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ABOUT PUBLICATION

Mining Zimbabwe is the premier source of unfiltered Zimbabwe Mining News. Our core focus is the Zimbabwe Mining Industry, trends, new technologies being developed and used to improve this crucial sector, as well as new opportunities and investments arising from it.

Mining Zimbabwe's sole purpose is growing and empowering the Mining Industry and highlighting all its challenges as well as putting forth expert solutions







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Welcome to the mining industry Hon Minister





THE CLEAR PERSPECTIVE

The Mining Industry has just seen the appointment of a new Minister of Mines and Mining Development, Hon Soda Zhemu.

Like most, we are hopeful that the new Minister will hit the ground running and fix some of the pertinent issues bedevilling the sector. Whilst sector challenges are far too many to mention it is highly advisable that Hon Zhemu immediately push for the resuming of the Mines and Minerals Amendment bill which was put on halt after the dissolving of the 9th parliament. For two weeks Legislators engaged stakeholders across the country and Mining Zimbabwe witnessed the appreciation from communities who believed that finally they had a say in the governance of the minerals being exploited in their backgrounds. The passing of the bill will eliminate conflict between Mines and the Communities they will be operating from as the latter will have had their needs enshrined in the Mines Act.

One other distressing issue is man-made disputes arising from greed mainly a result of primitive methods being used to demarcate mining claims. The country needs to speed up a fully functional Mining Cadastre system that will once and for all eliminate the

ever-rising disputes. The time spent trying to resolve disputes should be better spent on production as the country races toward the 12 billion dollar industry. by 31st december

The honourable Minister should also push for the capacitation of the Ministry as currently, it takes years for a Mining Title to be issued. This has been attributed to the lack of essentials like vehicles and computers.

Large-scale miners have been pushing for 100% USD as they say it will help them run their operations efficiently. That conversation is long due! Semi-precious mineral miners also need export licenses ready in not more than 48 hours. The country also needs to be fully educated about EPOs and their advantage to the economy.

The Zimbabwe Mining Industry is the pride of the country and because of that, all eyes will be on the newly appointed Minister Soda Zhemu. Welcome to the mining industry hon Minister. Wishing the best in your tenure.

Remember you can write to us or submit contributions on email: info@miningzimbabwe.com or WhatsApp: +263 242 777728.





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Successfully Completes Mimosa Plant Optimization Project



"All pre-existing steel structure that was recently installed, awaits repainting on site"

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Hogarths which is an ISO 9001:2015 QMS Certified Organisation, a leading engineering and steel fabrication company based in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Has recently successfully completed the Mimosa Plant Optimization Project. The project involved the construction of three processing plants, namely the milling area, primary roughers, and cleaners. (Structural steel fabrication & erection).

Mimosa Mine, one of the top three platinum mines in Zimbabwe contracted Hogarths for this project, with DRA Global as the Project Managers. The objective of the project was to optimize the mine's platinum production by repurposing steelwork from a mine in South Africa. This trend is becoming prevalent because of sustainability, cost effectiveness and versatility, which an encouraging move by Mimosa as it aims at sustainability.

The project was completed within the Clients budget even though there were overruns due to unknown complexities. Hogarths' team of experienced engineers and steelworkers worked closely with the Mimosa Mine team and DRA team to ensure the smooth and efficient execution of the project. Hogarths achieved over 500 000 LTI free man-hours worked and received an achievement award from DRA. This shows a commitment to SHE by Hogarths.









The project involved a number of challenges, including:

• The condition of the steelwork from the decommissioned mine. This steel work was painted after installation.

• The need to modify the steelwork to fit the specific requirements of the Mimosa Mine plant.

• The transportation of the steelwork to the Mimosa Mine site.

• The installation of the steelwork, which was a complex and delicate process. To overcome these challenges, Hogarths

used a number of innovative solutions, including:

 \cdot Using computer-aided design software to

create the modifications.

• Using an efficient logistics coordination setup in the pre-clearance and transportation to the installation site inside

Mimosa mine premises. • Using a team of experienced steel

fabrication experts to install the steelwork.

Hogarths has a strategic partnership with VIVA Engineering in South Africa, this partnership aims at benefiting the client as both engineering companies' pool resources to ensure a short project turnaround time. The successful completion of the Mimosa Plant Optimization Project is a testament to Hogarths' expertise in engineering and steel fabrication. The company has a long history of delivering high-quality projects on time and within budget. Hogarths is a reliable partner for any mining company looking to optimize its production.

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MINING AFFAIRS

Soda Zhemu appointed new Minister of Mines



President Emmerson Mnangagwa has appointed Hon Soda Zhemu as the new Minister of Mines and Mining Development.

Zhemu has replaced Winston Chitando who has been at the helm of the powerful Ministry since 2017.

The former Minister of Energy and Power Development Minister attained a BCOM degree in accounting from the Zimbabwe Open University.

According to the Parliament of Zimbabwe website, Zhemu has a Masters in Business Administration (MBA)

China buys half of the world's lithium resource



n an endeavour to tighten the grip of China over the global battery metal supply chain, Chineseowned companies have bought half of the world's biggest Mines put on the market since 2018 as revealed by S&P Global Ratings.

Rudairo Mapuranga

According to S&P, Chinese firms bought 10 of the 20 lithium mines up for grabs, for an estimated \$US7.9 billion (\$12.3 billion), while Australian companies came a distant second, purchasing just five mines over the past five years.

In Zimbabwe, Chinese-owned companies also grabbed some of the most lucrative lithium projects which include Arcadia Lithium Mine, Bikita Minerals, Kamativi Lithium Mine (KMC), Sabi Star Mine among others.

Like the rest of the world, lithium Mining in Zimbabwe is on the rise with several projects in the exploration phase forecasted to kick-start production soon. The country has the largest lithium reserves in Africa and the fifth-largest deposits worldwide. It has the highest number of Lithium projects under exploration on the continent.

