

# Vedanta commissions India's first portable rig for gold, critical mineral exploration

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ETManufacturing Desk, ET Manufacturing

August 24, 2026



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[Vedanta Ltd](#) on Monday said it commissioned a high-speed hydrostatic [portable rig](#) for [mineral exploration](#), with the company deploying the equipment at two projects in Chhattisgarh targeting gold and [critical minerals](#), including nickel, chromium and platinum group elements.

According to the company's statement, the rig is India's first high-speed [hydrostatic portable rig](#) and is designed for exploration in inaccessible and difficult terrains. It can undertake drilling up to 1,000 metres, compared with the typical 300-400 metre range, while reducing the time required to move equipment between locations.

The deployment aims to enable faster, less intrusive exploration of mineral reserves while improving safety and operational efficiency, Vedanta said.

## **Critical mineral exploration**

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The company said it has secured 10 critical mineral blocks across commodities including gold, manganese, copper, nickel-chromium-PGE, tungsten, graphite, vanadium, rare earth elements and potash.

Exploration is already underway across five of these blocks, while the company has also been declared the successful bidder for the Punnam manganese block in Andhra Pradesh.

The company said its exploration capabilities are particularly relevant as India seeks to reduce dependence on imports of critical minerals and build domestic capabilities across the mineral value chain.

Gold is used in medical applications, high-reliability electronics and other strategic industries, while minerals such as copper and nickel are important for data centres, artificial intelligence infrastructure, renewable energy, electric mobility, defence, semiconductors and advanced manufacturing, it said.

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## **Global demand**

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The company said global demand for critical minerals used in clean-energy technologies is expected to nearly triple by 2030 under the International Energy Agency's Net Zero Emissions Scenario and quadruple by 2040, reaching close to 40 million tonnes annually.

This has increased efforts globally to diversify critical mineral supply chains and reduce dependence on individual sources, Vedanta said.

India has substantial reserves of rare earth elements and other critical minerals but remains dependent on imports despite its geological potential, it added.

## **Technology-led expansion**

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The portable rig deployment is part of Vedanta's broader technology-led expansion under its Vedanta 2.0 strategy, which includes increasing its presence in critical minerals and the clean-energy value chain.

The group has mineral assets across India, South Africa, Namibia, Liberia and Zambia and plans to expand into additional geographies, increase value-added processing in India and develop mining partnerships, the company said.

The company said its focus is to strengthen capabilities across exploration, mining and processing as India seeks to build more resilient domestic and global critical-mineral supply chains.