligence

The MSMEs primarily produce long steel products — reinforcing bars and wire rods — using induction-based furnaces that rely on raw materials such as steel scrap, sponge iron or billets. Hence, the use of imported low-ash thermal coal is a key aspect of their cost dynamics. Thermal coal prices are expected to remain supportive, while Indian iron ore prices will rise marginally this fiscal, driven by the steel market. However, the profitability of steel MSMEs is likely to be constrained by rising raw material costs, particularly of iron ore, and higher power tariffs from hikes by West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Haryana, and some state distribution companies.

Concurrently, the mandatory Bureau of Indian Standards certification for imported raw materials is likely to increase compliance costs and complexity for smaller players, giving larger domestic manufacturers an advantage. The recent safeguard duty — such as the 12 per cent duty on flat steel imports — was aimed at protecting domestic producers. While helpful to integrated firms, it could raise raw material costs, especially for MSMEs relying on spot markets.



Ring of steel

Can the safeguard duty on steel be more than a safety net, and is it enough when other countries are also stepping up to protect their interests?

ISHITA AVAN DUTT
Kolkata, 26 August

A surge in cheap imports, coupled with the threat of trade diversion triggered by a global trade war reignited by US President Donald Trump, has prompted the need to safeguard India's steel interests. Given that steel is the backbone of any economy, the stakes are high.

So on March 18, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), under the commerce and industry ministry, recommended a provisional 12 per cent

DGTR recommendation

Period and rate of duty



Threshold price for safeguard duty Import price on CIF basis (\$/mt)*

675: Hot rolled coils, sheets and plates

695: Hot rolled plate, mill plates

824: Cold rolled coils and sheets

861: Metallic coated steel coils and sheets, whether or not profiled, including galvalume, coated with zinc, or aluminium-zinc or zinc-aluminium-magnesium

964: Colour coated coils and sheets, whether or not profiled

*Prices at or above the price on a CIF basis will not be subjected to safeguard duty

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for a period of 200 days.
 This came days after the Trump administration had revoked the relaxations on steel imports under Section 232 and reinstated the full 25 per cent duty, effective March 12, which it doubled to 50 per cent starting June 4. The move reflected a rise in steel protectionism that has been building in recent years across economies.

Five months on, on August 16, when the DGTR issued its final recommendation of a safeguard duty starting at 12 per cent on certain non-alloy and alloy flat steel products for three years, the world looked dramatically altered, with geopolitics and trade alignments in a state of flux.

The Centre's trade remedies watchdog witnessed a sudden, sharp increase in imports, and the serious injury caused by it to the domestic industry. It proposed a phased duty: 12 per cent in the first year, 11.5 per cent in the second, and 11 per cent in the third. The duty would not be imposed if the products landed in India over a threshold price on a costs, insurance, and freight (CIF) basis. (CIF is an international shipping agreement that represents the seller's responsibility to cover the costs, insurance, and freight while the cargo is in transit.)

The petition for a safeguard duty was filed by the Indian Steel Association on behalf of its members — ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India), JSW Steel, Jindal Steel & Power, and Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL).

DGTR, while making the recommendation, noted that the rush of trade remedy and other protective measures against steel products by various countries posed a threat of serious harm to the domestic industry.

On the link between trade remedy measures and trade diversion, it found that imports of certain products into the US had declined by 2.183 million metric tonne (mmt) in 2023 compared to 2021, while imports into India had recorded a significant increase during the corresponding period. Among the major contributors were Japan, China, Korea, Vietnam.

In this backdrop, does the safeguard duty — which still requires the finance ministry's approval — serve merely as a safety net or could it act as a springboard for the billions of dollars worth of capacity addition by the domestic steel industry? That remains an open question. There is also the question of whether the industry believes that the duty is enough to safeguard domestic interests at a time when other nations, too, are stepping up to protect theirs.

In public interest
 As the DGTR mentioned in its final findings, a vibrant steel industry has historically been the foundation of a nation's rapid industrial development. From infrastructure and construction to automotive, defence, and manufacturing, there is a little, or a lot of, steel in everything.