Chinese car makers and battery manufacturers are also increasingly taking raw material supply into their own hands to secure lithium and battery minerals, buying 23 equity stakes in lithium, nickel and cobalt companies across the world.

Beijing fears its supplies of lithium, known as "white gold", could be withheld or reduced by the US and allied nations such as Australia and Canada. The US and its allies, meanwhile, worry Beijing could weaponise its dominance over-processing, as it did earlier this year for gallium and germanium by imposing restrictions on exporting the two metals crucial to the semiconductor, electric vehicle and weapons industries.

Despite the US Energy Department declaring lithium as "essential to the economic or national security of the United States", Chinese firms have been more active in lithium mergers and acquisitions since 2021, according to S&P's report examining China's reach.

Half of the 10 lithium mines China has snapped up since 2018 are in Australia and Canada, while the other five are in Argentina, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zimbabwe, which are not allies to the US.

Australia dominates lithium mining, producing 47 per cent of global lithium supplies. However, it exports 90 per cent of its output to be refined in China, which continues to dominate global lithium processing and accounts for about 60 per cent of globally refined supplies.

Demand for these vital resources is expected to surge as the world rushes to build electric vehicles, wind turbines and solar panels for the clean energy transition.

Water risk management in Tailings Dams

A weak water risk management approach and ensuing low strength or brittle behaviour affect the general risk of a tailings dam facility. This can impact your insurance premiums and your internal risk management programme costs. Globally, most tailings dam failures when investigated showed poor surface water management and related low strength tailings.

Water in the tailings should be managed actively whether the dam is using solar drying alone or in combination with mechanical compaction. The tailings dam should be designed in a manner that ensures maximum exposure to the sun. Effective water risk management helps avoid low strength brittle tailings from being formed. It reduces the risk of overtopping or dam wall failure due to slope instability.

Tailings behaviour is generally classified as ductile (good) or brittle (ill-behaved). On ductile tailings, the strength and behaviour can support upstream or centreline construction approaches. If a tailings dam failure occurs on a ductile tailing, it often results in a gradual downslope movement which can be minimised in terms of damage by reinforcing with rockfill or similar materials. Brittle tailings usually are associated with loose, saturated sand/silt-sized tailings which can have sudden collapses with rapid movement and large outflows. Brittle tailings can also occur where tailings are dumped in a loose state and further deposits are made on this loose state. Depositing a layer of loose tailings within a compacted stack, or re-saturation of a layer may compromise the strength of the layer.

Good water risk management lowers the risk associated with the dam and generally results in lower insurance premiums (if externally insured) or lower fund reserves (if self-insured). As a risk management best practice, the tailings dam is not supposed to be used for holding excessive water. Depending on the size of the operation, the mine can consider having an offline dam primarily for process water with a spillway or a water treatment plant. Also, the decant and pond as a guide should be 3 times the final tailings dam height from the perimeter wall in upstream raise or centreline constructions to avoid compromising the perimeter walls. Some of the information considered when assessing tailings dams water risk for insurance purposes include:

1. Operational history through satellite images.

2. Water level testing records for the tailings.

A regulated low water level combined with reduced pressure in the depth profile and a good underdrainage enhance strength and stability of the tailings.

3. Historical rainfall records for the area indicated patterns and volumes of external water impacting on the tailings dam.

- 4. Clay content Plasticity index.
- 5. Specialist geotechnical engineering

reports where these are available.

6. Dam breach modelling scenarios.

In conclusion, there is a lower risk of a Tailings Dam failure where there is minimal water stored on top. In the event of an embankment failure, the damage from outflow from a well-operated dam is restricted. At Firstlink, we advise mining clients on overall Tailings Dam risk management matters that enable them to manage their risks effectively and where insured, obtain economic terms.

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POWER IN SAFE HANDS

Interview: Alois Kwenda, MD AECI Mining Zimbabwe and Mozambique

MZ: Good day AK, a big congratulations to you and your team for being one of the suppliers of service products that has stood the test of time and continued to supply the mining industry and of course for achieving a momentous safety record and scooping several safety awards at the recently held SHEQ conference.

MINING AFFAIRS

AK: Thank you. These achievements are testimony to the highly dedicated and motivated team that we have in Zimbabwe. The success of any business is a direct result of the combined efforts of its employees.

MZ: Before we get into the Safety achievement and the subsequent awards, please tell me who is AK?

AK: I am a mining engineer born and bred in Zimbabwe. After initially working in the mining industry in Zimbabwe I joined AECI Zimbabwe in February 1994 and rose through the ranks to head up the company in May 1999. I was relocated to South Africa in September 2002 where I held several positions until I was appointed general manager for Latin America in May 2015. I returned to Zimbabwe in August 2018 following the conclusion of my assignment in Latin America. However, this time I returned with the additional accountability for Mozambique.

MZ: You are the MD for AECI Mining Zimbabwe and Mozambique, tell me more about AECI. (a brief on AECI Mining)

AK: AECI is a diversified group of companies comprising 4 main pillars namely, mining, water, agrihealth and chemicals. It has regional and international businesses in Africa, Europe, North America Latin America, South East Asia and Australia.

I am within the mining pillar which focuses on providing optimized blasting solutions consisting of explosives, equipment and technical expertise as well as metallurgical chemicals for the extraction of minerals with the attendant expertise to optimise the use of the chemicals.



MZ: You have been the MD for over 5 years now, how has been the experience?

AK: As already mentioned I was MD of AECI Zimbabwe previously. However, I returned to a more exciting and bigger business where mining was and continues to be on a growth trajectory. The environment is quite competitive with a number of local and international players. but as ACEI we have held our own as we are providers of holistic mining solutions rather than mere explosives suppliers or traders.

MZ: Apart from your distinguished products, what sets AECI apart from other suppliers of explosives?

AK: ACEI provides holistic blasting solutions consisting of products,

equipment and technical expertise. We work with our customers in partnership to optimise blasting practices in order to meet each individual customer's specific requirements. To this end, we put our money where our mouth is by entering into service level agreements with specific key performance indicators against which our peroducts and services are measured.



