
Production pruning - Nyrstar to restart Balen zinc plant

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Reuters reported that Belgium's Nyrstar would restart operations at its Balen plant in Belgium this month after a 9th month suspension due to weak demand.

Nyrstar said that it expected zinc production at the plant in north eastern Belgium to restart during the Q4 of 2009 adding that it intended to produce at 70% of capacity. The plant has a capacity of 275,000 tonnes of cathode zinc and employs 435 workers.

Mr Greg McMillan COO of Nyrstar said in a statement that the group was gradually ramping up its activities at Balen to enable zinc production to restart later 2009.

He said that "Whilst we believe that the outlook for zinc in the medium to long term is positive; in the short term markets are likely to remain volatile."

The sharp economic downturn ate into global demand for zinc which is mainly used to galvanize steel and forced Nyrstar to suspend operations at Balen in December a month after production cuts there. It also cut output at Budel in the Netherlands by 28% in November and also slashed output by about 40% at US site Clarksville in January.

(Sourced from Reuters)

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