

FG discovers high quality platinum mineral in Niger

Federal Government says it has discovered high quality of platinum group elements in a village in Niger State.

Abubakar Bwari, minister of state, Mines and Steel Development, announced this on Monday at the groundbreaking ceremony of AG Vision Mining Site in Suleja Local Government Area of the state.

Bwari said the large mineral deposit was discovered at Kuchiko village in Suleja, adding that the quality of the discovery was higher than that of South Africa, regarded as the highest deposit of the mineral in the world.

"A preliminary report by the company shows high deposit of minerals we are looking for.

"From what we have seen, the results are quite encouraging. The platinum group they have seen so far, the quality we have is higher than that of South Africa. And they are world largest producer of platinum group metal.

"That goes to show that Nigeria is highly endowed with this mineral. But what we are looking for now is the commercial viability of the mineral," he said.

He said the discovery was made by AG Vision Mining, awarded the exploration project in 2018.

He said the Federal Government had earmarked N15 billion for exploration of minerals

in Nigeria to generate detailed geo-science data of quality and quantity of available minerals in the country.

He said the project aimed at addressing one of the key challenges in the development of the solid minerals sector, which was the absence of bankable mineral data.

"No investor will take us seriously if we are unable to provide the kind of accurate, verifiable data that speaks to both the quality of mineral we have in Nigeria.

"This project is the biggest exploration activity of its kind ever embarked upon by the ministry," he said.

According to him, the project is domiciled in the Nigerian Geological Survey Agency (NGSA) and it is being supervised by the MMSD, it is also funded through the Natural Resources Fund.

The News Agency of Nigeria reports that the N15 billion was drawn from the Natural Resource Development Fund to the ministry as intervention fund to focus on exploration, which is the heart of mining.

He said that the project was designed to be executed and funded in phases, from the desktop studies, geological mapping among others.

The state minister said that all exploration companies and consultants handling exploration projects should provide reports at the end of each pro-

ject phase.

"The objective of the project is not limited to the generation of detailed geo-science information like ore reserves, mineral occurrences, discovery and reporting of new minerals, quality and grade of ore and minerals.

"The objective is to also improve the geological knowledge of the locality, generate wealth and employment along value chain; the outcome of the project will be used for policy and research purpose."

Abubakar Mua'zu, permanent secretary of the ministry, said the project was timely, as it would attract more mining investors into the country.

Abdulrazak Garba, director-general, Nigeria Geological Survey Agency (NGSA), said the project was initiated to bridge the gap between exploration data and mining development.

Garba said the project was also designed to know locations of minerals such as gold, lead and zinc, silver, copper, tantalite among others in Nigeria.

Fadi Ghazale, managing director, AG Vision Mining, said the event was another landmark in the roadmap towards development of Nigeria's solid minerals industry.

According to Ghazale, AG Vision Mining is currently exploring in many states, such as Niger, Ogun and Oyo states.