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MZ: You are overseeing AECI Mining business in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, what is the operating environment like in the two countries?

AK: The operating environment in Zimbabwe is very dynamic in terms of monetary and economic policies. As a result we have had to be a flexible and adaptive organisations in order to be able to sustain our business in the current environment. We take a long term view of our business in Zimbabwe and we believe that the economy is headed in the right direction and sustained stability will be brought about over time.

MZ: AECI is very visible in the big mining corporations. What AECI Mining's strategy with regards to small-scale miners?

AK: We understand that the small-scale miners are an integral part of the Zimbabwean mining industry and constitute a significant part of the explosives market. Our strategy is to supply this market through local distributors of our products who have the support of our technical personnel to ensure the safe and efficient application of our products.

MZ: Let's talk about the 20 years LTI free, this achievement confirms Zero harm is possible. Please tell me the secret to achieving Zero harm.

AK: The secret to our achievement lies in the organizational culture that has been built over the years. Our employees are empowered to make decisions about safety at every level. There is constant engagement with our employees around safety and we have an environment where each employee feels free to raise concerns about anything that may impact negatively on safety but most importantly, we reward them for coming up with new ideas on how to improve safety. The safety message is driven from the top of the organisations downwards as well as from the shop floor upwards. This is how a culture of engagement on safety has been built over time.

MZ: Daily, what messages do you convey to yourself and your team regarding safety?

AK: It is that Zero Harm is achievable and that no job is so important that it cannot be done unsafely. If it cannot be done safely then it should not be done.

MZ: You and your team scooped three awards at the recently held AECI SHEQ conference, tell us more about these awards and what they mean to the business.

AK: In summary these awards were in recognition of the team's achievements in the areas of safety, environmental protection and quality within the AECI group.



Alois Kwenda

MZ: Let's talk about explosives security. How do you keep explosives safe considering the large volumes you handle in-country?

AK: Our main strategy has been to develop bulk explosives for all applications. This type of explosive requires 2 components which are non-explosive and only become explosive upon mixing using specialised equipment. This has reduced the quantity of explosives which are kept in locked and guarded magazines.

MZ: Innovation is the key to success, what innovations are coming up in the industry and how is set AECI towards achieving success?

AK: AECI is a leading innovator in the field of explosives and blasting which is recognised worldwide. There are a number of innovations currently in development, some of which I am not at liberty to disclose. However the most exciting one is the wireless electronic detonator which will bring about safe blasting in surface and underground applications. These are programmable wireless detonators which have the potential to be set off remotely via satellite from unlimited distances from the blast. AECI has successfully tested its prototype although without the use of satellites.

MZ: Does AECI offer any courses for blasting

AK: Indeed, we offer what is known as a blasting competency course and several of our customers in Zimbabwe have already benefited from this.

MZ: Alois you are a seasoned miner. What advice would you give to an 18-year-old who is passionate about mining and thinking of becoming one?

AK: Mining is a very interesting field where science is applied constantly. It has many opportunities but it is also a tough and unforgiving environment where compromising safety will have far reaching consequences than the majority of other occupations.

MZ: Outside work, what occupies Alois?

AK: Outside work I am an avid golfer. I also believe in keeping up to date with world affairs as well new developments in science. I read a variety of business and science journals quite regularly and the area of quantum physics is very fascinating for me particularly teleportation. I believe that the next life changing invention will come from this field of science and I hope it will be in my lifetime.

MZ: What are your parting words to our readers?

AK: As individuals and organisations it is important to set goals and actively work towards achieving them. Strategies need to be adjusted when faced with obstacles but focus should remain on the goals. Our main one as AECI is to achieve Zero harm to the environment and anyone ever and as the Zimbabwean team we have demonstrated that it is possible over a 20 year period. Our challenge is to sustain it and we are up to that challenge.



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Bikita Minerals exports its first lithium spodumene concentrate consignment



he country's biggest lithium producer, Bikita Minerals exported its first spodumene concentrate consignment on the 10th of September 2023. The company has been exporting petalite for decades and is ranked as one of the top lithium-producing mines in the world.

Rudairo Mapuranga

Bikita Minerals is targeting to ship 7000mt of lithium spodumene concentrates and a target of 70 000mt by the end of the year.

The average product grade for the lithium spodumene that Bikita will be exporting is between 5% to 5.5% Li20.

China's Sinomine Resource Group, the owners of Bikita Minerals who early last year acquired the project, invested US\$200 million to build a spodumene concentrates plant to expand its mining operations.

Bikita Minerals has taken heed of the President of Zimbabwe's call to prioritize value addition and beneficiation before exporting Minerals.

The President hinted that the company has the potential to emerge as a key player in the rise and popularity of the battery manufacturing industry. However, he also expressed his concern that the company should not benefit alone from global achievement but the community in which it is located should also benefit.

He said that his administration has implored the company, to prioritize the Bikita community as it digs in its soil and urged the company to treat its workers and environment with great care.

"We have told them that under the Second Republic, we would want to see that lithium is essential to the growth and development of Zimbabwe's economy. They told us that after two years the company will be generating US\$500 MILLION per annum.

"Companies are challenged to listen to their host communities and address their concerns. Communities must equally appreciate that investors are indispensable partners in the realisation of sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all.

"Mining companies must be good corporate responsible citizens, with

Corporate Social, Environmental Social, and Governance aspects being critical components of their entities. Tangible socio-economic advantages and benefits should accrue to societies in which they operate. In undertaking their ventures, companies are challenged to listen to their host communities and address their concerns. Communities must, on the other hand, equally appreciate that investors are indispensable partners in the realisation of quality of life,

"For greater harmony and unity of purpose, mechanisms should be developed to improve transparency and accountability so that aspects of the project are understood, while grievances are heard and addressed. "The safety and treatment of employees is also a key component. Mining companies must strive to be model employers by treating and remunerating their workers appropriately," The President said.

