

Vedanta plans to expand operations in South Africa

Vedanta Resources Plc said it plans to expand its footprint in Africa by investing in one of the largest undeveloped zinc sulphide resources in the world and by signing two new deals that will introduce South African firms to its subsidiary in India.

Vedanta was trading up 4.1% to 475.30 pence per share. The multi-commodity miner is already one of the leading natural resource companies operating in India but the company plans to enhance operations in Africa to build on the USD4.00 billion that it has invested into the country since 2004.

Vedanta's current operations on the continent include copper mining in Zambia, zinc and lead concentrate production at Black Mountain Mining in South Africa and zinc metal production at Skorpion Zinc in Namibia.

The latest project to be launched by the company is the Gamsberg zinc operation at Black Mountain Mining, which will involve USD400.0 million of capital being invested. The project lies in the Northern Cape of South Africa and holds one of the world's largest undeveloped zinc sulphide deposits with around 160.0 million tonnes of defined ore resources.

"We are committed to expanding our operations here and will continue to invest in our greenfield project at Gamsberg," said Chairman Anil Agarwal. Vedanta, led by Agarwal, will be part of a delegation



accompanying Narendra Modi on his visit to South Africa as the two countries meet to discuss shared growth opportunities. Agarwal said he plans to sign two new memorandum of understanding with South African companies during the meeting, further expanding Vedanta's activity in the country.

The goal of the agreements is to improve the safety and productivity at the mechanised underground mines owned by Vedanta's subsidiary, Hindustan Zinc Ltd, through the development and supply of equipment.

Vedanta said India-based Hindustan already employs around 125 South Africans across various sites in India and Vedanta has awarded projects worth almost USD300.0 million to at least seven companies based in South Africa to date, it said. "Vedanta

believes that its Gamsberg project together with its investment in technology and innovation with local partners will contribute significantly to improving the livelihoods of local communities in both India and South Africa," said Vedanta.

The new Gamsberg project will help to enhance the existing zinc, lead, copper and silver operation at Black Mountain Mining in South Africa, which has been operating for over 30 years. With Gamsberg, Black Mountain Mining has the potential to continue producing for at least the next two decades, according to Vedanta.

Notably, Black Mountain Mining is the largest private employer in the Bushmanland and Namaqua region, providing around 1,300 jobs at present.

Odisha to be aluminium capital of India : Balvinder Kumar

Mining industries in the country are recovering fast and mineral production is looking up despite global economic slowdown, said Union Secretary of Mines Balvinder Kumar. Kumar was addressing the inaugural session of the national seminar on 'Aluminium: The Strategic Metal' organised by Aluminium Association of India. With more than half the bauxite reserves of the country and massive presence of Nalco, Hindalco and Vedanta, Odisha is soon going to be the aluminium capital of India, Kumar said.

However, it is a matter of concern that the installed capacity is far more than the aluminium production in the country, he said.

With the Centre planning to develop 100



Smart Cities and a number of infrastructure projects including freight and industrial corridors in the pipeline, there will be huge demand for aluminium, he said.

"The demand for an Aluminium Development Council is genuine and the Government will set up the proposed council

as suggested by president of AAI and Nalco CMD Tapan Kumar Chand," he said. Kumar further informed that the Ministry of Mines has requested the Railway Ministry to charge the freight of bauxite at par with limestone and include alumina in the non-metal segment. In his welcome address, Chand said while the aluminium industry across the globe is passing through sluggishness, AAI is taking steps to strengthen the sector through various initiatives. He stressed on cost reduction, making domestic market more vibrant and enhancing the aluminium market through introduction of various value-added and high-end products. The seminar is a precursor to the International Conference on Aluminium 2017, which will be held in the State Capital next February.