The National Steel Policy, announced in 2017, had set an ambitious target of 300 million tonne (mt) of steel-making capacity by 2030 — a jump of more than 51 per cent over the FY25 level

Recent trade actions

Actions inconsistent with WTO law

Trade action	Imposing Country	Target Country	Product	Duty	Effective date
Section-232	US	All countries	All steel products	Increased to 50%	Jun '25
Section-301	US	China	Various products including steel	25%	Sep '24
Additional import tariffs	Canada	China	Steel and aluminium, among others	25%	Oct '24
Surtax	Canada	All non-FTA countries	Steel mill products	50% surtax above quota	Jul '25
Tariff increase	Mexico	—	Steel products	25% to 50%	Aug '23

Safeguard measures

Trade action	Imposing country	Target country	Product	Duty	Effective date
TRQ-Safeguard	Europe	All countries	Various steel products	25% TRQ up to July 2026	July '18 extended on June 24, '24
Safeguard	Brazil	All countries	Steel products	25% above quota	May '25
Safeguard	Türkiye	All countries	Wire rod	\$175/metric tonne	Jun '24

Antidumping measures

Imposing country	Product	Target country	Duty	Effective date
Türkiye	Hot rolled coil	China	15.42%-43.31%	Oct '24
		Japan	9%	
		India	6.1%-9%	
		Russia	6.1%-9%	
Vietnam	Hot rolled coil	China	23.1%-27.8%	Mar '25
Europe	Hot rolled coil and sheets	Egypt	12.80%	Provisional findings issued on April 4, '25
		Japan	6.9%-32%	
		Vietnam	12.10%	
		India	No duty	
Brazil	Cold rolled coils	China	Provisional findings establish dumping, but no duty imposed yet	Provisional findings issued on March 12, '25
Brazil	Hot rolled coils	China and Russia	Under investigation	-
Brazil	Colour coated	China	Provisional findings establish dumping, but no duty	Mar '25
Korea RP	Hot rolled coils	China and Japan	28.16%-33.75%	Jul '25
		China	38%	Feb '25

Source: DGTR report

of 198.5 mt.

Leading the investment table are private sector steel companies — JSW Steel, Tata Steel, Jindal Steel, AM/NS India — and the public sector SAIL.

The DGTR mentioned that when imports increase significantly, causing, or threatening to cause serious injury to domestic steel producers, it is in public interest to put in place trade remedy measures in accordance with the law to protect domestic producers.

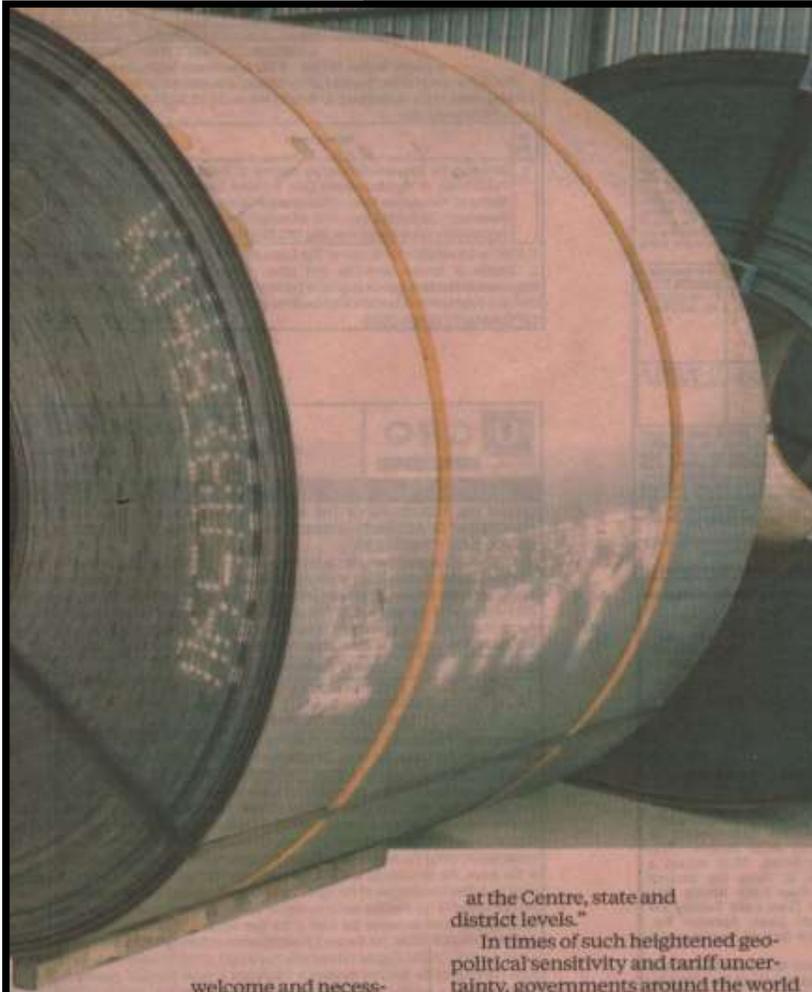
The stated policy objectives cannot be achieved if increased imports are not arrested, it believed.