Bikita Lithium Mine is Zimbabwe's biggest lithium producer and is the home to the world's largest-known deposit of the metal at around 11 million tonnes.

Bikita Minerals has been an active mining site for around 100 years.

For over 50 years, the mining and extraction of lithium minerals have been at the centre of Bikita Minerals' activities. Today, Bikita Minerals is the World's foremost supplier of the lithium mineral Petalite.



sustainable development and a higher



Zimplats revenue decreased by 23 percent

The country's biggest mining company, Zimplats' revenue decreased by 23 per cent during the Financial year ended June 30 2023, from US\$1.2 billion in 2022 to US\$962.3 million as average US\$ metal prices softened during the period.

Gross revenue per 6E ounce sold (including pipeline debtors revaluation) declined by 20 per cent to US\$1 595 (FY2022: US\$1 996). Sales volumes of 6E ounces were 3 per cent lower at 603 000 ounces (FY2022: 623 000 ounces) as the prior period benefitted from the deferred sales of stockpiled volumes due to administrative delays towards the end of FY2021.

Palladium revenue during FY2023

decreased to US\$340.652 million from US\$451.929 million during FY2022. Rhodium during the FY2023 decreased to US\$169.279 million from US\$312.045 million in 2022. Platinum decreased to US\$240.980 million from US\$248.799 million. The revenue for Nickel decreased to US\$102.888 million from US\$110.974 million during FY2022. Gold decreased to US\$51.840 million from US\$57.660 million. The revenue for copper also decreased to US\$25.626 million from US\$30.180 million. Cobalt revenue also decreased to US\$275 thousand from US\$707 thousand the previous year. Ruthenium decreased to US\$5.309 million from US\$7.337 million. However, Iridium revenue increased to US\$25.054 million from US\$23.135 million with Silver revenue increasing to US\$387

thousand from US\$374 thousand.

Cost of sales increased by 10 per cent to US\$651.9 million (FY2022: US\$594.3 million) primarily due to an increase in operating cash costs.

Operating cash cost per 6E ounce increased by 16 per cent to US\$837 per ounce (FY2022: US\$724 per ounce), owing primarily to 11 per cent year-on-year US\$ internal inflation. Additionally, costs were affected by an increase in engineering costs, permanent employee headcount as well as selling expenses due to an increase in concentrates sold from the third concentrator plant commissioned in the year.

MINING AFFAIRS

ZIDA launches mining claim dealership platform



he Zimbabwe Investment Development Agency (ZIDA) has launched a new platform that aims to connect mining claim owners with potential investors. This initiative is part of the government's plan to boost the mining sector and achieve a \$12 billion mining economy by the end of the year. The platform will allow individuals, companies, and syndicates to meet with investors online for joint ventures, outright sales, or other partnerships.

Rudairo Mapuranga

The mining sector is advancing to achieve a US\$12 billion mining economy by the end of this year. The gesture by ZIDA is in line with the Government's vision to achieve an upper-middle-income economy by 2030.

The matchmaking platform is a valuable resource for investors looking for opportunities to invest in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The platform provides a convenient way to view registered mining claims and contact claim holders. The platform also helps to ensure that investors can find the right investment opportunities for their needs.



matchmaking campaign, Mr Tafadzwa Chinamo, CEO of ZIDA, emphasized that the platform was designed to establish the Zimbabwean brand as a symbol of excellence and a reliable long-term partner for investors.

"Tonight, I'm excited to unveil our mining claims matchmaking platform. The platform allows claim holders to register their claims and specify the type of assistance they are seeking, such as technical assistance, tributary partnership, joint venture partnerships, debt funding, or a buyer for the mining claim. ZIDA will then market the claims to potential investors on the platform.

"To register on the platform, claim holders need to scan and upload their identification documents, claim registration certificate, valid inspection certificate, and site map and make a payment of US\$500.

"On the other hand, our platform allows investors to connect with holders of mining claims in Zimbabwe and express their interest in investing in them. The platform is open to both local and international investors. To access the platform, investors need to register and submit relevant information, such as their contact details, investment objectives, and the type of mining claim they are interested in. Investors also pay a registration fee of US\$1000," Chinamo said.

Murowa Diamonds expanding exploration activities

Murowa Diamonds, the associate of RioZim Limited listed on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange, is currently expanding its exploration activities in order to prolong the lifespan of its mining operations and resume activities in current pits. Rudairo Mapuranga

Through a Trading update for the first quarter of 2023, RioZim said Murowa Diamonds continues to process materials from its low-grade stockpiles at the same time expanding its exploration activities to extend the life of its pits.

According to RioZim Murowa Diamonds' production during the quarter increased by 20 per cent compared to the same period last year due to increased throughput and plant capacity after commissioning its 500tph plant in the third quarter of 2022.

"The Group's Associate, RZM Murowa (Private) Limited recorded a 20% increase in production compared to the same period in the prior year due to increased throughput and plant capacity after commissioning the 500tph plant in Q3 2022. The mine continues to process material from its low-grade stock piles. The mine is also expanding its exploration activities which are mainly centred on extending the life of its pits with a view to resuscitate mining operations in the current pits," RioZim said.

RZM Murowa is a medium-scale diamond mine. In the early 1990s, the Company conducted an exploration programme in Zimbabwe focusing solely on diamonds. In 1997, this exploration came to fruition with the discovery of three diamond-bearing kimberlite pipes in the Murowa area. Production from RZM Murowa began in 2004. Its current name-plate capacity is around 1.2 million carats per annum of predominantly white, gem-quality diamonds. Murowa produces reasonable quantities of large "special" stones.

A truck and backhoe method is used to extract ore from the three open pits. The waste is drilled, blasted and trucked away using dump trucks. This leaves the ore available for extraction, which is crushed, processed and pumped to the final recovery plant.

