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Govt warns Vedanta against illegal mining in Orissa

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Updated on Tuesday, August 04, 2009, 22:03 IST
Tags: [Orissa](#), [Vedanta](#), [Mining](#), [Bauxite](#)

New Delhi: Centre on Tuesday warned the Vedanta group that it can be prosecuted if it resorts to "illegal mining" of bauxite at Nyomgiri in Orissa since the Anil Agarwal-controlled firm has been given only in-principle approval.

"They have got environmental approval in-principle. They have not got full forest clearance. If mining is taking place in Nyomgiri, then it is illegal," Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh said in the Rajya Sabha.



Replying to a debate on the working of his ministry, he said the 'in principle' nod given to the group would not mean sanction for the mining operations. "They can be prosecuted," he said.

Ramesh said his ministry has now made it mandatory that all applications for mining in forest areas would require not only the forestry clearances but also an evidence that provisions of the Tribals Rights Act have been complied with.

Since the ministry was not insisting on implementation of the Tribal Act earlier, Vedanta received in principle nod.

Ramesh said he was not happy about giving 'in principle' approvals, "give me a little more time and I will get rid of this animal called in principle forest approval. It is not a good animal to have... had the Tribal Acts been in place, the chances are that this project (Vedanta) would not have been cleared in the first place".

The Vedanta group of UK-based Agarwal had announced Rs.70,000 crore India investment plans for its aluminium projects which would significantly hinge upon the Bauxite to be mined at Nyomgiri.

Bureau Report



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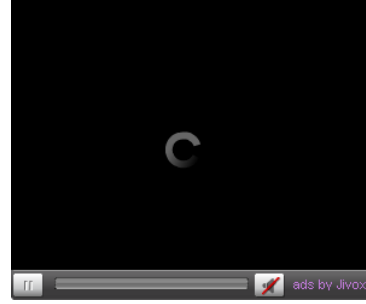
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