Necessary versus sufficient

The domestic industry has welcomed the safeguard duty, but a broader policy support might be required to keep the capex momentum going.

Jayant Acharya, joint managing director and chief executive officer, JSW Steel, said the final safeguard was

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welcome and necessary, given the external challenges and uncertainties.

"India's ability to export is getting restricted," he said. "As we add capacities, we also have to be mindful of the margins. Those have to improve for us to be able to spend on growth projects."

He added that India is a domestic-led economy. So, consumption growth is a key driver. He was of the view that the goods and services tax (GST) reform would be a big booster — "not only in terms of driving consumption, but also by creating a positive sentiment that reforms are being made to improve the overall standard of living."

On investment in capacity expansion, T V Narendran, MD and CEO, Tata Steel, said the safeguard duty gave comfort in the medium term. "We, however, need to be watchful of the trade actions being taken by other countries and the consequences those will have, directly or indirectly, on us," he added. "We need to continue to work on the cost of doing business and the ease of doing business

at the Centre, state and district levels."

In times of such heightened geopolitical sensitivity and tariff uncertainty, governments around the world are working to safeguard their respective country's interests, added Ranjan Dhar, director and vice president — sales & marketing, AM/NS India. "The Indian government, too, has taken strong steps, including imposing safeguard duty on steel imports."

However, the industry expected more measures for parity with duties imposed by other countries to support investment as envisioned by the steel policy, he said.

The industry's ask was a 25 per cent safeguard duty.

Impact on prices

Meanwhile, steel prices have been in a flux.

Prices hit a low in December 2024, and then started moving up in the runup to the provisional safeguard duty of 12 per cent on imported steel.

However, the early onset of monsoon, a deceleration in manufacturing activity, a decline in global steel prices, and tariff uncertainties turned

end-consumers cautious, said Sehul Bhatt, director, Crisil Intelligence, a research consultancy.

Between mid-May and July-end, prices plunged by ₹2,000–2,500 per tonne. In August, however, mills increased listed prices. It is, however, unclear whether this is a flash in the pan or if prices have actually rebounded.

Bhatt said the market hasn't yet absorbed the full extent of the increase.

Data from BigMint shows that for August 2025, the average hot rolled coil (HRC) prices ex-Mumbai increased by about ₹550 per tonne compared to July 2025 — touching ₹49,978.57 versus ₹49,422.22 per tonne. But year-on-year, prices had fallen. The average for August 2024 was ₹50,544.44 per tonne and for August 2023, ₹56,333.33 per tonne.

There is a silver lining in China, though. The single largest producer and consumer of steel, China continues to set the course for the global market. By the end of July, prices of hot rolled coil — a benchmark for flat steel — in China were up \$30-\$35 per tonne.

The sharp rebound in Chinese HRC prices has been driven by higher raw material costs (iron ore and coking coal) and improved market sentiment, pointed out Icria Vice-President Sumit Jhunjhunwala.

He added that despite safeguard duties, Chinese steel had been available at levels below domestic prices, exerting downward pressure on domestic realisations.

"At present, domestic HRC prices trade at a discount to Chinese offers, but remain at a premium to Japanese and Korean imports, owing to the absence of Customs duty and social welfare surcharge on the latter," Jhunjhunwala explained. "As a result, competitive imports from Japan and South Korea are likely to cap any material upside in domestic prices in the near term."

For now, the industry's bet is on a stronger second half and a reforms push from the government. Those might help lift demand while prices look to find a firm footing.

NALCO eyes new smelter tech partner, sticks to 2030 expansion timeline

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

State-owned National Aluminium Company (NALCO) has reset its expansion strategy after talks with Rio Tinto for smelter tech partnership failed to go through.

The company is planning to on-board a second partner, with DPR preparation underway for a brownfield smelter.

Even its 1 mtpa alumina refinery, which has gone through time and cost overrun, is expected to be commissioned in Q1FY27 (May-June 2026).