During the launch of the mining claim

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LI3 in encouraging results at Mutare Lithium Project



Li3 Lithium Corporation, a Canadian lithium exploration and development firm, has reported that its continuing exploration program at the Mutare Lithium Project has found lithium mineralization on a 1,2 kilometre length at the Nels Luck pegmatite target.

Rudairo Mapuranga

The company owns half of the Mutare Lithium Project, while Premier African Minerals Limited owns the other half. Premier African Minerals Limited also owns the Zulu Lithium and Tantalum Mine, which is located 80 kilometres from Bulawayo.

According to Li3 Lithium Corp, 2349 metres of trenching uncovered 1, 2 kilometres long and up to 60 metres wide pegmatites at the Nels Luck claim group.

The exploration program, which is currently focused on the Nels Luck area of the Mutare Greenstone Belt (MGB) East zone, is expected to aid in identifying priority targets for the upcoming 5,000metre exploration drilling program, which is set to begin in the third quarter of this year.

In conjunction with this increase in project ownership to 50%, the Company has assumed operatorship of the Mutare Project and taken over management of the exploration program. The exploration program includes geological mapping, soil geochemical survey, rock chip sampling and a trenching program to assist in identifying priority targets for a 5,000metre exploration drilling program, scheduled to start in the upcoming weeks.

François Auclair, CEO of Li3 Lithium, has visited the Mutare Project twice since February and believes that the Mutare Project has excellent potential for largescale lithium mineralization.

According to Mr. Auclair: "There are numerous spodumene rich pegmatites visible at surface and the project is adjacent to the large-scale Sabi Star Lithium Mine which recently commenced production. Li3 Lithium is confident about the presence of lithium but what remains to be determined are its tonnage, grade and mineralogy. For this reason, we have mobilized a full exploration team. An aggressive exploration program on the Mutare Project is now underway with initial results expected in the coming weeks and months."

Mutare Lithium Project, Zimbabwe

The Mutare Project consists of 1,500 hectares of licences retained within the Mutare Greenstone Belt and is located approximately 30 kilometres from the Sabi Star Lithium Tantalum Mine in eastern Zimbabwe's lithium district. The area was deemed prospective for lithium-caesiumtantalum pegmatites based on prior target generation work. Management believes the lithium exploration potential of the Mutare Greenstone Belt is analogous to that of the Pilbara Craton pegmatites in Western Australia.



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MINING AFFAIRS President pushes for adoption of automation, AI in Mining

President Emmerson Mnangagwa has urged the mining industry to move with the latest mining technologies which include robotics, automation and artificial intelligence (AI) at the same time ensuring sustainable extraction of mineral resources to create a world-class mining industry.

In an endeavour to increase productivity, health, and safety, the mining industry worldwide is adopting modern technologies such as AI, automation and robotics in line with Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) strategies for sustainable mining.

Speaking at the Sabi Star lithium floatation plant commissioning in Buhera recently, Mnangagwa said the mining sector in Zimbabwe should seek to modernise and industrialise while at the same time sustainably managing the environment for future use.

He encouraged higher and tertiary education institutions such as the School of Mines to modernise the education sector to produce students that are relevant to the modernisation of the mining industry

"We are determined to propel

modernisation and industrialization and deliver the next generation of jobs through economic production productive while sustainably managing our environment. My government through heritage-based education 5.0 continues to modernise the education sector which will ensure that the future mining sector workforce will have the requisite skills and competency from our higher institutions of learning. I challenge institutions such as the Zimbabwe School of Mines among others to review mining skills and training frameworks in line with new end innovative skills and gualifications required in the modern mining sector with the latest technology. Let us boldly leapfrog our mining sector towards the development of new technology including automation, robotics and artificial intelligence among others. I equally urge mining companies to support capacity building, training and economic

programs for the development of a diversified local business sector," HE Mnangagwa said.

The call by the President has come Kuvimba Mining House (KMH) owned

Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (Zisco) announced plans to utilize AI and modern technologies in order to revive their operations and produce high-quality steel.

Zisco Board Chairman Engineer Martin Manuhwa said Zisco was going to use all the sweat of the fourth industrial revolution in its plan for Zisco resuscitation. He said one of the leading Artificial intelligence companies in steel making industry in the whole world SMS group has been contracted to see through the adoption of modern technologies by Zisco. All over the world, SMS group stands for future-oriented technology and outstanding service in plant construction and mechanical engineering for the metals industry.

The Zisco chairman also said that the Company was going to team up with tertiary institutions for expertise in metallurgy, industrial processes, and digitalization to create new perspectives for the industry through continuous innovation.





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Chrome to replace REE in luminescent materials and catalysts



Chemists at the University of Basel have succeeded in replacing the rare earth elements (REE) found in illuminating screens with Chromium which is significantly a cheaper metal.

Rudairo Mapuranga

Luminescence may be seen in neon and fluorescent lamps; television, radar, and Xray fluoroscope screens; organic substances such as luminol or the luciferins in fireflies and glowworms; certain pigments used in outdoor advertising; and also natural electrical phenomena such as lightning and the aurora borealis.

The Researchers in a paper in the journal Nature Chemistry, said they developed chromium compounds that can replace the noble metals osmium and ruthenium in luminescent materials and catalysts.

The team reports that the luminescent properties of the new chromium materials are nearly as good as some of the osmium compounds used so far. Relative to osmium, however, chromium is about 20,000 times more abundant in the earth's crust and much cheaper.

The new materials are also proving to be efficient catalysts for photochemical reactions, including processes that are triggered by exposure to light.

If the new chromium compounds are irradiated with a red lamp, the energy from the light can be stored in molecules which can then serve as a power source.

"Here, there's also the potential to use our new materials in artificial photosynthesis to produce solar fuels," lead researcher Oliver Wenger said in a media statement.

To make the chromium atoms glow and enable them to convert energy, the researchers built them into an organic molecular framework consisting of carbon, nitrogen, and hydrogen.

