

Now, sand mining will be a green affair

Surendra Gangan

The state government has decided to impose 2% environment charge on sand mining to protect the environment in the region where the extraction is allowed, says a state government draft policy that was approved on Wednesday. Besides, 10% of the royalty revenue will be reserved for the development of the area and for the administrative works.

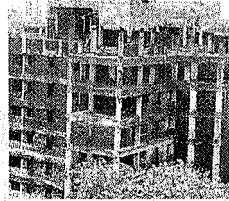
The Bombay high court had recently slammed the government on its sand mining policy and directed it to revise it, saying that the damage to the river beds was resulting in serious threat of flood or diversion of water flow.

The new policy has provision of monetary allocation as well as ban on mining in the areas where the river beds have deteriorated beyond control.

The policy has proposed that the 2% of the royalty amount be paid as the environment charge from contractor before handing over the possession of the mining sites. The amount collected as the environment fund will be utilised for the conservation and protection of the environment of the area.

The policy also has provision of banning the mining where the riverbed has sand layer less than 6 feet in depth.

Revenue minister Narayan Rane said his department ex-



REPRIMAND EFFECT

- The Bombay high court had recently slammed the government on its sand mining policy and directed it to submit a revised policy
- The state government has decided to impose 2% environment charge on sand mining.
- Money will be used for saving the environment in the region

pected the ban on mining to be lifted shortly as the government had complied with the court order. "We expect that the revenue this year will be Rs1,400 crore as against Rs800 crore last year. Revenue officials working under the district collectors will monitor the mining and ensure that the norms and rules are not violated," he said.

Rane said the final authority of the contract had been given to the sub-divisional officer, as most gram sabhas tend to oppose sand mining.

HC refuses to lift stay on sand mining

The Bombay High Court on Thursday refused to lift the stay on sand mining across the state. The high court had in September imposed the stay as the government failed to frame a policy on sand mining, a court directive in May.

PTI

वेदांता रिफाइनरी की विस्तार योजना को झटका

नई दिल्ली: वेदांता एल्युमिना लिमिटेड को 63
गुरुवार उस समय एक बड़ा झटका लगा जब 12
पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने उड़ीसा के लांजीगढ़ में
मौजूद कंपनी की रिफाइनरी की क्षमता छह गुना
बढ़ाने को मंजूरी देने से इनकार कर दिया।
हालांकि, वेदांता की 10 लाख टन क्षमता वाली
मौजूदा रिफाइनरी को जरूरी कदम उठाने के बाद
कामकाज जारी रहने की अनुमति दी गई है।
इसके लिए कंपनी को उड़ीसा राज्य प्रदूषण
नियंत्रण बोर्ड को तीन वर्ष के लिए 10 करोड़
रुपए की बैंक गारंटी भी उपलब्ध करानी होगी।
बुधवार को जारी आदेश में मंत्रालय ने वेदांता को
'साइट पर यथास्थिति बनाए रखने और विस्तार
परियोजना के संबंध में आगे कोई निर्माण न
करने' का निर्देश दिया है। इसके साथ ही वेदांता
द्वारा 'पर्यावरण से जुड़ी बिना पूर्व अनुमति के
निर्माण करने' पर उड़ीसा सरकार को कानूनी
कदम उठाने का भी निर्देश दिया गया है।

GOLD MAY POST FIRST FALL IN 12 WEEKS

Gold was set for its first weekly decline in 12 weeks on Thursday after US jobs data lifted the dollar and further eroded investor demand for bullion, although several analysts said they viewed this as temporary. Gold is on course for a 1.9 per cent fall this week, which would mark its largest weekly drop since early July, while holdings of gold in the world's largest exchange-traded fund, the SPDR Gold Trust, fell for a fourth consecutive session, indicating lower investment appetite. Spot gold hit a high of \$1,349.05 an ounce before slipping to \$1,339.50 by 15.13 GMT, versus \$1,343.50 on Wednesday.

REUTERS

Stop refinery work: MoEF to Vedanta

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 21

THE government on Wednesday ordered Vedanta to immediately halt expansion work at its troubled alumina refinery in Orissa's Lanjigarh, and asked the company to fulfill a number of other conditions in order to operate its existing facility.

"You are directed to maintain the status quo at the site and no further construction shall be undertaken in respect of the expansion project," an order by the Environment Ministry said.

On Wednesday, *The Indian Express* had reported that the Ministry had ruled that the expansion work violated the existing laws.

The Lanjigarh refinery has been caught in an environmental wrangle. The existing facility with a capacity of 1 million tonnes has been found to be in illegal occupation of 26 hectares of forest land. The company also

229
started work on expanding the unit's capacity to 6 million tonnes without waiting for environmental clearance.

The MoEF had served a show-cause notice to the company in August. The company had responded in September and made a personal appearance to explain the case.

The company had pleaded that it was willing to pay the penalty for violating the law and requested the ministry not to stop work. It informed the ministry that it had already spent about Rs 5,000 crore on the expansion plan, which was about 50 per cent of the estimated cost of the project. About 40-45 per cent of construction activity has started and the progress of the project was about 50-55 per cent.

"The Secretary, Forest and Environment department, Government of Orissa shall take legal action under the provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for violation of the EIA Notification, 2006," the order said.

VEDANTA EXPANSION PLAN HITS GREEN BLOCK

HT Correspondent

✉ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The environment ministry on Thursday cancelled the initial approval given for Vedanta Resources' \$5.8 billion expansion plan citing environmental violations.

The London-based metal giant had planned a six-fold expansion of its aluminum refinery in Lanjigarh in Orissa's Kalahandi district from the existing output of one million tonnes a year and increase capacity of its captive power plant.

In August, the ministry rejected environment clearance to Orissa Mining Corporation for bauxite mining for the company in Nyamgiri Hills, home of primitive tribal groups Dongriya and Kuntia Kondhs.

THE COMPANY CAN CONTINUE OPERATIONS IN ITS REFINERY, IF IT MEETS NORMS, BUT CANNOT EXPAND IT

HT had reported on October 15 that approval to the company's expansion plans would be scrapped. In a communication to the company on Wednesday, the ministry cancelled the initial approval given in August 2009 and scrapped all actions taken thereafter, warning that the company maintain status quo at the refinery site.

The NC Saxena committee, which probed the alleged violations, had said Vedanta started construction for expanding the factory without the ministry's approval. The company had told the ministry that the approval was not required.

This means the company can continue operations in the refinery, if it meets environment norms, but cannot expand it. "The company can continue to operate its existing 1 million tonne a year refinery, provided it maintains a minimum level of forested area around the plant," the ministry letter said. The company has also been asked to deposit ₹2 crore with the state pollution control board.

A non-starter from the start

The government's justification of the Posco project is based on false information

Girish Agrawal

uq-12

Paan kheti [betel vine cultivation] is our lifeline...why does the government want to destroy it and force us into being labourers?" asked Niranjana, a 60-plus-year-old farmer who would lose his betel vines to the Posco steel project in Orissa. This is one of the questions that haunted us, when we, a group of US-based researchers interested in the new economy of globalised India, started looking into the Posco project. We had followed the development of several large projects in India, but earlier this year, when Posco was in the news due to the imminent expiry of the MoU between the company and Orissa, we were intrigued that even five years after the MoU had been signed, the project — widely celebrated as the single largest Foreign Direct Investment in India — had failed to make any headway at all. The lofty claims of the government, that the project would contribute over a tenth of the total economy of the state, besides almost wiping away the widespread unemployment in Orissa were well-known to us. So why, we wondered, would there be such a strong resistance to this project on the ground? We wanted to go beyond the standard narratives of cash flow and revenues, and look at the actual impact of the project on the residents of Jagatsinghpur, Keonjhar and Sundergarh, where the steel plant, port and mines would be set up.

In pursuing these questions, we were surprised to discover that despite the size and scope of the project (encompassing the biggest steel plant in India, a captive port, extensive iron ore mines, two townships, a rail and road network and the largest ever industrial allocation of water in Orissa), the government had never really bothered to evaluate the impact of the project on the people, their environment or on the state's economy.

While the government had made loud claims around tax revenues and increased employment — claims, which have never been substantiated — it uttered not a word as to the costs involved (social, economic and environmental), to help us compute how these compared. The environment assessments were still incomplete, the socio-economic data from the affected villages had been erroneously gathered, and all the economic claims came from one single study conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research — a study paid for and commissioned by Posco-India itself.

Our findings, published in the report, 'Iron and Steel: The Posco-India Story', describe the pivotal role played by the various institutions of the government in justifying and implementing the fundamentally flawed Posco project, many times in an un-



■ A clear message: Anti-Posco protestors, Orissa REUTERS

democratic, illegal and coercive manner.

