



## 20 Microns outlines growth plans

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Indian attapulgite and GCC miner describes expansions, plus new Malaysian subsidiary

Indian industrial minerals company, 20 Microns Ltd, is storming ahead with mining investments this year, including local and overseas expansion projects, following the allocation of \$20m. for new attapulgite and bentonite mines in Gujarat, India, earlier this year (*see IM February '09, p.18*).

As outlined to **IM**, 20 Microns has formed a new subsidiary, 20 Microns Sdn. Bdh., based in Ipoh, west Malaysia, which will begin producing ground calcium carbonate (GCC) in 2009 or 2010. The company plans to sell its Malaysian GCC products to consumers in South and South East Asia.

Meanwhile, 20 Microns has also outlined plans to expand its wet GCC capacity with the creation of a new facility in Daman, west India.

The company has identified the site and expects to begin plant construction in late 2009 with a view to becoming operational by early 2010. 20 Microns' wet GCC grades will be sold to the plastics and paper markets.

### **New nano production**

In addition to these ambitious projects, 20 Microns has become the first Indian producer of nano grade minerals, with the creation of subsidiary company 20 Microns Nano Minerals Ltd.

Atil Parikh, joint managing director of 20 Microns, told **IM**: "20 Microns is now entering into the segment of nano minerals after being immensely successful in launching various products in the micronized and sub-micronized ranges."

Following a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement between 20 Microns and the Gujarat government for new attapulgite and bentonite mines, 20 Microns Nano plans to focus on producing attapulgite products such as inorganic thickeners.

The attapulgite will be sourced from mines in Waghodia and Bhavnagar, Gujarat state, while other nano grades – such as bentonite thickeners – will be sourced from operations in Nandesari and Bhuj, Gujarat state. The company will also produce diatomaceous earth products and hydrous kaolin.

20 Microns, which also produces barytes, lithomer, and talc, is one of the country's largest producers of high performance minerals used in functional fillers.