The group designed this organic framework to be particularly stiff so that the chromium atoms are well packaged. This tailor-made environment helps to minimize energy losses due to undesired molecular vibrations and to optimize the luminescent and catalytic properties. The disadvantage of the new materials is that chromium requires a more complex framework than noble metals and further research will therefore be needed in the future.

Encased in its rigid organic framework, chromium proves to be much more reactive than noble metals when exposed to light. This paves the way for photochemical reactions that are otherwise difficult to initiate. A potential application could be in the production of active pharmaceutical ingredients.

Similar to noble metals

For a long time, the search for sustainable and cost-effective materials without noble metals focused primarily on iron and copper. Other research groups have already achieved promising results with both of these elements, and chromium has also been incorporated into luminescent materials in the past.

In many cases, however, the luminescent and catalytic properties of these materials lagged behind those of materials containing rare and expensive noble metals—therefore failing to represent a real alternative. The new materials made of chromium are different because they contain a form of chromium that is particularly similar to noble metals, thereby achieving luminescent and catalytic efficiencies that come very close to materials containing such metals.

"At the moment, it seems unclear which metal will ultimately win the race when it comes to future applications in luminescent materials and artificial photosynthesis," Wenger said. "What is certain, however, is that the postdocs Dr. Narayan Sinha and Dr. Christina Wegeberg have made important progress together."

Next, Wenger and his research group aim to develop their materials on a larger scale to allow broader testing of potential applications. By making additional improvements, they hope to achieve light emission in different spectral colors from blue to green to red. They also want to further optimize the catalytic properties to bring us a major step closer to converting sunlight into chemical energy for storage—as in photosynthesis.





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Gold deliveries increase by over 5 percent



old deliveries by the largescale producers increased by 5.03 per cent in August 2023 compared to the previous month with small-scale miners' deliveries decreasing by 15.2 per cent.

Rudairo Mapuranga

The Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners however remain the country's biggest gold producers accounting for 55.6 percent of gold deliveries in August and 60.34 percent from January to August of 2023.

Deliveries by the large-scale producers in August were 1100.6512 kgs compared to 1379.1247 kgs from Small-scale producers with total deliveries in August adding to 2 479.7759 kgs. Total deliveries for August decreased by 7.3 per cent compared to 2674 3806 kgs delivered in July.

For the period January to July, total deliveries by large-scale producers increased by 1.6 per cent to 6567.9290 kgs from 6464.1939 kgs in 2022. However, small-scale miners' deliveries decreased 17.5 per cent from 12472.2436 kgs delivered in 2022 to 10287.4774 in 2023. Total deliveries by both producers during the period January to July 2023 decreased by approximately 11 per cent to 16855.4064 kgs from 18936.4375 kgs delivered during the same period last year. Total deliveries by the large-scale gold producers during the period January to June 2023 increased by approximately 0.4 per cent from 5498.4087 kgs delivered in 2022 to 5519.9795 kgs.

However, deliveries by Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners (ASM) decreased by 17.31 per cent to 8661.0463 kgs from 10474.1159 kgs.

Also, total deliveries by both the large scale and the ASM declined by approximately 11.22 per cent to 14181.0258 kgs from 15972.5246 kgs.

In June alone, large-scale producers delivered 1032.5263 kgs from 837.1151 kgs. While the ASM deliveries decreased by 13.5131 percent with 1702.0787 kgs delivered in June from 1968.0192 kgs delivered in June last year. June total deliveries also decreased 2.5 per cent to 2734.6047 kgs from 2805.1343 kgs delivered in 2022.

There is an urgent need for financial institutions in Zimbabwe to look for opportunities and ways to capacitate Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Miners



(ASGM) to ramp up production in the wake of heavy rains which saw deliveries by the miners decline by 18.2 per cent during the first 5 months of 2023 compared to the same period last year.

Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners last year accounted for over 67 per cent of gold deliveries to the country's sole gold buyer and exporter Fidelity Gold Refinery (FGR). FGR General Manager Mr Peter Magaramombe attributed the improved contribution of small-scale producers to timeous payments to the miners by his organization.

Last year gold deliveries reached FGR's target of 35 tonnes, the increase in deliveries is attributed to ASM whose deliveries increased by 30.3 per cent to 24.1 tonnes from 18.5 tonnes delivered in 2021. Deliveries by large-scale producers were approximately 11.2 tonnes in 2022 as well as in 2021.

Gold deliveries to FGR in the first quarter of this year (2023) plunged 20 per cent to 6.194 in the first quarter of the year from 7.694 tonnes in the same period last year.

"Gold output has declined for the first quarter ended March 31 2023 to 6.194 tonnes from 7.694 tonnes during the comparable period last year due to heavy rains during the first two months of the year," FGR general manager Peter Magaramombe said.



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A Statistical Overview of the Lucrative Ventures Awaiting Miners



(Harare) - As we gradually progress towards the end of 2023, the mining industry finds itself brimming with opportunities to extract valuable minerals. The global market demand, coupled with consistent technological advancements, sets the stage for new mining ventures that promise substantial profitability.

Copper and lithium ranked materially higher as likely big winners in 2023, with battery minerals and base metals as the most likely areas for consolidation.

In this article we explore the top ten minerals that miners should consider focusing on in 2023, supported by insightful statistics.

Lithium:



With the growing popularity of electric vehicles and increased demand for energy storage solutions, lithium is poised to remain the most profitable mineral in the coming years. Global lithium demand is projected to surge to 1.82 million metric tons by 2025, a staggering increase of around 85% from 2020[^1^]. As lithium-ion batteries continue to revolutionize various sectors, mineral miners should prioritize exploring lithium-rich deposits. In Zimbabwe, areas of verified lithium deposits are Goromonzi, Mudzi, Buhera, Bikita, Chegutu, Harare, Insiza, Rushinga, Mutoko, Mutare, Hwange and more lithium is reported in other areas such as Kamativi.