The claims of the government about benefits to the state are based on fudged numbers, sloppy calculations and flawed methodology. Coming in the wake of the divided ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) committee report on Posco, our research report adds a depressing dimension to the development policies being pursued across India in a mad rush to please global capital.

Not only is the Posco project illegal, as declared by the majority of the MoEF Posco panel, but the very justification of the project by the government is based on falsified information. Our report suggests that besides being illegal, the Posco project is fundamentally flawed from an economic standpoint. We conclude that the Posco project as it currently stands is poorly conceptualised. Its financial benefits are grossly exaggerated and its costs minimised. If carried forward in its current form, it will certainly result in the repetition of a process that is now known internationally as "growth without human development." Overall, the country stands to lose rather than gain from the Posco project.

How does one hold the government accountable for such seemingly insane 'development' projects? As one of the villagers in Jagatsinghpur, where a strong and popular resistance to the Posco project exists, asked us: "Can somebody go to jail for breaking democracy?" This is surely the core question: what can the people do to bring to justice those who violate rudimentary democratic norms and procedures? When rights of capital take precedence over the rights of people, and when elected governments start to act as promoters and paid consultants for a private company, what recourse do people have?

Girish Agrawal is a California-based lawyer and civil engineer

The views expressed by the author are personal

Projects and party politics

JOBS AT STAKE Several scrapped large-scale projects are in states ruled by parties other than the Congress, raising questions on political motives.

hotair



Kamayani Singh

in New Delhi

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On Thursday, the Union environment ministry struck down the six-fold expansion plan of Vedanta's aluminium unit in Orissa, citing violations of laws.

Earlier this week the majority view of a committee set up by the ministry was to revoke initial clearances for a steel plant being built by South Korea's Posco in Orissa because of violations of green laws. These are just two among many such instances.

The question mark over the future of the \$12-billion (Rs 53,000 crore) project by Posco comes two months after UK-based Vedanta Resources saw its \$1-billion (Rs 4,500 crore) bauxite-mining project in Lanjigarh, Orissa, getting axed. A central government-appointed committee found the mining giant had violated laws concerning environment and forests.

Several other projects were cancelled and suspended by the Centre this year. These include the Rs 3,600-crore Renuka Dam project in Himachal Pradesh, the Bhaironghati and Pala Maneri hydroelectric projects on the river Bhagirathi in Uttarakhand and the Maheswar dam project in Madhya Pradesh. Some of these projects had been approved by the same Union environment ministry.

Although some experts see this as a subtle shift in the way tribal rights and environmental issues are being handled now, others feel that politics plays a role in the sanctioning and scrapping of such projects. The latter builds on the fact

that all of the projects that have been shadowed are in non-Congress states — Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh.

COINCIDENCE OR POLITICALLY MOTIVATED?

In August, Congress General Secretary Rahul Gandhi visited the Niyamgiri Hills, where Vedanta had planned to mine bauxite, to join the protesting Dongria Kondh tribe and proclaimed himself as their "sipahi" (soldier) in Delhi. This came two days after permission for the project was scrapped.

"There could be some political motivation in projects related to mining because they concern tribal rights and displacement," said Pratap Bhanu Mehta, president of the Centre for Policy Research, a Delhi-based think tank. "It's hard, however, to talk about motivation behind construction of big dam projects because right now government policy on big dams isn't very clear."

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) feels that so far the Centre has had a softer stand on large-scale projects in Congress-ruled states.

"It's worth asking why so many previously approved projects are suddenly getting cancelled," said BJP spokesperson Prakash Javadekar. "We have no tolerance for those who violate laws but why are projects in Congress-ruled states not getting stopped?"

Some states have communicated their concern to the Centre. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had written to the Prime Minister, seeking intervention after work on the Maheswar dam was stopped in April.

In Uttarakhand, after work on the Bhaironghati and Pala Maneri dams was stopped, Chief Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal wrote to the environment ministry asking it to also stop work on



■ Congress general secretary Rahul Gandhi with tribal women as he arrives to address a rally in August at Kalahandi in Orissa.

PTI PHOTO

National Thermal Power Corporation's Loharinag Pala dam on the same river — the Bhagirathi. The ministry later stopped work on that project too, citing environmental concerns.

The Congress denies any political bias in the decisions made.

"A look at the funding by the Centre to states will reveal that not only has it increased during the UPA years but also it has increased for many non-Congress states. Why should we do this if we wanted to favour Congress-ruled states over non-Congress ruled ones," said Manish Tewari, spokesperson of Congress. "Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh has also pointed out environmental threats by projects in Congress-ruled states."

BRAND INDIA

If Posco's project is axed, will it hurt Brand India's image?

Posco's 12-million-tonne steel project in Orissa is the largest foreign direct investment that the Indian government has approved to date. The uncertainty over it does not augur well for global investors' confidence in India, especially at a time when FDI inflows are on a slide. The FDI inflow of \$167 billion in the first seven months of 2009 came down by 25 per cent to \$12.5 billion for the same period of 2010.

Anjan Roy, economic advisor, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), said: "The scrapping of one or two projects, which could have adverse impact on the environment, is not likely to affect FDI into the country."

Some experts feel that scrapping projects that are breaking the law might benefit India in the long run.

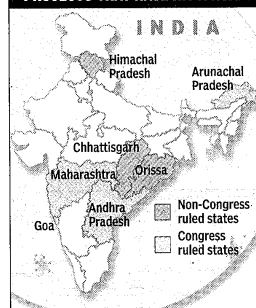
"If the cancellation of these projects leads to stricter implementation of laws, institutionalisation of the process by which projects are sanctioned, and greater transparency, then it would help rather than hurt India's image abroad," said Mehta.

WINDS OF CHANGE

"Political undercurrents could be well present in some cases but the fact is that livelihood issues and environment concerns can't be ignored by any party in power," said Vipul Mudgal at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in Delhi.

The government is talking about making locals a stakeholder in these projects. "The protest movements against these projects have become huge people's movements over the years and now there is some hope that they will get what has long been due to them," Mudgal added.

PROJECTS THAT HAVE HIT A ROADBLOCK



Will delays and cancellations deter foreign investors?

Himachal Pradesh

■ Renuka Dam. **Cost:** ₹3,600 crore
Status: Cancelled

Chhattisgarh

■ Jindal power project.
Cost: ₹10,000 crore. **Status:** Environment clearance initially suspended but restored later.

Orissa

■ Vedanta Resources, bauxite mining project. **Cost:** ₹4,600 crore
Status: Cancelled
■ Posco plant. **Cost:** ₹53,000 cr.
Status: Pending. Majority on review panel want it scrapped

Arunachal Pradesh

■ Lower Subansiri dam. **Cost:** ₹6,000 crore. **Status:** Under construction. Not environmentally feasible according to expert committee report.

Andhra Pradesh

■ Nagarjuna Construction Limited's power project. **Cost:** ₹10,000 crore. **Status:** environment clearance cancelled.

Maharashtra

■ Navi Mumbai airport project. **Cost:** ₹9,700 crore. **Status:** Delayed

Goa

■ Caream iron ore mining project. **Cost:** ₹1,000 crore
Status: Clearance revoked. National Environment Appellate Authority didn't give approval.

नहीं मिली मंजूरी 60-17

नई दिल्ली। नियामगिरी हिल्स में बॉक्सइट खनन की योजना को मंजूरी नहीं देने के कुछ दिन बाद ही वेदांता रिसोर्सज को सरकार ने एक और झटका दे दिया है। वन एवं पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने हरित नियमों की वजह से कंपनी की उड़ीसा की एल्युमिना रिफाइनरी की 5.8 अरब डालर की विस्तार योजना को मंजूरी देने से इनकार कर दिया है।

हमारी मंजूरी के बगैर केयर्न में हिस्सेदारी खरीद नहीं : ओएनजीसी

नई दिल्ली • ओएनजीसी ने कहा है कि ब्रिटेन स्थित केयर्न इनर्जी को भारत स्थित सहायक कंपनी में अपनी हिस्सेदारी वेदांता रिसोर्सेज को बेचने से पहले उसकी सहमति लेनी जरूरी है। ओएनजीसी ने बीएसई एवं एनएसई को भेजे अपने पत्र में कहा है कि इस सौदे से पहले खरीददार कंपनी (वेदांता रिसोर्सेज) को इस क्षेत्र में अपनी तकनीकी क्षमता और पूर्व अनुभव तथा वित्तीय सामर्थ्य के बारे में भी विवरण देना होगा। ओएनजीसी केयर्न इनर्जी की भारत इकाई की उसकी सभी उत्पादक संपत्तियों और उसकी सात में से अधिकांश उत्खनन संचालनों में साझीदार है। केयर्न इनर्जी ने 16 अगस्त को लंदन में सूचीबद्ध वेदांता रिसोर्सेज को अपनी भारतीय इकाई में 40 से 51 फीसदी हिस्सेदारी की बिक्री की घोषणा की थी। (ब्यूरो)

Vedanta refinery plan fails to get govt nod

press trust of india

64/10

NEW DELHI, 21 OCT: Days after its plan to mine bauxite from Niyamgiri Hills was turned down, Vedanta Resources has received yet another blow with the environment ministry rejecting its \$5.8 billion expansion plan for alumina refinery in Orissa, citing violation of green norms.

