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Vedanta's Anil Agarwal flags land, clearances, high premiums as key hurdles to mine operationalisation

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Synopsis

Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal points to land acquisition issues, delayed clearances, and high mining premiums as major hurdles. He urges faster execution of auctioned mines to boost India's energy and mineral security. Agarwal suggests technology for land payments and streamlined approvals.



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Anil Agarwal, chairman of **Vedanta Ltd**, has flagged **land acquisition** challenges, delays in environmental and forest clearances, and high **mining premiums** as the three key bottlenecks hindering the operationalisation of auctioned mines, urging faster post-auction execution to strengthen India's energy and mineral security.

His remarks come against the backdrop of rising global uncertainties and heightened tensions in West Asia.

Agarwal called for immediate policy interventions to boost domestic production and reduce reliance on imports. He noted that nearly 85% of mining blocks auctioned over the past decade remain non-operational, with only 82 out of 592 blocks currently producing.

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He added that around half of India's \$400 billion import bill is driven by dependence on imported natural resources, leading to significant job creation outside the country.

Stressing the strategic importance of energy and mineral security, Agarwal recommended a faster and more efficient post-auction execution process. His key suggestions include a technology-enabled direct payment system for land acquisition, streamlined approvals through self-certification and trust-based regulation, and capping mining premiums at 60% to ensure commercial viability.

Agarwal said India has the potential to emerge as a global hub for minerals, metals and hydrocarbons, positioning the sector as a major driver of employment, including for women.

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Reiterating confidence in the government's facilitative approach, he called for collective action to leverage the opportunity and advance the vision of a self-reliant India.

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