TECH PARTNER

A company official said, in case of DPR preparation (for the smelter), the technology suppliers' input is required. So by the time, NALCO has finalised the DPR, a techno-



FUTURE PROSPECTS. Land acquisition formalities are at final stages, with expected completion in the next 4 to 6 months

logy partner will be on-boarded. "We have almost finalised things... and very soon we will be on-boarding the tech supplier," the person in the know said.

NALCO CMD, Brijendra Pratap Singh, during a previous investor call confirmed that talks with Rio Tinto (RTAL Technology) had fallen through, and the state-run aluminium maker was

looking for other options.

But, despite the setback, NALCO is determined to remain on track with its refinery and smelter expansion plans, sticking to the timeline of FY27 and FY30 respectively.

PRODUCTION TO START

"For fifth stream refinery expansion.... we will try to start the production by June. That

is the commitment we have given earlier and we stand by it. Progress in the site is good," Singh said during a recent investor call.

ADDITIONAL DELAYS

Consultancy firm Systematix in a recent report said, the refinery expansion project faces additional delays; "after almost 53 months of overrun and a cost (overrun) of about 38 per cent... alumina refinery is now expected to be commissioned in June 2026, versus its original commissioning date of April 2021," the report said.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the planned 0.5 mt brownfield aluminium smelter is expected to be finalised in the coming 7-8 months.

Land acquisition formalities are at final stages, with expected completion in the next 4 to 6 months.

Amid challenges, aluminium extrusion sector seeks govt support

V Sajeew Kumar
Kochi

Amid US tariffs and other challenges, the aluminium extrusion sector has sought stronger policy support from the government to remain globally competitive and viable.

Jitendra Chopra, President of the Aluminium Extrusion Manufacturers Association of India (ALEMAI), said domestic industries are struggling under the pressure of FTA concessions and cheap imports from China and Asean countries. This, coupled with US tariff issues, has further worsened the situation.

Chopra, who was in Kochi as part of a road show for the upcoming ALUMEX India 2025 in New Delhi, told *businessline* that the domestic industry has asked the government to review the FTA to



ROLLING ON WITH DIFFICULTY. Delays in obtaining environmental clearances, high production costs, and high transportation costs are eroding competitiveness of the industry

counter imports from Asean countries at zero per cent duty to India, as China is rerouting its products to India through these countries at cheaper prices.

“India should rethink its own FTA agreements and import structure, because if

the US can protect its industry through tariffs, why should we not protect ours?” he asked.

DOMESTIC MARKET

Regarding US tariffs, Chopra said there is a concern for the time being. “We need ex-

ports for foreign currency inflows. At the same time, we have the advantage of a huge domestic market. Our per capita consumption of aluminium is approximately 3-4 kg, compared to 20-25 kg in China, 15-20 kg in the US, and a world average of 15 kg.

The domestic industries are struggling under the pressure of FTA concessions and cheap imports from China and Asean countries

So, we can step up our domestic production and increase consumption within India. This way, we can counter the impact of the US tariffs, at least temporarily,” he said. India, according to him, is the world’s third-largest aluminium producer with its own bauxite reserves, and raw material prices are highly volatile.

However, delays in obtaining environmental clearances, high production costs and high transportation costs are eroding competitiveness and discouraging ca-

capacity expansion. The total installed aluminium extrusion capacity in India is 3 million tonnes per annum, but the utilisation is only around 1.2 million tonnes, with the remaining 1.8 million tonnes being imported, he said.

DEMAND RISING

The demand for aluminium extrusions is growing due to infrastructure development, urbanisation and industrialisation.

The construction of new airports, railways, highways, smart cities, and other infrastructure projects has led to a greater use of aluminium due to its advantages such as being lightweight, durable and corrosion-resistant.

He stated that the the upcoming ALUMEX India 2025 in September intends to showcase global opportunities for the aluminium extrusion sector.

Gem, jewellery exporters eyeing alternative markets

Suresh P Iyengar
Aishwarya Kumar
Mumbai / Bengaluru

The gem and jewellery industry plans to tap alternative markets in West Asia, the UK and Europe more aggressively, with the US imposing unsustainable 50 per cent duty on imports from India. The industry, which has already been reeling under global economic slowdown and geopolitical ten-

sions, has sought the government support to conduct additional exhibitions in select countries to display their products and attract fresh orders, said industry sources.

EYEING SUBSIDIARIES

A few exporters are planning to tap the US market through their subsidiaries in other countries, though it will not be cost-effective as the margins in this industry are very thin, he said. However, these

measures will have little impact, given the fact that the US is the second-largest market for Indian gem and jewellery exporters.