The London-based metals giant had plans to increase the production capacity of the refinery in Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district from the current one million tons per annum (mtpa) to six mtpa.

However, the ministry in an official communication to the company yesterday said: "You are directed to maintain status quo at the site and no further construction activity shall be undertaken with respect to the expansion project."

Adding to the Vedanta's woes, the ministry has also asked the Orissa

Government to take legal action against it under the provisions of Environmental Protection Act, 1986 for violation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification.

The ministry's action came as per recommendations by Mr NC Saxena panel which had alleged that Vedanta Aluminium Ltd had undertaken expansion activity of the refinery without obtaining prior permission from it.

"The Terms of Reference (ToRs) issued on 12 March 2009 for expansion of alumina refinery from one mtpa to six mtpa and 75 MW to 300 MW are hereby withdrawn and consequently the public hearing on 25 April 2009 stands cancelled," said the ministry's four-page order.

The company has also been denied permission to increase its captive power plant capacity at the site.

Just two months ago, the ministry had rejected Vedanta Aluminium's pro-

posal to mine bauxite from Orissa's Niyamgiri Hills citing threat to the ecological balance of the area and the Dongria Kondh tribe which lives in the hills.

The opposition by the tribals against the company's mining plans had gained momentum just a few months back with the Congress general secretary, Mr Rahul Gandhi also taking up their cause.

Meanwhile, acting tough on the existing refinery plant, the environment ministry in a separate order has asked the company to strictly follow pollution control norms.

"The company can continue to operate its existing one million tons a year refinery, provided it maintains a minimum level of forested area around the plant," the order says.

It has also been asked to monitor pollution levels and submit a bank guarantee of Rs 2 crore to the State Pollution Control Board as a preventive measure.

Vedanta Al refinery plan fails to get nod

NEW DELHI: Days after its plan to mine bauxite from Niyam-giri Hills was turned down, Vedanta Resources has received yet another blow with the environment ministry rejecting its \$5.8 billion expansion plan for alumina refinery in Orissa, citing violation of green norms. The London-based metals giant had plans to increase the production capacity of the refinery in Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district from the current 1 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) to 6 mtpa. — PTI

ALUMINIUM COMPLEX

India rejects Vedanta's proposal on expansion

16-3

BY ABHIJIT ROY CHOWDHURY
& ABHISHEK SHANKER

MEW DELHI

Vedanta Resources Plc's proposal to start an \$8.5 billion (₹37,740 crore) expansion of its aluminium complex in India was rejected by the environment ministry on Thursday, citing violations of forestry laws.

The ministry ordered the London-based company to not begin any new construction at the site and placed conditions on the running of its current 1 million tonne (mt) alumina refinery at Lanjigarh in Orissa, the notice said.

A proposal to raise the capacity of a dedicated power plant to 300MW from 75MW was also denied.

Vedanta, controlled by billionaire Anil Agarwal, won approval from the Orissa government on 10 August to expand the refinery capacity to 6 mt.

Two weeks later, the environment ministry said Vedanta's refinery may be sourcing bauxite from mines without environmental approvals and asked Vedanta to justify why the permit for the refinery should not be cancelled.

The rejection won't have a major impact, Mukesh Kumar, chief operating officer of Vedanta Aluminium Ltd, the company's Indian unit, said on Thursday.

The availability of raw mate-

rial won't be an issue, he said, without elaborating.

Vedanta fell as much as 1.4% to 2,199 pence in London and traded at 2,228 pence as of 9.59am local time.

The shares have declined 15% this year, compared with a 6% in the benchmark FTSE 100 Index.

Vedanta will cut its investments by as much as \$2 billion in the next two years after failing to get clearance to mine bauxite at the Niyamgiri hills near the site of its refinery,

chief executive officer Mahendra Singh Mehta had said on 7 October.

The capital expenditure revision will have an impact of between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion, Mehta said, adding the numbers were tentative. The plan to mine bauxite, which would help cut Vedanta's raw material costs, was rejected by the environment ministry on 24 August, saying it would endanger the lives of the Dongaria Kondh and the Kutia Kondh tribes, who depend on the hills and forest for their livelihood.

The ministry's notice on Thursday follows a 28 September court directive to Vedanta unit Sterlite Industries (India) Ltd to shutter its only copper smelter in the country for breaching environmental standards. **BLOOMBERG**

feedback@livemint.com

The company has been asked not to undertake any new construction at the site in Orissa

वेदांत की रिफाइनरी विस्तार परियोजना पर भी लगा ब्रेक

नई दिल्ली, जागरण ब्यूरो : वेदांत को एक और झटका देते हुए पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने कंपनी की अल्युमिना रिफाइनरी विस्तार परियोजना को लाल झंडी दिखा दी है। मंत्रालय ने वेदांता के लिए जारी नए निर्देशों में साफ कर दिया है कि उसे केवल एक मिलियन टन की रिफाइनरी परियोजना को ही चलाने की ही इजाजत होगी।

मंत्रालय ने 21 सितंबर को वेदांता का पक्ष सुनने और कंपनी के संबंधित दस्तावेजों को देखने के बाद उड़ीसा के कालाहांडी स्थित पावर प्लांट और रिफाइनरी को पर्यावरण संरक्षण कानून के तहत सख्त नियमों और दिशानिर्देशों के पालन को भी हिदायत दी है। साथ ही ताकीद किया है कि यदि कंपनी इनका पालन नहीं करती तो उसके खिलाफ कार्रवाई की जाएगी।

वेदांता को एक और झटका : रिफाइनरी विस्तार पर रोक

भाषा/नई दिल्ली

6-1-1

.....नियामगिरी हिल्स में बॉक्साइट खनन की योजना को मंजूरी नहीं देने के कुछ दिन बाद ही वेदांता रिसोर्सेज को सरकार ने एक और झटका दे दिया है। वन एवं

■ वन एवं पर्यावरण नियमों

का किया उल्लंघन

पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने

हरित नियमों की वजह

से कंपनी की उड़ीसा

की एल्युमिना

रिफाइनरी की 5.8 अरब डालर की विस्तार योजना को मंजूरी देने से इन्कार कर दिया है। लंदन में सूचीबद्ध वेदांता रिसोर्सेज का इरादा कालाहांडी जिले के लांजीगढ़ में अपनी रिफाइनरी की क्षमता को सालाना 10 लाख टन से बढ़ाकर 60 लाख टन करने का था। मंत्रालय की ओर से कंपनी को भेजे गए आधिकारिक पत्र में कहा गया है, "संबंधित स्थल पर आपको यथास्थिति बनाए रखने का निर्देश दिया जाता है। विस्तार परियोजना के तहत आगे और ▶ शेष पृष्ठ 11 पर II

वेदांता को एक...