Cobalt:

Cobalt, a crucial component in lithium-ion batteries, enjoys a flourishing market thanks to its role in the electric vehicle and renewable energy storage sectors. According to industry forecasts, demand for cobalt is expected to increase by 50% by 2025[^2^]. With limited global supply, miners should seize the opportunity and identify viable cobalt-rich deposits. Cobalt is found in Kwekwe, Insiza, Shamva, Bubi, Bindura.

Graphite:



As electric vehicles become more prevalent, the demand for graphite, a key material used in battery anodes, is set to skyrocket. The market estimates that graphite demand will triple by 2025[^3^]. Miners should target high-quality graphite deposits to meet the industry's growing needs. Hwange, Hurungwe, Kariba, and Makonde hold significant Graphite deposits.

Palladium:



Palladium, primarily used in catalytic converters and electrical contacts, is anticipated to maintain its profitability in 2023. Its importance in reducing vehicle emissions continues to drive demand. The projected supply deficit in the upcoming years further supports its profitability[^4^.] You can find Palladium in Kwekwe, Makonde, Shurugwi, Chegutu areas.

Rhodium:



Like palladium, rhodium is extensively used in automotive catalytic converters and plays a vital role in reducing harmful vehicle emissions. Given the supply concerns and continuous demand for efficient emission control equipment, rhodium is expected to retain its profitability through 2023[^5^].

Gold:



Gold:

The safe-haven allure of gold remains intact, attracting investors during times of uncertainty. While its position may not change significantly, a modest increase in demand, particularly from emerging markets and central banks, is expected to contribute to its profitability[^6^]. Gold is found in every district in Zimbabwe.

Nickel:

Given its importance in lithium-ion batteries, nickel's prominence as an essential component in the electric vehicle industry is set to grow. Forecasts indicate an annual growth rate of 19% for nickel demand through 2025[^7^]. Miners should focus on extracting high-grade nickel deposits. Areas of verified Nickel deposits are Bubi, Makonde, Kwekwe, Insiza, Guruve, Shamva, Shurugwi, Matobo, Chegutu, Bindura, Gweru

The ongoing global effort to transition to renewable energy sources bodes well for copper, as it is an integral part of solar panels, wind turbines, and electrical grids. By 2030, copper demand is projected to increase by 22%[^8^], affirming its potential as a profitable mineral for miners to extract. Zimbabwe has lots of copper deposits and it is an avenue the government needs to push more which can generate the the much-needed revenue. Makonde, Kadoma, Mutare, Chirumanzu, Chegutu, Kwekwe, Shurugwi, Beitbridge, Gokwe, Chipinge, Bikita, Insiza, Makonde, Harare, Bulawayo, Shamva, Chiredzi, Nkayi, Mudzi, Chegutu, Bindura, Kwekwe, Hurungwe, Bubi, Makonde, Bikita, Gwanda, Masvingo hold significant deposits of the mineral.

Rare Earth Elements (REEs):

REEs comprise a group of minerals crucial for technologies like smartphones, wind turbines, and medical devices. With a limited supply chain outside of China, efforts to diversify sources have increased

MINING AFFAIRS

demand for REEs. This surge in demand is expected to create opportunities for miners to tap into profitable REE deposits Zimbabwe has 19 of the world's rare earth minerals.

Zinc:

The demand for zinc, an essential component in galvanizing steel and numerous industrial applications, is expected to experience significant growth. Ongoing infrastructure projects and booming construction industries worldwide further cement zinc's profitability[^10^]. Zinc is found in Kwekwe, Gokwe, Nyanga.

Mineral miners seeking long-term profitability should consider the dynamic landscape of the market and capitalize on various opportunities. By targeting lithium, cobalt, graphite, palladium, rhodium, gold, nickel, copper, rare earth elements, and zinc, miners can lead the charge towards a prosperous future in 2023.

Copper:

Zimplats records 2 Lost Time Injuries



Australia Stock Exchange listed platinum group metals (PGM) producer Zimplats recorded 2 lost time injuries (LTI) during the quarter ended 30 June 2023 both which were related to fall of ground incident at Bimha Mine, the company revealed.

Rudairo Mapuranga

Through Zimplats Quarterly report for the period ending 30 June, 2023, the PGM producer said implementation of plans to avoid fall of ground at Bimha Mine are underway. "Two lost-time injuries were recorded at the mining division during the quarter under review, both of which related to fallof-ground incidents at Bimha Mine. The implementaton of remedial action plans from the accident investigations is ongong," Zimplats said.

Zimplats is subscribed to zero harm and has been working to ensure that it's worker's safety is number one priority. The Company recorded over 5 million fatality free shifts before and was considered an example in Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) issues. Zimplats board and management remain committed to ensuring a safe working envronment for all employees and contractors.

In 2021, Zimplats was certified to the comprehensive IS045001 international standard for occupational (ISO) health and safety management as the platinum producer is geared towards the achievement of the zero-harm target.

According to the platinum group parent company, Impala Platinum Holdings (Implats) Zimplats and two other Implats owned platinum producing firms were certified as it seeks to make sure that all its platinum operations are certified by 2024.

"In 2021, Zimplats, Marula and Impala Springs were certified to the

comprehensive IS045001 international standard for occupational health and safety management. Our objective is to have all our managed operations certified by 2024."

ISO 45001:2018 specifies requirements for an occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system, and gives guidance for its use, to enable organizations to provide safe and healthy workplaces by preventing work-related injury and ill health, as well as by proactively improving its OH&S performance.

MINING AFFAIRS

Unlocking Success for Small-Scale Miners in the Gold Mining Business



old mining has long been considered one of the most lucrative industries globally.

However, it is often associated with large corporations, overlooking the potential for small-scale miners to thrive in this sector. With the right knowledge, approach, and support, small-scale miners can indeed achieve success and pave their way towards sustainable growth. In Zimbabwe small-scale have dominated the sector submitting more bullion than large corporations despite operational challenges. In this article, we will outline key strategies and facts that can empower small-scale miners in the gold mining business.