Namita Kothari, founder at Akoirah by Augmont, said relocating manufacturing to the UAE or Mexico to bypass the higher US duties presents both opportunities and challenges. The UAE, with its 10 per cent duty, offers a potential escape route, allowing manufacturers to continue serving the US

market via re-exports. However, such a shift would come with substantial operational and compliance challenges, including higher production and logistics costs, regulatory hurdles, and strain on supply chains, he said.

Additionally, it could require significant upfront investment in new facilities and compliance systems. While it offers a viable alternative, such a transition is far from straightforward and requires careful considera-

tion of the long-term costs and benefits, he added. Last fiscal, the industry exported \$10 billion worth of goods to the US, and accounted for nearly one-third of India’s total gems and jewellery exports of \$30 billion.

GJEPC PLEA

The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) has appealed for policy reforms and extensive support to aid the industry in these challenging times.

Buy zinc if price dips to ₹264

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Zinc futures, currently trading at ₹267/kg, lack direction. Over the past few weeks, the price has largely been moving within the broader sideways range of ₹262-₹272.

COMMODITY CALL

While the contract rebounded from ₹263 last week, it has not surpassed the barrier at ₹272. If the bulls can lift zinc futures above ₹272, we can witness another leg of uptrend. The nearest resistance above ₹272 is the price band of ₹278-280.

On the other hand, in case zinc futures drop and slip below ₹263, where a rising trendline coincides, there is a support immediately at ₹260.

But if ₹260 is breached,



the contract could extend the decline to ₹254 and ₹250, notable support levels.

Overall, as it stands, there is no clear trend. Given the current chart set-up, zinc futures might see an uptick towards the resistance at ₹272 in the coming days.

But fresh long positions at the current level do not provide a good risk-reward ratio. So, participants can buy if the price moderates.

TRADE STRATEGY

Buy zinc futures if the price slips to ₹264. Target and stop-loss can be at ₹272 and ₹260 respectively.

Global steel production down 1.3% in July

Sneha Joseph
Chennai

Global crude steel production decreased 1.3 per cent to 150.1 million tonnes (mt) in July 2025 against 152.8 mt in the corresponding period a year ago.

According to the World Steel Association, India produced 14 mt of steel, up 14 per cent. The top producer, China, produced 79.7 mt of steel in July, an increase of 4 per cent. The US production also saw an increase of 4.8 per cent at 7.1 mt.

JAPAN, RUSSIA DOWN

Meanwhile, Japan's steel output nosedived 2.5 per cent to 6.9 mt. Russia followed this trend with 5.7 mt, down 2.4 per cent. South Korea's production was 5.3 mt, down 4.7 per cent, and Türkiye produced 3.2 mt of steel, up 4.2 per cent. Ger-

many and Brazil saw their output go north by 13.7 per cent and 5.5 per cent, respectively, at 2.7 mt and 2.9 mt. Iran's production went up 29.7 per cent at 2.2 mt.

Region-wise, Africa saw a 2 per cent drop in steel production in July. Asia and Oceania's output also plunged 1.9 per cent to 110.4 mt. The EU (27) produced 10.2 mt, down 7 per cent and Europe (Other)'s production increased by 2.6 per cent at 3.6 mt. The Middle East produced 4.4 mt of steel, up 27.7 per cent and North America's output saw an increase of 5.8 per cent at 9.4 mt.

Russia and other CIS nations had a 5.1 per cent dip in their production at 6.7 mt. South America saw a drop of 4.5 per cent in steel production at 3.6 mt. In the period between January and July 2025, global steel production saw a dip of 1.9 per cent y-o-y to 1,086.2 mt.

Cement prices surge as fuel, gypsum costs escalate

NEW DELHI, Aug 27 (PTI)

CEMENT prices have seen a sharp escalation in the current fiscal, following upward pressure from input fuel costs, particularly petroleum coke (petcoke), industry sources said. The all-India average cement price reached Rs 360 per 50-kg bag in May 2025, about 8 per cent higher year-on-year after a steep decline the previous year. While regional differences persist - with eastern India seeing the sharpest increases (Rs 20 a bag in West Bengal) and western markets rising by a modest Rs 3 - the trend across the country is clearly upward.