निर्माण गतिविधियां नहीं की जा सकती हैं।” यही नहीं मंत्रालय ने उड़ीसा सरकार से कहा है कि वह पर्यावरण प्रभाव आकलन (ईआईए) अधिसूचना की अवहेलना के लिए कंपनी के खिलाफ पर्यावरण संरक्षण कानून, 1986 के प्रावधानों के तहत कार्रवाई करे।

इससे पहले एन.सी. सर्वसेना समिति ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा था कि वेदांता एल्युमीनियम लि. ने रिफाइनरी के लिए विस्तार गतिविधियों को बिना पूर्व मंजूरी के शुरू किया है। इसके आधार पर ही मंत्रालय ने यह कार्रवाई की है। कंपनी को इसी स्थल पर अपने कैप्टिव ऊर्जा संयंत्र की क्षमता बढ़ाने की भी मंजूरी नहीं दी गई है।

8213
**वेदांता के एलुमिना
रिफाइनरी विस्तार
पर भी रोक**

नई दिल्ली (प्रेट) । वेदांता रिसोर्सेज को पर्यावरण मंत्रालय से एक और झटका मिला है। पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने उड़ीसा में उसकी एलुमिना रिफाइनरी की 5.8 अरब डॉलर की लागत वाली विस्तार परियोजना को मंजूरी देने से इनकार कर दिया है। इसके पहले वेदांता की नियामगिरी पहाड़ियों में बॉक्साइट खनन परियोजना पर रोक लगाई गई थी। पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने कंपनी की एलुमिना परियोजना के बारे में भी कहा है कि इसमें पर्यावरण मानकों का उल्लंघन किया गया है। वेदांता की योजना उड़ीसा के कालाहांडी जिले में स्थित लांजीगढ़ रिफाइनरी के क्षमता को बढ़ाकर 10 लाख टन प्रति वर्ष से बढ़ाकर 60 लाख टन प्रति वर्ष करने की है। पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने कंपनी को भेजे गए पत्र में कहा है, 'आपको इस परियोजना स्थल पर यथास्थिति बनाए रखनी होगी।'

बांबे हाईकोर्ट का आदेश महाराष्ट्र में रेत खनन पर रोक नहीं हटेगी

भास्कर न्यूज | मुंबई

9/10

बांबे हाईकोर्ट ने रेत खनन पर से स्टे हटाने से इनकार कर दिया है। कोर्ट ने कहा है कि महाराष्ट्र सरकार जब इस बारे में अधिसूचना (जीआर) जारी करेगी, तभी स्टे हटाया जाएगा।

हाईकोर्ट ने सागर श्रमिक हातपाटी बालू उत्पादक सहकारी संस्था मर्यादित की याचिका पर सितंबर महीने में पूरे राज्य में रेत उत्खनन पर रोक लगा दी थी। इससे पहले मई महीने में अदालत ने सरकार को इस बारे में एक पॉलिसी गठन करने का भी निर्देश दिया था, मगर जब सरकार ने पॉलिसी नहीं बनाई और अवैध व मनमानी ढंग से रेत उत्खनन से पर्यावरण और नदियों को भारी नुकसान पहुंचने का सिलसिला जारी रहा, तो अदालत ने कड़ा रुख अपनाया। पर अदालत के स्टे के कारण कंस्ट्रक्शन इंडस्ट्री पर संकट आ गया। जिसकी वजह से सरकार पर इस बारे में



निर्णय लेने का दबाव बढ़ने लगा।

राज्य के महाधिवक्ता रवि कदम ने गुरुवार को हाईकोर्ट से रेत उत्खनन पर लगाई गई रोक को हटाने का निवेदन किया। उन्होंने अदालत में कहा कि राज्य सरकार ने बुधवार को ही इस बारे में मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय लिया है। मगर अदालत ने इस बारे में सरकार द्वारा जीआर जारी करने के बाद ही स्टे हटाने की जानकारी देते हुए मामले की सुनवाई सोमवार तक स्थगित कर दी। पिछले वर्ष सरकार को रेत उत्खनन से करीब 800 करोड़ रुपए का राजस्व मिला था। राजस्व मंत्री नारायण राणे का मानना है कि इस वर्ष लगभग 1400 करोड़ रुपए का राजस्व मिलेगा। मगर अदालत के स्टे की वजह से उनका अंदाज गलत साबित होने की उम्मीद बढ़ गई है।

खनन मामले में हरियाणा ने केंद्र से मांगी मदद

जयराम रमेश से मिले प्रदेश के पर्यावरण मंत्री

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

पड़ोसी राज्यों राजस्थान और उत्तर प्रदेश में खनन जारी रहने व हरियाणा में इस पर प्रतिबंध को लेकर प्रदेश के पर्यावरण मंत्री कैप्टन अजय सिंह यादव ने गुरुवार को केंद्रीय पर्यावरण मंत्री जयराम रमेश से लंबी चर्चा की। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इस मामले में हाईकोर्ट और सुप्रीम कोर्ट के दिशानिर्देशों के मुताबिक काम करने को बाध्य है लेकिन हालात से निबटने में केंद्र को प्रदेश सरकार की मदद करनी चाहिए।

राज्य के उद्योग एवं पर्यावरण सचिवों को साथ लेकर रमेश से मिले कैप्टन अजय ने कहा कि प्रदेश में खनन पर रोक से न केवल विकास एवं निर्माण कार्य प्रभावित हो रहे हैं बल्कि निर्माण सामग्री की कीमतें भी तेजी से बढ़ रही हैं। जयराम रमेश ने कहा कि खनन को लेकर पर्यावरण संबंधी मंजूरी, जरूरी तकनीकी औपचारिकताएं व खनन योजना की मंजूरी संबंधित ठेकेदार को लेनी चाहिए, राज्य सरकार को नहीं। कैप्टन यादव ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार



की मौजूदा खनन नीति हाईकोर्ट और सुप्रीम कोर्ट के निर्देशों के अनुरूप है। रमेश ने राज्य सरकार की समस्या व सुझावों को ध्यान से सुना और इन पर सकारात्मक विचार का आश्वासन दिया। बाद में कैप्टन यादव ने खनन विभाग के अधिकारियों को निर्देश दिए कि हाईकोर्ट की हिदायतों के बाद वे सभी क्रशरों को बंद करके मालिकों को परेशान न करें। उन्होंने कहा कि पर्यावरण संबंधी शर्तों को पूरा करने वाले क्रशरों को सील करने से राज्य में निर्माण सामग्री की उपलब्धता पर नकारात्मक असर होगा इसलिए वे उन्हीं क्रशरों को सील करें जो नियमों की अवहेलना कर रहे हैं। शाम को यादव ने गुड़गांव में विभागीय अधिकारियों के साथ इस मसले पर बैठक भी की।

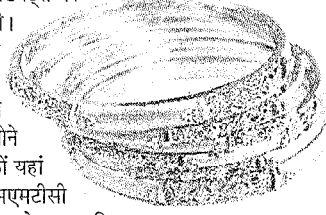
शिमला | हिमाचल सरकार ने सभी पंचायत में प्रस्तावित 1272 पशुऔषधालयों में सेवानिवृत्त वेटरनरी फार्मासिस्टों की पुनर्नियुक्ति की आयु सीमा 65 वर्ष कर दी है।

गोल्ड फेस्टिवल आज से छूट के साथ नए प्रॉडक्ट पेश होंगे

वि.स. ॥ नई दिल्ली : एमएमटीसी का गोल्ड फेस्टिवल 22 से 31 अक्टूबर तक दिल्ली में लगेगा। यहां किसी भी तरह के सोने के प्रॉडक्ट खरीदने पर 0.5 से 2 पैसे तक की छूट मिलेगी। सांची सिल्वर वेयर प्रॉडक्ट्स पर 5 पैसे तक की छूट होगी। एमएमटीसी ने इसे युनिवर्सल डिस्काउंट नाम दिया है।

फेस्टिवल की शुरुआत केंद्रीय वाणिज्य मंत्री आनंद शर्मा करेंगे। सोने में रिकॉर्ड महंगाई से परेशान ग्राहकों यहां थोड़ी राहत महसूस कर सकेंगे। एमएमटीसी के डायरेक्टर (मार्केटिंग) वेद प्रकाश ने बताया कि

इस बार गोल्ड फेस्टिवल में कई नए प्रॉडक्ट पेश किए जाएंगे। इनमें प्रमुख रूप से 500 और 1000 रुपये के सिल्वर नोट और सिल्वर बार होंगे। सिल्वर बार की रेंज 20 ग्राम से शुरू होगी। इटैलियन डिजाइन की स्पेशल चैन भी होगी। हर बार की तरह फेस्टिवल में कंपनी के दिल्ली समेत मुंबई, चेन्नै, कोलकाता, गोवा, हैदराबाद और बंगलुरु आदि केंद्र गोल्ड जूलरी से लेकर चैन, सिक्के और अन्य प्रॉडक्ट पेश करेंगे। ये प्रॉडक्ट इस तरह डिजाइन किए गए हैं कि इनमें इन प्रदेशों की छाप नजर आए। चैन और चूड़ियों की विशेष काउंटर भी लगेगी। दुल्हन के गहनों का अलग स्टॉल होगा। वेद प्रकाश का कहना है कि अभी सोने में और तेजी की संभावना है। ऐसे में यहां ग्राहकों को क्वालिटी की गारंटी के साथ छूट भी मिलेगी।



GREEN WOES

Centre halts construction work at Vedanta refinery

1325126

New Delhi, Oct. 21: India's environment ministry on Thursday ordered Vedanta Resources to immediately halt all construction work aimed at expanding its aluminum refinery in the state of Orissa, saying the company never got the required environmental clearances.

The ministry also asked the Orissa government to take legal action against the London-based mining giant. Vedanta officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The decision was only the latest example of the increasingly activist ministry scuttling mining and construction plans by multinational companies.

