

## Alpart to resume mining bauxite

Mining of bauxite is set to resume at the Alpart bauxite-alumina plant in Nain, St Elizabeth by next month, while the refining of alumina is scheduled to resume in December, 2016.

The announcement was made by Mining Minister Phillip Paulwell at a press conference at Jamaica House, a short while ago.

Mr. Paulwell said the agreement, approved by Cabinet, was reached with Russian Aluminum conglomerate UC Rusal today. He said the deal will see the company "to mine and to export up to two million crude wet tonnes of monohydrate bauxite over an 18 month period." While bauxite mining will start in January, the export of the ore will not resume before July, Paulwell explained.

The Mining Minister had given UC Rusal until December 31 to resume operations, or risk losing the mining rights. The Alpart mining operation was brought to a halt in 2009, at the height of the global economic downturn. MP happy Richard Parchment, MP for South West St. Elizabeth, the constituency in which the plant is based, has expressed happiness at news of the imminent reopening, describing it as "a significant move for South East St. Elizabeth, with Alpart having been one of the mainstays for employment in the constituency, and the parish, in general." He said it was expected that approximately 250 additional persons will be employed (on a contract basis) in various capacities during the initial mining stage, and that, starting in February 2015, approximately 100 additional workers will be employed to refurbish the port, in preparation for the resumption of export in July. These new employment opportunities will constitute a significant boon for the local economy, he added.