May is the latest all-India data available. Sources said demand remains robust growing 9 per cent in May to 39.6 tonnes, underpinned by housing and government-led infrastructure. Analysts forecast 6-7 per cent growth in FY2026 volumes to 480-485 tonnes. The strongest upward pressure is coming from fuel costs, particularly petroleum coke (petcoke), which constitutes over 50 per cent of the cement industry's fuel mix. In the spot market, international petcoke prices surged 17 per cent. Typically, India's cement industry imports 12-14 million tonnes of petcoke annually from the USA (60 per cent)

and Saudi Arabia (25 per cent). For Indian cement makers, this has added Rs 75 per tonne to costs - Rs 60 from the price increase itself and Rs 15 from rupee depreciation.

Given that fuel and power typically account for 30-35 per cent of total production costs, such spikes immediately hit profitability. Companies like Shree Cement and JK Cement, which rely on petcoke for 70-95 per cent of their energy needs, are the most exposed. Even with some relief from lower coal prices, the sector is facing renewed cost intensity.

"Global petcoke prices have climbed to nearly USD 115 per tonne, their highest in four months. For Indian cement producers, the challenge is compounded by the rupee's comparatively weaker performance - it has slipped by 2-3 per cent against the dollar in recent months, making imports even costlier. With petcoke forming more than half of the fuel basket for Indian cement players, this double blow is adding significantly to per tonne production cost. The knock-on effect on cement prices is inevitable until more high-grade domestic fuel alternatives are developed," said Subhasri Chaudhuri, Secretary General, Coal Consumers' Association of India.

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Auction of five critical mineral blocks cancelled

New Delhi: The government has cancelled the auction of five critical mineral blocks, including a rare earth element (REE) block in Karnataka, in the fifth round of auction due to poor response. There were no bids for three blocks - two glauconite mines in Gujarat and Chhattisgarh and one Nickel and PGE (Platinum Group Element) block in Karnataka, which led to cancellation of their auction, the mines ministry said in a notice. PTI

Govt cancels auction of 5 critical mineral blocks due to poor response

NEW DELHI, Aug 27 (PTI)

THE Government has cancelled the auction of five critical mineral blocks, including a rare earth element (REE) block in Karnataka, in the fifth round of auction due to poor response.

There were no bids for three blocks -- two glauconite mines in Gujarat and Chhattisgarh and one Nickel and PGE (Platinum Group Element) block in Karnataka,

which led to cancellation of their auction, the mines Ministry said in a notice. Besides, sale of two other blocks -- a tungsten mine in Maharashtra and an REE block in Karnataka -- was annulled for lack of minimum three technically qualified bidders, it said.



The fifth tranche of auction of critical and strategic mineral blocks was launched in January. Of 15 blocks put on auction, 10 have been auctioned.

These 10 blocks comprise critical and strategic minerals including graphite, phosphorite, phosphate, REE, vanadium and potash and halite spread across Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Coal India, Oil India, NLC India, and Vedanta Group's Hindustan Zinc were some of the companies that secured key mineral blocks in the fifth round of auction.

A total of 34 blocks have been auctioned in five rounds out of the 55 put for sale.

Tailored Emission Targets Proposed for Steel Cos

Suryash Kumar

New Delhi: India plans to introduce tailored emission reduction targets for its large steel makers in a bid to balan-

ce decarbonisation needs with capabilities of existing players, people familiar with the development said.

The proposed goals are in line with targets defined under the National Steel Policy 2017.

Companies will face penalties for not achieving emission reduction goals, said an official. However, the official said, these commitments can be offset by purchasing carbon credits.

"These rules lean towards penalising the players as the government uses a combination of incentivising and penalising the stakeholders to ensure compliance with policy targets," a senior official aware of the plans told ET.

"Stricter goals have been defined for larger players while smaller steel producers have moderated targets," the official said.

NSP 2017 aims to reduce emissions in the iron and steel sector to 2.2-2.4 tonnes CO2 per tonne of crude steel in the blast furnace route by 2030.



Companies will face penalties for not achieving emission reduction goals, said an official



NALCO smelter expansion: Chinese firms join race with Russian, UAE majors for ₹17,000-cr deal

Abhishek Law
New Delhi

With a thaw in Sino-Indian relations, at least two Chinese companies, GAMI and CHALCO, an arm of the State-owned CHINALCO, have expressed interest in providing NALCO (National Aluminium Company Ltd) with smelter tech for a ₹17,000-crore project.