Two months ago the ministry denied Vedanta permission to mine bauxite for its refineries in eastern India, citing violations of environmental and human rights laws.

Earlier this week, a government panel called for



Jairam Ramesh

withdrawing the environmental clearances for South Korean steel giant Posco to build a \$12 billion steel plant, citing "serious lapses and illegalities" in the process of getting the clearances and the assent of locals.

Environment minister Mr Jairam Ramesh has not yet announced whether he would accept those findings.

Business analysts fear the decisions could frighten

away investment and hamper India's growth, but Jairam Ramesh says he is simply enforcing laws that have long been flouted in this country.

In a letter sent to Vedanta and published on the ministry's Web site on Thursday, officials painted a picture of a company that appeared to be ignoring government requirements for expanding its refinery below the Niyamgiri hills in Orissa.

The letter said the company had first applied for environmental clearances in 2006 to expand the refinery six-fold and increase the capacity of a related power plant.

As the application wound through the approval process, a team of government experts sent to the site discovered that the company had already begun expanding the plant, even without the needed permits, the letter said. — AP

Vedanta refinery may hit hurdle

New Delhi, Oct. 10: The government is likely to halt this week London-listed miner Vedanta Resources' plans to expand its alumina refinery in Orissa due to serious violation of environmental laws, government officials said on Wednesday.

If halted, the move — which comes two months after the government rejected the firm's plans to mine bauxite in Orissa over environmental concerns — would be another blow to Vedanta, already facing hurdles to a planned \$9.6 billion acquisition of a stake in Cairn India.

Vedanta operates a one million tonne-a-year alumina refinery in Orissa and wants to expand its capacity by six times. The company's project in Orissa is valued at about \$9.5 billion.

In August, the environment ministry asked the company to explain why the green clearance given to its refinery should not be revoked after a probe found it violating laws, including sourcing bauxite from mines that did not have green clearance.

The company said last week there were no regulatory violations of any kind at its refinery in Orissa's Lanjigarh.

The officials said environment minister Mr Jairam Ramesh was likely to take a final decision on Vedanta this week.

"There is procedural violation of the regulation in Vedanta refinery while there is serious and unambiguous violation in the expansion plan," a senior environment ministry official said.

— Reuters

Hindustan Zinc profit up by 1.47%

29/10/10

VEDANTA GROUP firm Hindustan Zinc on Wednesday posted 1.47 rise in profit at 948.72 crore for the second quarter of the current fiscal, as against the year-ago period, on improved demand and rising prices. "The increase was primarily on account of higher volumes and improved London Metal Exchange prices," the company said in a statement. Hindustan Zinc had a net profit of ₹934.95 crore in the same quarter last fiscal. The revenues moved up in Q2 FY11 to ₹2,162.8 crore, around 21 per cent, as compared to ₹1,789.5 crore in the same period last fiscal.

Hindustan Zinc increases prices of zinc, lead

Hindustan Zinc hiked zinc and lead prices for the second time this week, according to data on the company's website. It raised zinc prices by Rs 1,100 a tonne, or 0.92%, to Rs 120,200 a tonne.

Vedanta Lanjigarh plant expansion hits green hurdle

Dilip Bishnoi

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The London-listed Vedanta Resources heaved a sigh of relief on Thursday as the ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) stopped the expansion of its existing 1 million tonne per annum (MTPA) alumina refinery at Lanjigarh in Orissa's Kalahandi district but did not withdraw the environment clearances accorded to the refinery.

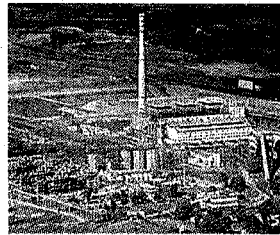
"That the existing refinery was saved is of great satisfaction to us," Vedanta Aluminium (VAL) COO Mukesh Kumar told *FE*.

The ministry's permission to source bauxite from mines is also a great relief, he added.

VAL top bosses were quite apprehensive about the ministry's ban on sourcing bauxite from mines in Orissa and Jharkhand. The company is running the refinery with bauxite from 14 mines in the two states.

Kumar was in Lanjigarh on Thursday to tell the employees that the existing refinery was not going to be closed.

The MoEF on Thursday announced its verdict in connection with the violation of forest and environment laws by Vedanta Aluminium in Orissa.



ROAD BLOCK

■ The environment ministry ordered the company to not undertake any new construction at the site

■ Vedanta had planned to spend Rs 37,500 crore to raise capacity to 6 million tonne per annum

■ The company may receive a notice from the ministry for breaching norms at the site

The ministry has directed the company to submit an irrevocable bank guarantee of Rs 10 crore within 15 days to the Orissa State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) for implementation of all environmental protection measures.

The ministry has directed that the company shall immediately install Piezometers around the red mud and ash ponds to monitor the ground water level. At least 25% of the plant area must be covered with green belt within two years.

Another setback for Vedanta³¹

MoEF disallows expansion of refinery



An overview of the Vedanta refinery in Lanjigarh, Orissa.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Environment and Forest has denied permission to the Britain-based Vedanta Resources for a six-fold expansion of its aluminum plant in Odisha due to environmental concerns.

In a directive to Vedanta, the Ministry said on Thursday that the company must "maintain status quo" at the Lanjigarh site and undertake "no further construction activity." The company had applied for expansion of its aluminum complex from the present one million tonne (MT) to six MT at Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district of the State. This expansion budget was pegged at US \$8.5 billion.

The Environment Ministry has, however, stated in its directive, which was also put on its website, that the company can continue to operate its existing one-million-tonne a year refinery, provided it maintains a minimum level of forested area around the plant, monitors pollution levels and submits a bank guarantee of Rs 100 million (\$2.2 million) to the Odisha pollution control board where the refinery is located.

Meanwhile, the latest order that came under Section five of the Environment Protection Act 1986 has come as a second blow for Vedanta Aluminum, since its proposal to mine

the Niyamgiri Hills, eight kilometers from the Lanjigarh refinery, was also turned down by the Environment Ministry in August. It stated that mining bauxite in the hills would damage the ecology of the area and drastically affect the Primitive Tribes of the Dongria Kondh that had inhabited the hills for generations.

According to experts, denial of access to bauxite from Niyamgiri Hills would have anyway made it difficult for Vedanta to run its refinery at an expanded capacity as it currently incurs a high cost lugging bauxite from distant mines. The Ministry in its present directive has spelt out certain prescribed parameters, which the company would have to adhere to, in the course of its existing operations in the State.

The order states that the company shall cover 25 per cent plant area by raising a green belt within two years. The selection of the plant species would be as per the agroclimate zone with the native species. The Ministry has directed the company to submit detailed plan for Green Belt Development and plantation within three months.

Further, it shall instal piezometers (an instrument for measuring fluid pressure) around the red mud and ash ponds to monitor the groundwater level, fluctuations and quality parameters on quarterly basis.

Vedanta told to halt expansion at alumina refinery

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Oct. 21

Vedanta Resources suffered yet another setback on Thursday. The Environment Ministry refused permission for Vedanta to expand its alumina refinery capacity at Lanjigarh in Orissa from one to six million tonnes per annum for violating environmental norms.

The Ministry directed the Chief Operating Officer of Vedanta Aluminium Ltd to maintain status quo at the project site and said that "no further construction shall be undertaken in respect of expansion project".

The latest directive is in line with the recommendations of the N.C.Saxena Committee, which had alleged that the company was expanding capacity without obtaining prior environmental clearance.

Vedanta, which operates a one million tonne per annum, is in the middle of expanding its capacity to six million tonnes per annum. About 40-45 per cent of construction activity on the capacity expansion has been taken up by

the company and the overall progress of the project is around 50-55 per cent, Vedanta officials recently told the Ministry. They expect that it may take another 18-24 months to complete the entire work. The estimated cost of the project is about Rs 10,000 crore.

NO TO CAPTIVE POWER PLANT

On Thursday, the Ministry also refused permission for the company to expand the capacity of its captive power plant from 75 MW to 300 MW.

"The Terms of Reference issued on 12 March 2009 for expansion of alumina refinery from 1 mtpa to 6 mtpa and 75 MW to 300 MW are hereby withdrawn and consequently the public hearing conducted on April 25, 2009 stands cancelled," the Ministry said.

Further, the Ministry also asked the Orissa Government to take legal action under the provisions of Environment (Protection) Act 1986 for violation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification, 2006.

Chinese growth data drive up copper ¹¹²/₂₀

Reuters

London, Oct. 21

Volatile copper rose on Thursday, as investors mulled over the latest economic growth data from top metals consumer China, while a weaker dollar offered support.

