ArcelorMittal Ostrava commemorates 65 years from first blowing-in of blast furnace no. 2

Ostrava, September 27 – On Sunday, October 1, it was precisely 65 years since the blast furnace no. 2 which serves for production of hot metal had been festively blown in for the first time in today’s ArcelorMittal Ostrava. The first tapping took place on December 9 of the same year.

In the second half of the 1940s, the then Vítkovice Steelworks resolved the issue of modernisation and construction of new blast furnaces. The option was either to expand the operation in Vítkovice or to build new blast furnaces in Kunčice. Eventually, the second option was chosen, mainly due to the Austrian company United Austrian Ironworks and Steelworks offering Vítkovice Steelworks a sale of three blast furnaces from the Linz metallurgical plant in the spring of 1946. The sale talks were stretched, however, and after the amount of furnaces offered had been reduced to two, the business was cancelled.

“There was no other choice left than to build furnaces of one’s own. Thanks to a dynamic development of the metallurgical industry in the region back then, the work in progress was much in the eyes of the general public and it was a matter of prestige for both builders and hired workers to be involved at this particular site,” explains Hana Benkeová, archivist at ArcelorMittal Ostrava accredited archives.

Despite the construction project had been completed down to the last T, production was to face a few difficulties in the beginning. These were mainly caused by insufficient equipment, lack of storage facilities, maintenance workshops and dressing rooms. Some units were not sufficiently equipped in terms of technology. Despite the blast furnaces were put into operation with a range of investment backlog, they meant real technological progress in heavy industry of its time. All shortcomings were eventually eliminated and the previously delayed production caught up due to gradual improvement of processes and technical equipment.

Unlike blast furnace no. 1, blast furnace no. 2 has remained in operation up to the present, though in a remarkably modernised shape and with extended distribution of industrial and heating gases as well as heat and electric power.

ArcelorMittal Ostrava a.s. is part of the world’s largest steel and mining group ArcelorMittal. Annually it produces over 2 million tonnes of steel, which is mainly used in construction and machinery. It is the biggest manufacturer of road safety barriers and the only producer of grain-oriented steel sheets in the Czech Republic. Besides the domestic market the company delivers its products to more than 40 countries around the world. ArcelorMittal Ostrava and its subsidiaries employ over 7 000 people. In 2016 average income was CZK 35 104. As a result of the completion of a range of above-standard
greening technologies the company produces its products with the minimum possible environmental footprint. To contribute to making a more sustainable future possible, the company has set 10 sustainable development outcomes. The progress on each of the outcomes is reported on the Annual Review. The sole shareholder is ArcelorMittal S.A.