Two other companies, DUBAL (Dubai Aluminium Company) and Russia's RUSAL, are also in the fray for partnerships, people with knowledge of the matter told *businessline*.

The search for a new partner comes after talks with Rio Tinto (RTAL) failed, a development that the Navaratna PSU brass has confirmed to investors.

"NALCO continues to explore a range of options as part of its broader strategic goals," the PSU said in an



emailed response. The company said smelter expansion is an ongoing process.

0.5 MTPA SMELTER

"We are reviewing all available options with due diligence and in alignment with the best interests of the company," it added.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the planned 0.5 mtpa brownfield aluminium smelter expansion is likely to be finalised in 7-8 months, after which board approval will be sought.

Land acquisition is in the final stage, and is expected

The Detailed Project Report for the planned 0.5 mtpa brownfield aluminium smelter expansion is likely to be finalised in 7-8 months

to be completed in 4-6 months.

Following the DPR finalisation, the project tendering is expected to be completed by the end of next year. The smelter, likely to be commissioned in 2030, is a part of the ₹30,000-crore expansion plan that includes a captive power plant (over 1,080 MW) at around ₹12,000 crore, along with investments in downstream and value-added facilities.

PARTNERSHIP TALKS

GAMI (Guiyang Aluminium Magnesium Design & Re-

search Institute) is an engineering and design institute focussed on providing technology and engineering services in the non-ferrous metal segment.

CHALCO, or Aluminium Corporation of China, is a major state-owned Chinese multinational corporation involved in bauxite mining, alumina and aluminium production.

Chinese partnerships have to be cleared by the Centre.

On the specifics of opting for Chinese tech, NALCO said it "fully understands the importance of conducting thorough due diligence, especially in the light of the current geopolitical sensitivities."

United Company Rusal is the world's second-largest aluminium company by primary production output. DUBAL founded in 1975, was the first aluminium smelter in the UAE.

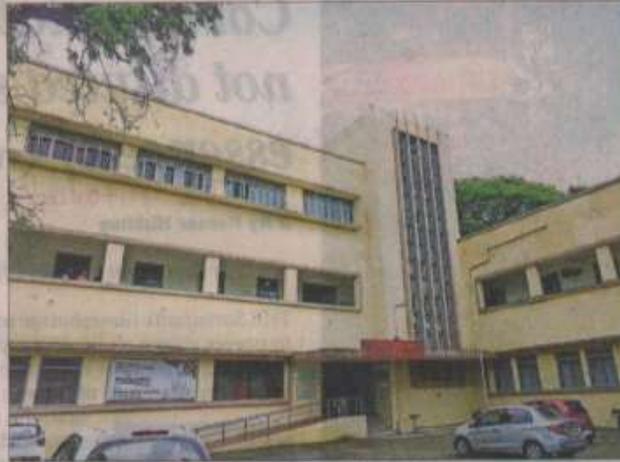
Nagpur University named key centre for national critical minerals research

■ Staff Reporter

RASHTRASANT Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University (RTMNU) has been designated a central institution for research into critical minerals, positioning it at the forefront of India's mission to achieve self-reliance in strategic resources. The university's Department of Geology will conduct this research in collaboration with the newly-inaugurated Centre of Excellence (CoE) at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay.

This initiative is part of the Government of India's ambitious National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM). Approved in January 2025 with a budget of approximately Rs 34,300 crore over seven years, the NCMM aims to reduce India's dependence on imported critical minerals. The mission fosters indigenous exploration, processing, and recycling, promoting the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-reliant India) vision.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised the mission's importance for clean energy and national security in his Independence Day address on August 15. The CoE at IIT Bombay



Department of Geology, RTMNU.

was formally opened on August 23 by Kantha Rao, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, in a ceremony attended by leaders from academia and industry. The mission adopts a 'Hub and Spoke' model, with IIT Bombay serving as the primary hub. RTMNU is one of several academic 'spokes', which also include IIT Kanpur, IIT Bhubaneswar, and CSIR-NEERI, Nagpur. These institutions will focus on mineral discovery and resource analysis.

Industrial partners such as Hindalco, OLA, and Tata Steel will form the industrial spokes, tasked with translating research into practical applications.