By 09:14 GMT, copper for three month delivery on the London Metal Exchange traded at \$8,368 a tonne from \$8,340 at the close on Wednesday.

China's economic growth slowed in the third quarter but was a touch stronger than expected. Consumer inflation hit a 23-month high of 3.6 per cent in September, but was in line with market expectations.

Battery material lead for three-month delivery on the London Metal Exchange traded at \$2,495 a tonne versus \$2,450, after earlier touching its highest level since mid-January at \$2,508.

Zinc hit \$2,504 a tonne, its highest level since mid-April, but was last at \$2,492 versus \$2,440. Aluminium traded at \$2,378 versus \$2,362.

Steel making ingredient nickel traded at \$23,975 from \$23,945, tin was at \$27,025 from \$26,750.

Vedanta's refinery expansion plan rejected; faces legal action

Environment Ministry asks the company to maintain status quo at the site

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: In another setback to Vedanta Aluminium's Orissa ambitions, the Environment Ministry has rejected its plan to expand its Lanjigarh refinery six-fold and directed the State government to take legal action against the company for illegally beginning the expansion without permission.

This comes almost two months after the government rejected the company's proposal to mine bauxite in the Niyamgiri Hills near the refinery in Kalahandi district. Both decisions were taken on the basis of the N.C. Saxena

59-15
● **Orissa government directed to take action against company**

● **Vedanta asked to undertake strict pollution monitoring**

Committee report that detailed the company's violations of environmental norms.

The Vedanta Aluminium had a \$5.8-billion plan to increase the production capacity of its Lanjigarh alumina refinery from the current one million tonnes to six million tonnes per annum.

In a letter dated October 20 to the Vedanta, the Ministry

directed it to "maintain status quo at the site and no further construction activity shall be undertaken with respect to the expansion project." The terms of reference granted to the company, as well as the public hearing conducted in April 2009 were cancelled. The Secretary of the State Forest and Environment Department was directed to take action against the company

under the provisions of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

At a hearing held by the Ministry on September 30, the Vedanta officials admitted that they had completed 40 to 45 per cent of the construction work for expansion despite the fact that they had no prior environmental clearance. They pleaded that the clearance could now be granted "considering the magnitude of the project and the wide ranging benefits," including a 5 per cent profit sharing with the local community mandated by the Supreme Court. "They are ready to pay any penalty for viola-

tion but not to stop the project," according to the minutes of the hearing.

In another order, the Ministry asked the Vedanta Aluminium to put strict pollution monitoring and control facilities in place at the existing one million-tonne per annum refinery, and also develop a green belt in 25 per cent of the plant area. It will not be allowed to source bauxite from any mine without prior environment clearance. It was also asked to submit a Rs. 10 crore bank guarantee to the State pollution control board to ensure its compliance with these directions.

Centre clips Vedanta expansion plans

Rajaram Satapathy | TNN

Bhubaneswar: The Centre on Thursday drew the curtains on the controversial Vedanta refinery project at Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district of Orissa, limiting its operation to just one MTPA (metric tonne per annum) capacity under stricter conditions.

The government cancelled the company's application for the refinery's expansion to six MTPA and the captive power plant there from 75 mw to 300 mw. It also ordered to stop any construction relating to expansion of the project and "maintain status quo at the site." Moreover, the company has been directed to source bauxite for its plant only from those mines which have "prior environment clearance."

The action against the project, owned by Anil Agarwal, assumes significance as it raised considerable storm in the political circles from Bhubaneswar to New Delhi.

Earlier, the ministry of environment and forest (MoEF) had refused permission to the company to mine bauxite for the refinery from Niyamgiri hill, home of the primitive Dongria Kondhs.

The issue had even seen Congress leader Rahul Gandhi flying down to the area to tell the tribals that he would fight their case. The ruling

GREEN HURDLE

BJD, which showcased the project as a proof to its industrialization drive, had dubbed the Centre's move as a "conspiracy" and conducted statewide padayatra.

While consigning the mining plan to the backburner, MoEF had kept the refinery's operations alive by seeking explanations for alleged unauthorized expansion and violations environment and forest laws. The decision coming after reports by expert teams pointing out serious violation.

US Ex-Im OKs \$917m Sasan plant guarantee

Our Bureau
NEW DELHI

56
76
The board of directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States has approved a \$917-million export finance guarantee to Anil Dhirubhai Ambani group company Reliance Power's 3,960 mw ultra mega project at Sasan in Madhya Pradesh.

This is the largest loan guarantee given by US Ex-Im to a private sector Indian company for project financing and comes just weeks before US President Barack Obama's visit to India.

"The clearance will enable Reliance Power Ltd (RPL) to source much needed mining equipment from the US and accelerate commissioning of Sasan project. In addition, it will



ALL CLEAR

give the company the option to make savings on interest payouts, replace some of its high cost debt raised for Sasan project with cheaper Ex-Im credit and use the released funds for use in other projects," said a Reliance Power spokesperson.

RPL had contracted to purchase mining equipment from Wisconsin-based Bucyrus International. The sales agreement was contingent upon the Indian firm receiving US Ex-Im financing.

"The board's approval of the Sasan power project resulted from carefully balancing the need to support American jobs and conventional energy exports, while simultaneously encouraging development of renewable energy facilities," said Ex-Im Bank chairman and president Fred P Hochberg.

On June 24th, the Ex-Im Board had rejected a request from Reliance Power to finance the \$4.5-billion project at Sasan on environmental grounds. The coal-fired project was considered an environmental hazard by the US agency due to 26,000-27,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per annum. Subsequently, the company signed a MoU with the bank to build a new 250 mw renewable energy facility. It also agreed to comply with Ex-Im's new environmental guidelines (for Sasan project) that limit carbon emissions to 850 grams of CO2 per kilowatt hour.

Reliance Power on its own and through subsidiaries has a portfolio of almost 37,000 mw of power generation capacity, which includes operational as well as projects under development.

How To Spot The True-Blue Rock Star

Diamonds are fast winning over fans in a land obsessed with gold. Here are some tips on how to recognise the charmer

Weekly Schedule

MON	Growth Investing
TUE	Income Investing
WED	Insurance
THU	Borrowing
FRI	Real Estate and Spending

KNOW YOUR

CUT

PROPORTIONAL: Commands the highest premium
SHALLOW: Looks larger than it actually is
DEEP: Looks smaller than it actually is
Diamonds come in various shapes including round brilliant, marquise, princess, pear, heart and oval. Round brilliant is the most expensive shape.

CLARITY

- The best quality diamonds in terms of clarity, i.e. the clearest ones, are of the internally flawless (IF) variety.
- The IF grading is followed by very very slightly included (VVS 1 and VVS 2) and very slightly included (VS 1, VS 2)
- Lower down the grading scale are diamonds in the slightly included (SI1 and SI2) group
- The Imperfect (I1, I2 and I3) category ranks last

Carat Weight

The weight of a diamond is expressed in terms of "carats". One carat is equal to 1/5th of a gram. Heavier the diamond in terms of carat weight, higher will be the price

COLOUR

Colour grades start from the letter D, which stands for colourless, and is regarded as the most superior

- D - F: Colourless
- G - J: Near Colourless
- K - M: Slightly tinted
- N - R: Very light yellow
- S - Z: Light yellow and yellow

THE dazzling rock holds its sway the world over. Both women and men swear by it, and its popularity refuses to fade thousands of years after it was first discovered by man. Known for their perennial fixation for gold, Indians are now looking at the white bauble with greater interest. More and more women consider gold as old-fashioned, and something that their mothers and grandmothers used to wear. No wonder then that these days, Indian weddings not only an occasion for the bride to flaunt her designer trousseau, but also chic diamond jewellery.

So, it's time for prospective grooms, brides and their families to shop for ornaments, hoping to benefit from discount schemes and other offers that several jewellery houses roll out in the run up to Diwali. What's more, this may be the right time to buy these most precious of stones, from the investment perspective too, given that the demand for diamonds has picked up significantly post the 2008 global slowdown, which saw a fall in diamond prices by almost 30%.

Industry experts say that though diamond prices have risen by 10-15% over the past one year, it still remains a favourite buy for most Indian brides and grooms. For instance, a Gili finger ring of VVS clarity and a weight of 0.04-carat set in 18-carat gold, weighing 1.94 gram, costs ₹11,100. Similarly, a 0.15-carat earring of VVS clarity will cost ₹22,000. Unlike gold, there is no single price for diamond because of various determinants including cut, weight and clarity. "A major increase in gold prices and a shift in preference towards diamond-studded jewellery, as an accessory and style statement, is partly responsible for the increase in demand," says Mehul Choksi, CMD, Gitanjali Group.

