

‘New projects take 5-10 yrs to produce...’: Anil Agarwal says there’s only one way to pace up mineral production

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Quoting former Chinese leader and revolutionary, Deng Xiaoping, who said it does not matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches mice, Vedanta Group Chairman Anil Agarwal argued that the same logic can be used for mineral production in India. He said the only way to pace up mineral production in the short term is by using the already-existing assets.

“If the world wants to increase mineral production in the short term, there is only one way. Sweat existing assets. New projects take 5 to 10 years to produce,” said Agarwal.

The Vedanta Chairman said copper and gold assets in India are either under-producing or dormant — even as India imports 99.9 per cent of its gold and 95 per cent of its copper requirements — which indicates a huge potential.

“At the current record price levels, there is a strong case for the Government to encourage private partnership since most existing assets are under government ownership. Take a plunge. It is the fastest way to self-reliance,” he said, adding that this would involve entrepreneurial energy, investment and technology.



Meanwhile, the Parliament had earlier this year approved the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025, aimed at promoting sustainable mining, reducing waste, and supporting the objectives of the National Critical Mineral Mission amid global supply concerns. These changes seek to strengthen India's domestic mineral production and lessen reliance on imports, impacting sectors such as electric vehicles, batteries, and advanced manufacturing.

Union Minister for Coal and Mines, G. Kishan Reddy, stated that "the Modi government is committed to transparency in the mining sector, with production enhanced through the use of modern technology."

The new legislation empowers the government to facilitate mineral trading through exchanges and allows the sale of mineral dumps to address environmental hazards. It also encourages the extraction of deep-seated minerals, which could influence India's supply chain resilience.