

Huawei, Menar and MTN sign MOU for Gugulethu Colliery

Private investment firm Menar, MTN, and Huawei have joined forces to bring 5G technology to the Gugulethu mine. This strategic memorandum of understanding (MOU) paves the way for a technological revolution in South Africa's mining sector, just as Gugulethu, a newly established mine in Mpumalanga, gears up to commence production in early 2024. The mine is operated under the stewardship of Canyon Coal, a subsidiary of Menar, marking a significant stride in the industry's digital transformation.



MOU signing, Menar's CIO Cleavon Moothoosamy, MTN's Tumi Chamayou and Huawei South Africa's Jason Shao pen a 5G smart mine agreement for Gugulethu mine. Source: Supplied

Menar's chief innovation officer Cleavon Moothoosamy said the MOU symbolises company's drive to embrace technology across its operations. "We want to be at the forefront of mining innovation, and this partnership is a bold step towards a future where technology and connectivity redefine the mining landscape," said Moothoosamy.

The companies involved now look forward to further discussions after the signing of the MOU, which entails the possibility of rolling out a three-phased project to install 5G connectivity on the mine campus and shafts amongst other elements.



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Lindsey Schutters 14 Nov 2023



With MTN's leadership in telecommunications, the operations aims to enhance communication onsite, ensuring people's safety and well-being, and operational efficiency.

"Huawei's technological infrastructure serves as the backbone of this venture and could enable us to leverage cutting-edge solutions to drive productivity and sustainable practices within our operations," Moothoosamy added.

Excited to play a lead role

Tumi Chamayou, chief business enterprise officer at MTN commented, "5G technology is increasingly being adopted in South Africa. At MTN, we are excited to be playing a leading role in this space by using our world-class network and systems to promote the growth and sustainability of our enterprise customers."

Chamayou added, “our bold investment toward network puts MTN in a greater position to offer state of the art, faster and seamless connectivity to its customers. The partnership will see all parties involved reaping the benefits of our best network.”

Speaking at the MOU signing, Huawei MTN KAD account director Jason Shao, said 5G had proved successful in improving operational efficiency and mine safety.

Real-time analytics

“Importantly, 5G supports artificial intelligence based real-time analytics, thus enabling data driven decision making which is critical in the mining environment,” he said

Through the MOU, Gugulethu has become the second mine under the Menar stable to form a partnership with MTN and Huawei. In December 2022 Canyon Coal's Phalanndwa Colliery also based in Mpumalanga, signed an agreement that saw the mine adopting 5G technology.

The team at Phalanndwa registered improvements when it comes to enhanced communication, safety, and real time monitoring. Moothoosamy said Menar was looking forward to seeing Gugulethu achieve the same milestone upon the conclusion of a formal commercial agreement with MTN and Huawei.

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