



**HARESH MELWANI**

The ferrous groups comprises Iron Ore, Manganese ore and Chromite and are vital raw materials for the steel

Industry and their availability has become a major hurdle in the growth of the Indian steel Industry. Steel production + consumption is a vital indicator of the health of any economy and in my opinion the hurdles in the growth of Indian Steel Production had given a forecast that a slowdown was round the corner and we have seen now the after effects of the same on our economy. Today, the Rupee dollar exchange rate is touching Rs 62.00 approx and the Planning Commission has declared a lower growth estimate at 5 % approx, which both are indeed alarming, and should serve as a wakeup call to all of us. While I do not claim that solving the woes of the Steel & its Raw materials sector will solve all the problems of the Indian economy, some positive steps will indeed help in the general revival of the health of our economic system, and the steps we take in this specific sector can be the solution blueprint to tackle other sectoral problems.

# Issues & Challenges before the Ferrous Minerals Mining Industry in India

- **Hareesh Melwani**, CEO, H. L. Nathurmal

## What are the problems that need to be tackled on an emergency footing ?

- Firstly, we must start by acknowledging that we are in a problem situation which really needs a urgent recovery plan, without which our economy may crash.

Secondly, an efficient and Super Transparent system of Rule of Law has to be strictly enforced, without bowing down to political pressures. This is going to be a very bitter pill, and will need to be swallowed. What we have seen are the cumulative effects of cornering of resources by a few influential persons, rampant illegal operations of mines, evasion of duties & taxes, etc; and all could be summed up as total breakdown in the Legal Control Systems, with the Criminals going scot free.

Thirdly, the existing laws need to be looked at afresh, since they are open to so

many different interpretations, as is being seen by a plethora of litigations at different courts resulting in so many differing orders. The consequence is that the Judiciary has taken over the functions of Legislature and is now settling the law instead of interpreting it. This situation calls for pro-active engagement with our lawmakers at State & Central levels, cutting across party lines, since we are now in a situation where our survival itself is threatened.

Fourthly, industry must resolve to behave within the norms of reasonableness, failing which Civil Society will not tolerate the irresponsible working, due to increasing awareness resulting from better education and media reporting.

Fifth, a pro-active engagement in dialogue by all stakeholders including the various NGO's, without ego issues, since we all impinge upon each other's space and that appropriate development is inevitable and is a consequence of our increasing needs.

We really have no choice left but to pull together in the larger National Interest.

