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What is GMDC's focus at this exhibition?

GMDC, a Government of Gujarat enterprise, primarily operates in the lignite sector and has recently expanded into coal mining. However, the company's current emphasis is on venturing into the metal sector to support India's transition towards green energy. Accordingly, GMDC's key focus at this exhibition is on the shift to sustainable energy, particularly through the mining of critical minerals such as copper and rare earth elements.

How do you view the current performance of the mining and mineral sector in India?

The mining and mineral sector in India is currently performing quite well. Although the mining industry still has scope to enhance its contribution to the GDP, the government's recent initiatives have been highly encouraging. Several industry-friendly policies, schemes, and incentives have been introduced, along with significant amendments to existing laws. Collectively, these measures are fostering a conducive ecosystem for the sustainable growth and prosperity of the mining industry.

What are the key growth drivers and challenges in this industry?

The industry today stands at a very crucial juncture—one that is defined by the global commitment to achieve net zero emissions and build a sustainable future. The transition toward clean and green energy is driving an unprecedented demand for



critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, copper and rare earth elements. These minerals form the backbone of renewable energy technologies, electric mobility, and energy storage systems, making them key growth drivers for the mining and mineral processing sector.

However, the major challenge lies in the fact that the minerals required to achieve the net zero

goal must undergo beneficiation and advanced processing to be suitable for industrial applications. While India possesses abundant mineral reserves, the country lacks the cutting-edge technology, modern infrastructure, and specialized expertise required to carry out large-scale value addition domestically. As a result, we remain heavily



dependent on foreign players for technical know-how, processing equipment, and project execution capabilities.

Moreover, developing a robust ecosystem that includes skilled manpower, R&D institutions, and indigenous technology solutions is still a work in progress.

Policy reforms, investment in technology transfer, and the creation of collaborative frameworks between public and private sectors will be essential to bridge this gap.

In essence, India is currently in a transition phase—rich in resources but still evolving in terms of technical competence and industrial sophistication. The focus going forward should be on building self-reliance through knowledge partnerships, technology upgradation, and capacity building to reduce dependence on foreign expertise and unlock the full potential of the country's mineral wealth.

How do you view the role of private players in this entire development?

Private players have shown growing interest in recent years, and the government is actively encouraging their participation. With 100% FDI permitted in the coal sector and initiatives to promote private involvement in exploration, the private sector is making significant progress. In fact, private companies are sometimes better positioned than PSUs to attract foreign investments and forge

international partnerships, which can further accelerate the sector's growth and modernization.

The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, has consistently emphasized the vision of Atma Nirbhar Bharat. How do you see GMDC contributing to this goal?

Our initiatives are closely aligned with the vision of Atma Nirbhar Bharat. Gujarat is home to one of the world's finest copper assets which is ranked among the top ten globally, with a total metal content exceeding 10%. GMDC is also spearheading the development of India's first rare earth value chain based on hard rock mining. Until now, India has only extracted rare earth elements from beach sand deposits; this will be the first time we mine them from hard rock sources.

Moreover, our focus extends beyond mining and processing to include complete downstream integration. GMDC is establishing a dedicated rare earth hub or estate, which will bring together the downstream industries within a single ecosystem. The hub will provide offer a plug-and-play infrastructure to facilitate seamless industrial development and drive India's self-reliance in this strategic sector.

What are the major economic and regulatory policy changes that have impacted your business?

There have been several positive relaxations in recent years. Earlier, Indian laws—

particularly those governing the mining sector—were quite stringent. However, the reforms introduced have balanced industry growth with economic and environmental responsibility. The government has implemented progressive measures across the value chain, starting from the exploration stage, including reforms in royalty, statutory clearances, the District Mineral Foundation (DMF), and the National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET). These initiatives have created a more industry-friendly environment, which the sector is now leveraging effectively.

How do you view this exhibition from your perspective?

This exhibition is an excellent and large-scale platform that brings together both national and international participants. It provides valuable opportunities for networking and building contacts, which prove beneficial once we return to our workplaces. We have plans for diversification and expansion, and for that, we require strong support and reliable service providers. This exhibition offers us precisely that,—the right opportunities and platform to connect and collaborate.

How do you foresee the trends shaping the minerals and mining sector over the next three to five years?

The sector is expected to become increasingly focused on environmental sustainability, ESG compliance, and digital transformation. Greater integration of IT and digital technologies will enhance operational efficiency, while growing awareness of environmental and social responsibilities will redefine the way mining is perceived. Going forward, the industry will evolve into a more professional, socially responsible, and environmentally conscious sector, marking a significant shift from traditional mining practices. ■