COMMENT

'Gold in Laterite: a surprising challenge in metallogeny'

(A comment on the Note by B. P. Radhakrishna in the Journal of the Geological Society of India, vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 199-200.

The paper has rightly emphasised the need for a new thrust in exploration strategy and for a resurgence of gold-related geological activity.

As I was reading the paper, the concept of remobilisation and reprecipitation of gold especially with iron-oxides sounded rather familiar to me but I could not immediately recollect where I had got the introduction to this idea. I have now been able to take out from my reprint collection a paper on the 'Residual enrichment and supergene migration of gold, Southeastern United States' by two authors from the Geological Survey of United States.* The content of gold in the limonitic mud is reported to be 2.9 ppm which is equal to 2.9 gm per tonne. I must say that the values and size of deposits reported by the Australians at Bodington and Telfer are possibly much larger than what is reported from the US occurrence referred to in this paper. But the concept of secondary enrichment by chemical remobilisation seems to be as old as, if not older than 1968, when this paper was published. What seems to be important is the association of large amount of sulphides. Many Indian occurrences do have associated sulphides, within primary lodes and in Quartz Pebble Conglomerates.

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Reference

* KINKAL, A. R. and LESURE F. G. Residual enrichment and Supergene migration of gold, Southeastern United States, Geol. Surv. Res., 1968, U.S.G.S. Prof. Paper 600-D. pp. 174-178

REPLY

I thank Dr. Mahadevan for this additional information. It only goes to emphasize once again the need for taking a new look at weathered profiles in known auriferous areas. There is also an urgent need for developing sensitive analytical methods for rapid analysis of large number of samples for gold. A new thrust in exploration strategy for gold is thus called for.

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