

### *Exploration Activity*

Exploration for lead/zinc was given priority under the Eighth Plan. The GSI reports significantly increased reserves in the North Sindesar Ridge(S) Block, and the Tikhi Extension Block in Rajasthan, as well as in the Kayar-Ghugra Block. HZL has conducted advanced exploration near Ajmer, Rajasthan, and at the Dhukonda Lead prospect in Andhra Pradesh. Private exploration in Rajasthan has also increased since the 1993 policy reforms.

### *Prospects*

HZL and the large Australian firm BHP have reportedly created a joint venture for base metal exploration and development. HZL is also pursuing joint venture projects for exploration and development of other base and precious metals (notably nickel, tungsten and tin) as well as industrial minerals (potash, mineral sands, etc.)

The Ministry of Mines indicates scope for collaboration in lead/zinc exploration, and joint ventures for primary lead production, as well as primary and secondary zinc production.

The Indian Investment centre notes that depth exploration (below 300 metres), and economical methods to exploit low-grade deposits, are needed. It adds that "there still remains good possibility of locating ...concealed ore bodies in other lead- zinc belts."

### **Diamonds**

#### *Major Producers*

National Mineral Development Corp. Ltd. (Government of India)  
Government of Madhya Pradesh, Directorate of Mines and Geology

#### *Output/Trade*

India is among the world's leading diamond-cutting centres (83 per cent of all diamonds by one account). Virtually all rough diamonds are imported, and the output exported. The country has one producing diamond mine at Panna in Madhya Pradesh. Other kimberlite formations have been identified in the Ramkherisa- Hirappur belt in Andhra, Pradesh. Total production in 1993/94 was 19,607 carats, of both gemstone and industrial quality.

### *Exploration Activity*

The GSI maintains an active diamond exploration program. In 1993/94, they report (1) processing of Venkatampelle pipe in Andhra Pradesh yielded 177 diamonds weighing 16.63 carats, and 183 diamonds weighing 36.83 carats. (2) discovery of three pipes near Raipur, Madhya Pradesh, and (3) proposed diamond investigations in western Orissa and eastern Maharashtra.