News Release

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JX Nippon Mining & Metals Corporation

JX Nippon Mining & Metals Corporation Announces Major Expansion of Production Capacity for Cathode Materials for Automotive Lithium-Ion Batteries

JX Nippon Mining & Metals Corporation (head office: Otemachi 2-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; president: Masanori Okada) has decided to increase the annual production capacity for cathode materials for automotive lithium-ion batteries at its Isohara Works (Kitaibaraki-shi, Ibaraki) from the current 300 tons to 5,000 tons. A total investment of 9.2 billion yen will be made, and the expanded production facilities are scheduled to commence operation at the beginning of 2012.

The construction work related to this facility expansion has been selected by Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry for a fiscal 2010 subsidy for programs to promote siting of job-creating industries with low-carbon society.

Lithium-ion batteries are used as essential onboard power sources for next-generation eco-friendly vehicles, including electric vehicles (EV), plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV), and hybrid electric vehicles (HEV), and demand for such batteries is increasing rapidly. JX Nippon Mining & Metals decided to substantially increase its production capacity in light of the forecast that lithium-ion batteries that use its cathode materials will be incorporated in next-generation eco-friendly vehicles on a full-scale basis.

Lithium-ion batteries for next-generation eco-friendly vehicles must have a high-level balance of battery capacity, safety, and life expectancy, and the cathode materials used in such batteries must have the quality and properties needed to meet these requirements. Through this major expansion of its facilities utilizing its proprietary integrated process, JX Nippon Mining & Metals will build a framework for the stable provision of high-purity, homogeneous cathode materials that fully satisfy the above quality requirements.

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With an eye to creating a resource-recycling framework, JX Nippon Mining & Metals will actively promote demonstration tests toward the commercialization of a system for efficient recovery of metals from used lithium-ion batteries to secure raw materials for cathode materials. It is expected that such a resource-recycling system will contribute greatly to the stable procurement of the raw materials needed for the production of the cathode materials.

(Reference) Cathode materials developed by JX Nippon Mining & Metals for automotive lithium-ion batteries

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