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#### **FOREWARD**

**SAKUNTALA CHANDA** Editor, SERC Industry Scenario

### Mining: The Bedrock of India's Economic Growth

As India transitions towards a sustainable future, the mining sector's role will expand beyond resource extraction. It must become a catalyst for innovation, a driver of economic resilience, and a steward of environmental sustainability. Collaborative efforts between the government, industry, and communities are essential to realizing this vision.

India's mining sector has the potential to become a global leader in sustainable practices, setting benchmarks for responsible resource management. By embracing technology, fostering innovation, and committing to environmental and social goals, the industry can build a legacy of growth that benefits generations to come.

The mining industry is undeniably a cornerstone of India's economic and industrial prowess, serving as a critical backbone for power, steel, cement, and infrastructure sectors. With its vast reserves and significant contribution to GDP, employment, and foreign investment, mining occupies a pivotal position in India's economic trajectory. However, this dynamic sector faces an equally formidable challenge: achieving sustainable and responsible mining to meet the nation's developmental and environmental goals.

As India stands at the cusp of a transformative decade leading up to 2030, the mining industry must align itself with global best practices in environmental stewardship and technological advancement. This foreword examines the sector's current performance, future prospects, and the imperative to integrate sustainable practices into its growth strategy.

#### India's Mining Wealth: A Geological Treasure Trove

India's rich geological heritage underscores the country's immense mining potential. The nation is endowed with 95 minerals, categorised into four fuels, 10 metallic, 23 non-metallic, three atomic, and 55 minor minerals. India holds prominent positions globally:

- World's largest producer of sheet mica
- Third-largest producer of steel and coal
- Fifth-largest bauxite reserves

Despite its abundant resources, only 20% of India's total mineral reserves have been explored, leaving vast untapped potential. This highlights a dual challenge and opportunity: scaling up exploration activities while ensuring sustainable exploitation.

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