

INDIA TODAY

Celebrating working mothers in mining this mother's day

This Mother's Day 2025, the mining industry celebrates working mothers redefining leadership in a male-dominated field



By Arunima Jha



As the world celebrates Mother's Day on May 11, 2025, the mining industry, traditionally associated with masculinity, is experiencing a significant transformation. Increasingly, companies are implementing inclusive policies that support working mothers, enabling women to take on leadership roles in operations, engineering, and safety. These women are successfully balancing the demands of motherhood with professional responsibilities, breaking down traditional gender barriers and redefining leadership in an industry once dominated by men. This shift towards gender diversity is not just a goal but a growing reality, shaping a more equitable and inclusive future for the mining sector.

SUPPORTING WORKING MOTHERS IN MINING

In response to the growing number of women in the workforce, many mining companies are implementing policies that help working mothers excel in their careers while also managing their family responsibilities. Flexible work arrangements, such as hybrid schedules and extended parental leave, are becoming more common, allowing mothers to balance their professional and personal lives more effectively. Additionally, some companies offer on-site childcare and wellness programs to ensure employees have access to the support they need.

"We understand that unpaid care work, mostly done by women, can be a barrier to career growth," says Ms. Madhu Srivastava, CHRO, Vedanta Limited. To combat this, Vedanta has rolled out initiatives that help working mothers balance career and family life, including flexible work arrangements and on-site childcare at key locations.

These policies are starting to show tangible results, with over 2,600 women in Vedanta's workforce, 28 per cent of whom hold decision-making roles. "When women lead, industries evolve," says Srivastava, emphasising that inclusion is not just about policies—it's about changing mindsets and creating lasting impact.

INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT WORKING MOTHERS

Mining companies such as National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) are also taking steps to support working mothers. Daycare facilities at project sites, flexible working hours, and other family-friendly initiatives are designed to help women thrive in their roles without sacrificing their family responsibilities.

“NMDC’s commitment to creating an inclusive work environment is reflected in the upgrades to its childcare facilities and the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across its mines,” says a representative from NMDC. This initiative is aimed at supporting the induction of more women into mining-related roles.

In addition, NMDC has introduced SOPs across its projects to encourage the recruitment and promotion of women in roles traditionally held by men.

WOMEN CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES IN MINING

Women in leadership roles are helping to break down long-standing gender stereotypes in mining. Smt. Sima Kumari, Senior Manager (Civil Engineering) at NMDC’s Diamond Mining Project, who joined the project site 11 years ago as the only woman in a male-dominated field, says, “Women can thrive in engineering roles. It’s about proving your skills and overcoming the challenges.”

Similarly, Smt. Shweta Kumari, Senior Manager in the Geology Department, has seen more women join the workforce over the years, and credits NMDC’s supportive policies for helping her balance her professional and family life.

The efforts of these women prove that gender does not define one’s ability to lead or succeed in the mining industry. Their experiences highlight the unique strengths that women bring to the workplace, such as creativity, focus, and resilience.

“As more women rise to leadership positions, they serve as role models who advocate for workplace equity and set the stage for future generations of women leaders,” says a spokesperson for NMDC. This growing representation is gradually changing the narrative around gender roles in the industry, making the sector more inclusive and sustainable in the long term.