Proper Geological Survey:

Small-scale miners should prioritize conducting a thorough geological survey before commencing mining operations. Whilst costly this step helps identify potential gold deposits, analyze the potential yield, and understand the geological risks associated with the site. Contacting local geological institutions or hiring experienced professionals can significantly enhance the accuracy of this assessment, reducing the chances of investing in an unpromising location.

Utilize Modern Technology:

Technological advancements have revolutionized the gold mining industry, opening doors for small-scale miners. Miniaturized equipment, such as portable excavators or wash plants, reduces initial investment costs and increases operational flexibility. Advanced tools like magnetic and gravimetric separators enhance the recovery rates, maximizing the yield from ore-rich deposits. Embracing these technologies allows small-scale miners to compete effectively with larger operations and boost overall efficiency.

Establish Cooperative Alliances syndicates):

Small-scale miners can capitalize on the strength of numbers by forming cooperative alliances with neighbouring miners. Such alliances enable shared resources, collective bargaining power, and access to larger supply chains. Additionally, pooling financial resources for investments like machinery or land acquisitions can significantly reduce individual burdens. Collective knowledge-sharing and problem-solving within alliances further strengthen the capability of small-scale miners to succeed in the gold mining business.

Engage in Responsible Mining Practices: Sustainability is key for long-term success in the gold mining industry. Small-scale miners must adopt responsible and environmentally friendly mining practices. Compliance with local regulations, employing water conservation methods, and monitoring and reducing carbon emissions will not only ensure continued operations but also enhance the reputation of the business. Responsible mining practices also attract investment from socially conscious investors who prioritize ethical operations, further supporting business growth.

Formalize Operations and Secure Financing:

Small-scale miners often struggle to secure adequate financing due to their informal nature. Formalizing operations by obtaining necessary licenses and permits, registering the business, and complying with regulatory frameworks can enhance the credibility of the business. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of securing financing from banks, investors, or government schemes tailored for smallscale mining. Financial backing facilitates acquiring modern equipment, hiring skilled labour, and expanding operations, ultimately driving success in the gold mining business.

Participation in Training and Skill Development:

Continuous learning and skill development play a crucial role in the success of smallscale miners. Participating in training programs, workshops, and educational initiatives provided by established mining institutions or government bodies empowers miners with up-to-date knowledge on ore identification, mineral processing techniques, gold recovery methods, and business management. Equipping themselves with the latest industry knowledge and technical skills enhances overall productivity and optimizes resource utilization, increasing profitability.

Conclusion:

Small-scale miners possess immense potential to succeed in the gold mining business when armed with the right tools and strategies. By conducting thorough geological surveys, embracing modern technology, establishing cooperative alliances, adopting responsible mining practices, formalizing operations, and investing in skill development, small-scale miners can pave their way towards sustainable growth. It is imperative that governments, industry leaders, and stakeholders collaborate to provide technical support, financial aid, and regulatory guidance to unlock the true potential of small-scale miners and create a more inclusive and prosperous gold mining industry.

US\$45million Sabi Star lithium floatation plant

Commissioned



resident Emmerson Mnangagwa recently commissioned a US\$ 45 million Sabi Star lithium floatation plant in Buhera, Zimbabwe.

Rudairo Mapuranga

Speaking at the official commissioning of the floatation plant President Mnangagwa commended Sabi Star Lithium Mine for moving with the government's vision that will see the country begin positioned as a key player in the Lithium market.

"It is pleasing to note that Sabi Star has taken heed of the call by my Government to beneficiate and value-add minerals before exportation through the construction of the lithium (spodumene) flotation plant. My Government banned the export of raw lithium ores through Statutory Instrument 5 of 2023 which was then followed by Statutory Instrument 57 of 2023 meant to promote local beneficiation of the lithium ores.

"The lithium (spodumene) flotation plant we are witnessing here today represents a huge effort in Mineral Value Addition and Beneficiation which is in line with goals of the National Development Strategy 1 (NDSI) and Statutory Instruments I have mentioned above. The global demand for lithium is rapidly increasing, and the presence of our own processing facilities not only reduces our reliance on imports but also positions Zimbabwe as a key player in the lithium market," Mnangagwa said.

Vice President of Zimbabwe Dr

Constantine Chiwenga speaking at the same event said the lithium flotation plant will harness the lithium-rich mineral resources abundant in Buhera, tapping into the vast lithium reserves and transforming them into a higher value beneficiated product sought after in the global market.

"The collaborative efforts from Sabi Star have resulted in the successful completion of this processing plant through their investments in our country's wide longterm investor-friendly opportunities. Through their dedication and passion, the country is establishing itself as one of the top lithium mining and processing hubs," Dr Chiwenga said.

The Minister of Mines and Mining Development Hon Winston Chitando said the official opening of the Max Mind Sabi Star's Flotation plant is a clear testimony that the strategies outlined in the National Development Strategy 1 (NDSI) are beginning to bear results.

"Today, we are launching this state-of-theart lithium flotation plant set up by one of the major producers in the lithium subsector, Max Mind Sabi Star. I can assure you, Your Excellency, that this project has the potential to be a major contributor to the entire lithium mineral processing revolution by unlocking the full potential of our mineral resources. The plant will be capable of processing low-grade spodumene with high efficiency and output," Chitando said.

MINING AFFAIRS

The construction of the Sabi Star plant required a capital injection of USD 45 Million and has the capacity to process 3,000 tonnes of lithium (spodumene) per day. Operation of the flotation plant will lead to direct employment of 450 employees, 85% of them being locals and another 400 contractors.

The declared resource at the mine is 6 million tonnes of Lithium and Tantalite ores. Exploration work commenced in 2018 and cost a total of USD 6 Million.

Earthworks for the processing plant were started in June 2022 with plant construction reaching 50 percent completion in December 2022, testing phase in May 2023, and full commissioning in August 2023.

During the construction stage, the Project employed over 1000 employees mainly from the local communities.

The construction of a 15 MW thermal power plant to supply power for all operations at the mine is now 40 per cent complete.





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