

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 10, 2015 /CNW/ - Since 1907, the majority of US mining disasters were caused by either fire or an explosion. Despite this pattern, very little has changed in the mining process since the invention and use of explosives, a method that wreaks havoc on the environment, hinders productivity, and puts employees at risk. In 2010, an explosion at the Upper Big Branch mine in Naoma, West Virginia killed 29 miners. A year later, Governor's Independent Investigation Panel's report revealed that the explosion was the result of safety system failures.

The Green Revolution is impacting a number of sectors, from technology to agriculture to the automotive industry. However, despite the last century being filled with technological and social advancements, in terms of the mining process, the mining sector has gone mostly untouched. Yet, one company, [Nippon Dragon Resources Inc.](#) (TSXV: NIP – OTCQB: RCCMF), is looking to change that.

A Mining Company with a Green Edge

Nippon Dragon Resources is a hybrid mining and technology company that's active in the exploration and development of gold resources in Quebec. The company's flagship gold property Rocmec 1, a fully permitted project located in Quebec, includes a 100-meter deep, two-compartment shaft, and an 844 meters decline, allowing access to four levels (50, 90, 110 and 130 meters). Over the past years, in excess of \$41 million has been invested in rehabilitating the property, surface and underground infrastructure, diamond drilling, equipment, drifting and the acquisition of a 75 tpd treatment plant, designed for underground installation. The latest NI43-101 report states gold resources of 125,000 ounces in measured/indicated, and 360,000 gold ounces of inferred resources. The project is 'shovel ready' and management is confident production will start in 2016. A portion of the mine will serve to showcase the thermal fragmentation mining method to potential clients and distributors.

The company, while an active junior mining company, has shifted its focus towards technological developments. Nippon Dragon's latest innovation, The Thermal Fragmentation mining method, has presented results that will not only save time and money, but it will also make mining part of the green revolution. "We just reduce the side effects of mining operations," said Jean-Yves Therien, Nippon's Vice-President of Business Development. "Our mining is a selective process. Most mining processes, in our view, are not selective." Recent events are adding credit to one of Nippon's slogans, 'the way of the future for mining high-grade narrow vein precious metal deposits'.

An Industry Breakthrough

The challenge facing modern miners is the actual retrieving of the precious metals. Most, if not all the 'easy gold' has already been mined. Remaining precious metal deposits are found in high-grade ore that's situated within narrow-vein structures that are difficult to mine profitably. Drill and blast mining, the conventional mining method, has been used for centuries. Other methods, such as shrinkage or long hole, are either labor intensive or present significant dilution issues.

Thermal fragmentation is a mining method that uses heat to 'spall' high-grade veins, greatly reducing the use of explosives. This method only extracts the mineralized ore with minimal dilution. This 'surgical' precision alleviates a number of stresses, both environmental and financial. Using Nippon's thermal fragmentation method reduces waste, uses less chemicals, and makes fewer alterations to the terrain. "We have a huge positive impact on the environment, because we significantly reduce dilution" said Therien. With less impact on the environment, the entire mining process becomes more streamlined. The amount of manpower needed is reduced, no need for a primary crusher and so on. "Because we reduce dilution, you truck less, you treat less and you dispose less," said Therien.

The "Apple" of the Mining Sector

A process that yields so many positive environmental changes and operational outcomes has the potential to revolutionize an entire industry. "If we were in pharmaceutical industry, I would say that we would be worth billions," said Therien. "It's speculative; but, we have THE solution to multibillion dollar problems for the mining industry. I cannot give you a real target. However, I'd like to say that we could be the Apple of the mining industry". As the company website states, "Simply put, we mine ounces, not tonnes."

Over the past year, Nippon has garnered international attention. In March of this year, Nippon successfully conducted three surface demonstrations in Japan to showcase their exclusive and patented thermal fragmentation technology. Representatives from the industrial, mining and construction sectors, along with representatives from the Japanese government responsible for major infrastructure projects in the country, were in attendance.

This past September, the company partnered with IBM to develop a cloud-based information acquisition system, working along with the thermal fragmentation technology that would allow Nippon to collect data from thermal sensors on the thermal fragmentation units. The concept of an 'Intelligent Mine' minimizes its impact on the environment while optimizing operations, reducing mining costs, increasing productivity, and providing safer working conditions through automation. This collaboration between Nippon and IBM is positioned to make this concept a reality.

Furthermore, Nippon's thermal fragmentation process can be utilized in other sectors. Where there's a city in the world that needs to dig a tunnel, build a bridge, or lay tracks for a subway, rocks typically block or present difficulties to work around crucial municipal systems, like water pipes. Thermal Fragmentation, for the construction industry, could be a game changer. "If there's a place that you don't want to use explosives," said Therien, "it's in the city."

Modernizing a Vital Industry

An industry that is plagued with safety concerns and costly operations is in desperate need for a solution that offers one key element: precision. Mining contractors like Don Bourgeois and Sons Inc. agree, and have ratified their agreement with Nippon for usage and distribution of Nippon's thermal fragmentation mining method to include all of Canada. Also, in March, the company signed an exclusive distribution agreement with SAFESCAPE for its patented Thermal Fragmentation mining method in various contracts and mining operations throughout the Countries of Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and the Philippines Nippon Dragon's mission of achieving selective mining with their Thermal Fragmentation process is the long-awaited green solution that is aimed to become a necessity to the modern mining sector.

For more information about Nippon Dragon Resources, www.nippondragon.com.

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