Even jewellery houses have been witnessing an increase in demand for diamond jewellery. "The demand for diamond has shown consistent growth over the past three years, and this year too, it has been in line with our expectations, which are based on our experience and overall economic conditions," RK Nagarkar, general manager, TBZ — The Original. However, while gold buying is relatively simpler, buying diamonds can be quite tricky, largely due to the absence of hallmarking practice. This is why you need to exercise more caution while zeroing in on your diamond-studded ornaments.

Quality Check: The best test is try breaking it with a hammer, if it does, you can assume it's not a real one, say most jewellers in a lighter vein. You may not have the heart to try out this exercise given the emotional value attached to your betrothal/wedding ring, but there is a more standardised approach to ascertain the diamond's quality, which is commonly referred to as the 4Cs analysis — cut, colour, clarity and carat weight. Cuts are of three kinds: proportional, shallow and deep. Proportional is the most expensive form of cut.

Diamonds are usually cut according to a mathematical formula. A round brilliant cut, for example, should have 58 "facets". These facets should be in a certain proportion so that it has the right glitter and catches the customer's eye. Similarly, diamonds come in various shapes like round brilliant, marquise, princess, pear, heart and oval. Round brilliant is of the most superior variety. In terms of colour, the diamonds can be classified into colourless, near-colourless, faint yellow, very light yellow, light yellow and yellow. Lesser the colour, the better is the quality.

The grades range from D to V, where the completely colourless variety is assigned the grade D. As far as clarity is concerned, the clearest diamond is the rarest one and, hence, commands the highest price. Internally Flawless (IF) is the grade assigned to the clearest stone. Other less superior varieties include very very slightly included (VVS1 and VVS2), very slightly included (VS1 and VS2), slightly included (SI1 and SI2) and imperfect (I1, I2 and I3). Then comes the last parameter — carat weight, which determines the size of the diamond and accordingly, the price. The weight of a diamond is expressed in terms of carats. One carat is equal to 1/5th of a gram.

Buy-Back Value: You may want to exchange your old jewellery for new ornaments to keep up with contemporary designs or simply liquidate them for cash. Hence, you should enquire about the buy-back value of the diamonds you purchase. Unlike gold, there is no standard practice when it comes to buy back of diamonds. Most big brands offer around 80-85% of the trading value of your diamonds, if you sell it for cash. "We guarantee buyback at a 20% discount, i.e. customer gets back 80 percent of the price," Mr Choksi informs. "We don't offer cash

across the counter, we offer a cheque to the customer," clarifies the store manager at Tanishq in Chembur, Mumbai. This figure could drop to around 75% in case of small-time jewellers.

Selling Diamonds: Most well-known diamond jewellery houses refuse to buy diamonds not sold by them. "One of the biggest concerns here is the quality of diamonds. We trust the quality only of our inhouse diamonds. A shallow cut can make the diamond look bigger, but that doesn't enhance its quality," explains a Tanishq store manager. Chitra Rajagopalan discovered this the hard way. She was looking to exchange her grandmother's diamond earrings at Tribhovandas Bhimji Zaveri (TBZ). She had almost selected the design, but the store refused to exchange her old diamonds. She found it difficult to dispose the old diamond earrings. A small jeweller at Zaveri Bazaar finally bought her earrings for ₹30,000. Out of which the jeweller took a commission of ₹10,000 on the purchase, which is commonly called margin money in the diamond market.

"More than the quality of diamonds, it's the margin money these jewellers charge, which amounts to almost 15-20%, that pinches your pocket," Ms Rajagopalan adds. So, if you have bought a pair of diamond earrings from your neighbourhood jeweller, it's better to have an exchange transaction with him only. Similarly, if you buy branded jewellery such as Gili or Nakshatra you get the best buy-back deal only from them.

Is This The Right Time?: Diamond prices are expected to increase in the years to come, on the back of strong demand and constricted supply. "The output from the existing diamond mines is declining and no new mines have been discovered recently. So, the supply of diamonds is likely to be restricted over the next decade and beyond," says Mr Choksi.

So you can buy diamonds if you are unable to resist their allure, but be clear about their intended use. If it's for their ornamental value, you need not hesitate to go ahead. However, if you have investment on your mind, you need to think twice, given the ambiguity and lack of standardisation pertaining to diamond buy-back transactions.

VIDYALAXMI & PREETI KULKARNI
vidyalaxmi.v@timesgroup.com

MONDAY: SAY NO TO UNDERPERFORMING FUNDS

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT DIAMOND

Diamonds can be set in 16/18 carat gold. 22 carat is too soft to hold hard diamonds

Big-sized diamonds are not always expensive. A shallow cut makes diamond look bigger

Some jewellers give an additional card apart from the usual invoice, which has details about the 4Cs

Only trained personnel can assess a diamond's genuineness. Hence, insist on a third-party certificate issued by a reputed laboratory

Diamond prices can go up by around ₹600-700 per carat with a diamond which is better-formed

Big stores buy back only the diamonds sold by them

Clarity diamonds are used for made-to-order solitaires. VS or SI are commonly used to make jewellery

Copper advances on upbeat China estimate

LONDON: Copper rose in New York and London as the dollar slid and economic growth in China, the world's largest user of the metal, topped economists' estimates. The US dollar Index, a six-currency gauge of the greenback's strength, dropped as much as 0.4%, erasing a gain. China's economy expanded by 9.6% in the third quarter, above the median 9.5% estimate of economists.

Vedanta deja vu for Posco

In Battleground Orissa, Two Mega Industrial Projects Have Run A Parallel Course So Far. But Will The UPA Bend The Laws For The Steel Giant?

Nitin Sethi | TNN

The UPA-II government's ability to go beyond its posturing as the biggest defender of green laws and actually adhere to the bunch of legislations passed in this and previous Congress regimes is being tested with the Posco case.

There are several similarities between Vedanta and Posco though the government has been keen to highlight the differences.

In both cases, the government ordered independent inquiries to ascertain if the proposed mining and industrial projects were in violation of environmental laws—the Environment Protection Act, Forest Conservation Act and the Forest Rights Act.

In the case of Vedanta—involving bauxite mining in the Niyamgiri hills—the panel headed by National Advisory Council member N C Saxena delivered a unanimous report that the alumina czar had brazenly violated all three laws with the collusion of state government officials.

In the case of South Korean steel giant Posco, three of the four members of the Meena Gupta committee have also concluded the same. The steel plant and port are coming up in flagrant violation of green laws in collusion with government officials.

Gupta, the chair of the committee, has in her report decided that she would not investigate the legality of these clearances despite the panel being asked to do so. Oddly, she has claimed that the panel was only meant to review if the Korean steel giant was following the conditions laid down in the clearances. It begs the question: how do you assess if an industrial unit, which is yet to be constructed or become operational, has complied with conditions it is meant to follow once running. It's controversial because she was the Orissa cadre IAS officer posted as secretary at the Union environment and forests ministry when the environmental clearance was granted to Posco—illegally, claim the other three members, among them a retired senior forest officer and two non-governmental experts.

The three members who filed the

THE BAUXITE TEST

► The government set up independent inquiries into both Vedanta and Posco projects. Vedanta faced opposition to bauxite mining from the tribals of Niyamgiri Hills; Posco faces resistance from villagers who are against handing over of "traditional forest land"

► Vedanta inquiry found blatant violation of Environment Protection Act, Forest Conservation Act and the Forest Rights Act by the



Anti-Posco agitators at Dhinkia village in Jagatsinghpur district of Orissa. (Below) A betel farm at the proposed Posco site; Dongaria Kondh tribals of Niyamgiri Hills

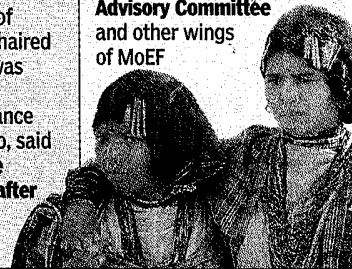
alumina major, in collusion with state govt officials

► The majority report on Posco said there were serious violations of the three laws cited above, besides the Coastal Regulatory Zone rules and that the clearances granted were a mockery of law. Posco suppressed data, the Orissa govt fabricated

evidence and MoEF altered records, they said

► The minority view of Meena Gupta, who chaired the committee and was MoEF secy when the environmental clearance was granted to Posco, said the project should be allowed to continue after imposing additional conditions

► The Posco report will now be assessed by the Forest Advisory Committee and other wings of MoEF



majority report have registered their complaint against the attempt by the government to give a spin that the two reports are not really different. The MoEF is yet to release that letter, highlighting the legal and logical deficiencies in Gupta's dissent note which they didn't get to review.