Critical minerals are elements essential for a country's economic development, national security, and technological advancement, but whose supply chains are vulnerable to disruption. They are often rare, difficult to extract, and concentrated in a few nations. In India,

RTMNU to research on Platinum group elements, rare earth minerals

DR KIRTIKUMAR Randive, Head, Department of Geology, RTMNU, represented the university at the launch event in Mumbai. He highlighted the department's ongoing research into Platinum Group Elements and Rare Earth Elements within the Deccan Traps. "Our research will be focused on the source rocks of these vital minerals," stated Dr Randive, confirming the university's readiness to contribute to the national goal.

they are crucial for high-growth sectors.

All designated research centres have been invited to present their findings at a seminar in Hyderabad on September 16, which will be inaugurated by the Union Minister for Mines and Coal.

देशातील खनिजांवरील संशोधनाचे मध्यवर्ती केंद्र म्हणून नागपूर विद्यापीठाला मान्यता

आयआयटी मुंबई येथील सेंटर ऑफ एक्सलन्सच्या माध्यमातून करणार संशोधन

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क

नागपूर : भारतातील महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिजांवरील संशोधनासाठी राष्ट्रसंत तुकडोजी महाराज नागपूर विद्यापीठाला मध्यवर्ती केंद्र म्हणून मान्यता प्राप्त झाली आहे. आयआयटी मुंबई येथील सेंटर ऑफ एक्सलन्सच्या माध्यमातून खनिजांवरील संशोधन विद्यापीठाच्या भूगर्भशास्त्र विभागामध्ये केले जाणार आहे.

केंद्र सरकारच्या राष्ट्रीय महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिज मिशन अंतर्गत आयआयटी मुंबईला सेंटर ऑफ एक्सलन्स म्हणून मान्यता मिळाल्यानंतर विद्यापीठाला शैक्षणिक संशोधनाचे मध्यवर्ती केंद्र म्हणून मान्यता देण्यात आली आहे. खाण मंत्रालयाचे सचिव कंठा राव यांच्या हस्ते २३ ऑगस्ट रोजी आयआयटी मुंबई येथील पहिल्या सेंटर ऑफ एक्सलन्सचे उद्घाटन करण्यात आले. या उद्घाटन कार्यक्रमाला महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिज संशोधनाशी संबंधित शैक्षणिक आणि औद्योगिक क्षेत्रातील केंद्राचे प्रतिनिधी उपस्थित होते. इतर पाच मंत्रालयांचे प्रतिनिधी तसेच केंद्र प्रतिनिधी यांच्यासोबत कंठा राव यांनी संवाद साधला.



विद्यापीठाची भूमिका

नागपूर विद्यापीठाच्या पदव्युत्तर भूगर्भशास्त्र विभाग प्रमुख डॉ. कीर्तिकुमार रणदिवे यांना आयआयटी मुंबई येथील समारंभास आमंत्रित केले होते. आयआयटी मुंबई सेंटर ऑफ एक्सलन्सचे सहयोगी असल्याने डॉ. रणदिवे यांनी विद्यापीठाच्या भूमिकेबाबत या बैठकीत माहिती दिली. येथील संशोधकांचा गट काही काळापासून महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिजांवर काम करीत आहे. प्लॅटिनम गट खनिजे आणि दुर्मीळ पृथ्वी घटक यावर संशोधन केल्याची माहिती त्यांनी दिली.

महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिज म्हणजे काय?

आर्थिक, राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षेसाठी व तांत्रिक विकासासाठी अत्यावश्यक असलेल्या खनिजांना महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिज म्हणून ओळखले जातात. मात्र, पुरवठा साखळीतील अडचणीमुळे धोक्यात आहेत. खणनासाठी कठीण, दुर्मीळ तसेच काही निवडक देशांमध्येच उपलब्ध असल्याने ती खनिजे महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिजे म्हणून ओळखली जातात. भारतामध्ये खास करून इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स व उच्च तंत्रज्ञान त्याचप्रमाणे बॅटरी व अक्षय ऊर्जा उद्योगांमध्ये या खनिजांचा वापर केला जातो.

बॅटरी व अक्षय ऊर्जा : लिथियम, कोबाल्ट, निकेल, ग्रेफाइट

इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स व उच्च-तंत्रज्ञान : रेअर अर्थ घटक, गॅलियम, जर्मेनियम

ऊर्जा संक्रमण : कॉपर, प्लॅटिनम ग्रुप मेटल्स

संरक्षण व एअरोस्पेस : टंगस्टन, टायटॅनियम, बेरिलियम

आदी खनिजांचा महत्त्वपूर्ण खनिजांमध्ये समावेश आहे.