

Interview of Mr. Atalanta Chakraborty, Chief Operating Officer of BTL EPC LTD. with WNP.



English Version.

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The coal powerhouse is looking for technology. Polish companies have a lot to offer.

By Aleksandra Helbin | Published: September 18, 2026 | Source: WNP.pl

India is increasing coal production and preparing for the increasing use of underground mining. This opens up a large market for technology suppliers. "Polish companies have underground mining expertise that India will increasingly need," says Atalanta Chakraborty, COO of BTL EPC to WNP. The Indian company is already implementing several projects with Polish companies. During the Future Mining Forum & Expo, it signed an agreement with Compensus. Further agreements are in the works.

Original Polish Version:

<https://www.wnp.pl/przemysl/weglowa-potega-szuka-technologiei-polskie-firmy-maja-tu-wiele-do-zaoferowania,1100302.html>

Summary Highlights

- BTL EPC has a strong presence in the Indian mining market – according to Atalanta Chakraborty, the company accounts for over 60% of the underground mine conveyor drive market and collaborates with companies such as the state-owned NTPC. Now, it wants to expand its offerings with additional technologies.
- The future of Indian mining will be increasingly linked to underground mining and longwall systems - areas in which Poland has many years of experience.
- Polish technology, however, is not enough. The Indian market expects local production, service, and spare parts, so one of the cooperation models is technology transfer and production in India.
- Chakraborty points out that one of the weaknesses of some Polish companies, which hinders their expansion into the Indian market, is the excessively long decision-making process. "Business doesn't wait for anyone. If you hesitate too long, someone else will take your place," he tells WNP.

Cooperation and Technological Hub

You're also developing collaborations with other Polish companies. Is Poland becoming a mining technology hub for BTL?

Poland is an important partner for us. I have personally been working with Polish companies for about 20 years and am well acquainted with the competencies of your industry.

BTL EPC has a strong presence in the Indian mining sector, including in ore transport systems. We now want to expand our offerings to include additional equipment for underground mining. We are also very interested in longwall systems, as this is the direction in which underground mining will develop in India. Therefore, we are looking for technologies in Poland, where the mining industry is highly developed and boasts many years of experience.

During the Future Mining Forum & Expo, we signed an agreement with Compensus regarding underground mining equipment. We are also expanding our collaboration with Famur on longwall systems and with Famak on energy equipment. We have different needs in each of these areas, so we collaborate with various partners. We take these plans very seriously.

India will need more and more technology for underground mining

India plans to further increase coal production. How will this change the demand for mining technologies, especially in underground mining?

India has a population of 1.4 billion and a huge demand for energy. The economy is growing rapidly, and we are investing heavily in infrastructure: energy, ports, mining, steel, airports, roads, and bridges...

Coal continues to play a significant role in India's energy sector, and mining will continue to grow in the coming years. Consequently, we will gradually explore deeper deposits. This translates into a greater importance of underground mining and a growing demand for technologies that are currently insufficiently available in India.

And this is where you see a place for Polish companies?

Definitely. Poland has extensive knowledge and experience in underground mining, especially in longwall mining and working at great depths. The technologies of Polish companies are very good.

Additionally, Polish producers can be cost-competitive with some Western European companies. This is important for the Indian market, as with such a large-scale investment, price obviously matters.

On the other hand, India has a vast manufacturing base, many good engineers, and skilled workers. Therefore, the natural model emerging is to combine Polish technology with Indian manufacturing capabilities.

Make in India is changing the model of cooperation

So a model based solely on exporting Polish machines to India may not be enough?

"In some cases, exporting will make sense, but for large devices, it won't always be the most competitive solution. Transporting them is expensive, and manufacturing them in India is cheaper."

Therefore, one possible model for Polish-Indian cooperation involves technology transfer and production sharing between the two countries. Key, specialized components could be supplied from Poland—especially those designed for specific machines and unavailable on the local market. Standard components and large structures could be manufactured or purchased in India, where a broad industrial and component base is available.

This model allows for reduced production and transportation costs while retaining the most important elements: technology, know-how, and key device components, for the Polish partner. As a result, the finished product can be more competitively priced.

India may become a production base for Polish companies

So, should Polish companies consider not only exporting to India but also joint production locally? What might such a cooperation model look like in practice?

One possibility is a joint venture between a Polish and Indian company, which is in line with Make in India - the Narendra Modi government's program promoting the localization of production in India.

The Polish partner brings technology, know-how, quality standards, and oversight. Some devices can be manufactured in India, while specialized components continue to be supplied from Poland. The finished product is then jointly offered by both partners.

Why is local presence so important?

Indian customers expect, above all, service and quick access to spare parts. This is difficult to effectively provide solely from Poland.

Therefore, on-site facilities are needed, including a parts warehouse and local service. The Polish company can supply the technology and key components, while the Indian partner can provide ongoing customer service.

Can production in India also help Polish companies expand into other markets?

Yes. India can act as a production base for selected components that are later used in devices assembled in Poland or sold in other markets.

This is a global sourcing model that has been used for years by international corporations: individual components are manufactured where it is most cost-effective and then combined into a final product.

For Polish manufacturers, this means the ability to reduce costs without relocating entire production to India. Key technologies and specialized components can remain in Poland, while some more standard production can be located in India. This could also improve price competitiveness vis-à-vis German and Chinese manufacturers in third-party markets.

You mentioned that you've been working with Polish companies for two decades. Based on this experience, how do you assess their preparedness for international expansion and entry into the Indian market?

"Communication used to be a major problem in Polish companies. Sales specialists spoke English, but it was more difficult to communicate directly with engineers and people responsible for technology or production. This has changed significantly, and today, language skills are no longer a barrier."

A bigger problem for some companies is a lack of flexibility and taking too long to make decisions. They analyze all the pros and cons, then analyze them again, debate them, and then postpone the decision. Business waits for no one. If you wait too long, someone else will come and take your place.

What does flexibility mean in the Indian market?

You need to be able to adapt the collaboration model to the client's requirements. Especially in the public sector, tenders include very specific requirements regarding experience in design, production, assembly, and commissioning of equipment.

A Polish company may have excellent technology, but it won't always meet all the criteria. One has experience in design, another in production, and yet another in assembly.

In such a situation, a consortium can be the solution. Partners combine their expertise, submit a joint bid, and jointly guarantee the project's implementation. This is precisely how we, together with Polish companies, have been successful in securing contracts in India in the past.

Therefore, we need to look not only at what a given company can do on its own, but also at how it can build an offer that meets the requirements of a specific customer.

The next decade will be good for underground mining

The Indian mining market is also changing. Who will benefit from these technologies?

Just a few years ago, coal mining was associated primarily with Coal India. Today, the market is much broader. Large private players have emerged, including Adani, Jindal, and Vedanta. There are also dozens of smaller operators who gained access to deposits through auctions.

This means that not only the scale of the market is growing, but also the number of potential customers.

BTL EPC already has a strong position in transportation systems used in the mining industry. We now want to expand our business to include additional equipment for underground mines, which is why we are so interested in Polish technologies.

In Poland, the outlook for coal mining looks completely different. How long will this growth market remain in India?

"I definitely see a future for mining in India, especially underground. We still have resources available at shallower depths, but we'll gradually have to go lower."

We also can't forget that we're talking about a country with 1.4 billion inhabitants. We need to provide energy for households and a growing economy.

India will simultaneously invest in solar, wind, and other energy sources. However, we once assumed that the transition away from coal-fired power would be rapid. It turned out that in such a large economy, this is impossible. Therefore, in my opinion, the next 10 years will be a very good period for underground mining and companies working for the energy sector in India.