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## NMDC to produce iron ore from hematite

*Sunday, 22 Nov, 2009*

B reported that National Mineral Development Corporation is all set to break new grounds in iron ore mining.

As per report the country's largest iron ore miner will shortly be giving India a new technology for commercial extraction of iron ore from banded hematite jasper and banded hematite quartzite rocks which are naturally mined along with the ore during normal mining operations. Huge layers of these rocks thus pile up at the mine sites, which now will be put to commercial use.

Mr Rana Som CMD of NMDC told Business Line that "We are close to developing the technology in another six months we should be ready with the technology viability report, which we are preparing with a consultant."

BHJ and BHQ rocks contain lesser quantities of iron ore and hence cannot be directly used in steel making. BHJ rocks, for example, contain about 40% iron ore and only if they are purified and enriched to 65% they can be charged in a pellet plant.

A senior official of NMDC's R&D Department said that "Roughly, 100 kg of BHJ rock can yield 30 kg (30%) of iron ore if enriched to 65% level which is what our technology is about."

Although the company had explored different beneficiation methods, it ultimately zeroed in on spiral separation method to transform the rocks into useable iron ore.

As far as availability of this resource is concerned, the company faces no problems. As of now, some 12 million tonne to 14 million tonnes of these two banded rocks are piled up as huge mountains of mineral wealth at its Donamalai mine site.

The company, which produces about 30 million tonnes of iron ore, plans to set up the first beneficiation plant with a capacity of 300000 tonnes a year at an estimated cost of INR 100 crore, which will actually demonstrate the commercial viability of the technology.

This forms part of the company's efforts to optimise iron ore production to meet the anticipated spurt in domestic demand. It has lined up a capital expenditure program of INR 2500 crore to increase the capacity of its ore production to 50 million tonnes by 2014, out of which about 85% will be for the domestic steel industry.

(Sourced from Business Line)

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