Jairam Ramesh, who is in the hot seat as the environment minister, has papered over these dramatic differences in the two reports and instead highlighted the differences between Posco and Vedanta. He has suggested that unlike Vedanta, Posco does not impact tribals and it is yet to be launched.

The first gains significance because shutting down Vedanta's mining plans in Niyamgiri hills suited the Congress just fine, with Rahul Gandhi's roadshow quickly reaching Orissa to claim credit for the "pro-tribal" decision of the govern-

ment. In the case of the Rs 54,000-crore Posco project, the party cannot see any political dividend. There is the question of how the people in state of Orissa view the project. And there is a PMO, on the other hand, which is seen to be averse to blocking the biggest FDI investment ever in India. Ramesh has admitted that international and strategic concerns run high in this case.

Trouble is, environmental laws are not tailor-made for political expediency or with strategic interests in mind, they are only meant to safeguard the environment and the people who depend upon it for their livelihoods—tribals or not.

The laws provide for cancellation of clearances in case of such blatant violations—hiding information to gain clearances for a plant 300% bigger than what the company told the Centre and falsification of data by the

state government to hand over people's land to a private company.

Posco has not invested much on ground as yet, unlike Vedanta. It's yet to even be handed over the land, so the 'economic' argument of wasting locked-in investment fails to fly, as it has in some cases previously. Though not in Vedanta's. In an ideal world, the government would simply follow the laws and cancel the illegally granted clearances and let Posco, if it so wishes, apply again for the same—this time adhering to Indian laws.

But the final decision on Posco would show if the UPA intends to chant the growth mantra at the cost of laws or is it capable of maintaining the high growth rate while following rules it created to prevent degradation of the environment, which impacts the poorest most. Posco is really the litmus test of UPA's ability to pave the way for inclusive growth.

MoEF rejects Vedanta's expansion plan in Orissa

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Oct. 21: Rejecting Vedanta Resources expansion plan, the environment ministry has asked the London-based metals giant to maintain status quo at its Lanjigarh refinery in Orissa's Kalahandi district. The ministry cited violation of green norms for turning down the expansion plan.

Vedanta Resources had plans to increase the production capacity of the Lanjigarh refinery from the cur-

rent 1 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) to 6 mtpa.

The ministry in an official communication to the company on Wednesday said, "You are directed to maintain status quo at the site and no further construction activity shall be undertaken with respect to the expansion project."

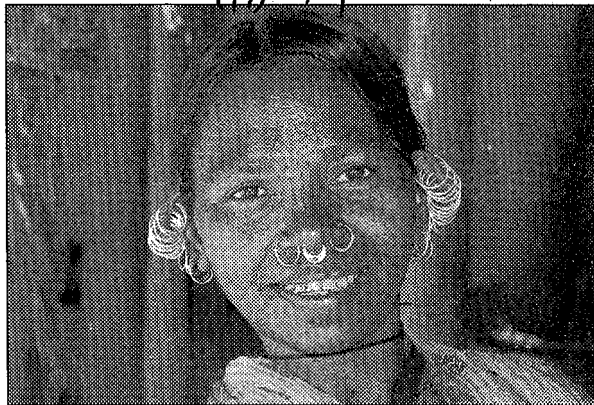
Adding to Vedanta's woes, the ministry also asked the Orissa government to take legal action against it under the provisions of Environmental Protection Act, 1986 for violation of Environ-

mental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification. The ministry recently also turned down Vedanta's proposal to mine bauxite from Niyamgiri Hills, citing threat to the ecology of the area and the Dongria Kondh tribe which lives in the hills.

The ministry's action against Vedanta's expansion plan came as per recommendations by N.C. Saxena panel which had alleged that Vedanta Aluminium Ltd had undertaken expansion activity of the refinery without obtaining prior permission.

aside Akshaya Kumar Sahoo

Dongria Kondh's voice in an album



BHUBANESWAR: The voice and vibes, the pulse and palpitation of the Dongria Kondh, the primitive tribal group living on the Niyamgiri hills in Orissa, can now be heard by the outside world, albeit through a music album, *Niyamgiri ti Rani*. Produced by Vedanta Aluminium Limited (VAL), the album contains eight songs in Kui language. Written by Gopal Melaka, the songs are composed by Oriya music director Manmath Mishra, Jitu Jakasika, Ramesh Kulesika, Gopal Melaka, Stephen and Biraji and the Dongria natives of Lanjigarh and Muniguda.

Most of the songs depict the day-to-day life of the Dongria Kondh tribe and express their joys and happiness. *Niyamgiri ti Rani* is claimed to be the first ever attempt to chronicle the Kui songs in an album format.

Releasing the album, SC & ST development minister Bijayaranjan Singh Bariha said the move would enable the wider section of people to know the Dongria Kondh from close quarters. "This is a noble endeavour and I hope more and more such

albums would be produced to highlight the rich cultural life of the Dongria Kondhs," Mr Bariha said.

The Dongria Kondhs are one of the primitive tribal inhabitants of Lanjigarh in the district of Kalahandi. Kui, the traditional language of the Dongria Kondhs, has a rich oral history that the elders of the community pass on from generation to generation through their folk songs and stories. The Dongria Kondhs, under the leadership of Jitu Jakasika, pioneered the thought to promote their culture with their own music band. Speaking on the occasion, Jitu said, "It's a dream come true for us. We have a long mission to accomplish. Hereafter, we also plan to release a video album followed by live performances across India to promote the culture of the natives of Lanjigarh."

Dr Mukesh Kumar, president and chief operating officer, VAL (Lanjigarh), reiterated Vedanta's vision for the overall development of the peripheral areas of Kalahandi, where it's already operating an alumina refinery.

The seed and the mine



**DIVIDING
LINES**

Shiv Visvanathan

THE MINISTER of environment and forestry, Jairam Ramesh, is an interesting man to quarrel about and quarrel with. In many ways, he has become a public figure keen to enact policy as an open drama. Mr Ramesh has taken the domain of policy and opened it to public debate. This makes the decisions vulnerable but one can smell the fresh air of democratic debate. This smell can be very invigorating for politics.

Let us be clear. Mr Ramesh is a shrewd and ambitious man. He began as a technocrat and later learnt the craft and humility that comes with politics. He also realises it as a balancing act where today's supporters might be tomorrow's opponents. He realises that environment and politics are about trade-offs. A trade-off is an art form. As Mr Ramesh stated it in his Satish Dhawan Memorial Lecture, there is always a trade-off between growth and environment. "In arriving at decisions to untangle the trade-off, three options present themselves — 'yes', 'yes, but' and 'no'. The real problem is that the growth constituency is used to 'yes' and can live with 'yes, but'. It cries foul with 'no'. The environment constituency exults with a 'no', grudgingly accepts the 'yes, but', but cries foul with a 'yes'. Therefore one clear lesson is this —

maximise the 'yes, but', where this is possible."

Mr Ramesh has his own reading of environment as politics where he quotes experts like Partha Dasgupta, Sumita Narain and Kanchan Chopra. His literacy has never been in doubt. But sociologically one can read this effort in a different way.

The last decades of the century were the era of social movements. They ranged from Chipko and Appiko to the battle over the Narmada Dam. The Indian battle for environment was a deeply political one where civil society used environment as a site to widen the idea of democracy.

But with liberalisation, the opening of the economy, the rise of a new generation, the idioms of politics were changing. The political idea of movements was seen as labour intensive and yet often futile in building consensus. Movements are precious and they represent the social conscience of the society. But movements can be concealed into method, when the method is more than a set of dry techniques like cost-benefit analysis. A variety of new heuristics, new legal frames, and new concepts could create the new life blood of a sustained environmentalism. Mr Ramesh as a mature technocrat was one of the first to understand the politics of conditionalities.

Method could become a mode of arbitration, raising policy to a new level of sensitivity and debate. The drama of method as an open frame of scrutiny and evaluation based on openness, objectivity and method centered around the two great moral sites of the ecological imagination — the seed and the mine.

The rise of the Bt Cotton controversy and the tandem debates on brinjals made seeds the site of the whole debate on agriculture. A seed could not be read as a mechanical artifact to be produced in a laboratory. A seed was the image of the future, a stored heritage, a form of competence,

lic space for doubt, debate and a process of resolution. The fact that the academics of science behaved like a collective Pinnochio was not his fault. Like Pinnochio, the academics became toys in the hands of private groups, and like Pinnochio their noses became longer with each denial.

One must be wary of creating a fairytale rendering. Mr Ramesh has employed method as a surrogate for ethics.

To the fate of agriculture, we must add the problem of the mine. The mine in India has been a source of exploitation and corruption. It has often destroyed the tribal way of life spouting the

introduce these cartels to the rule of law in India. He was quick to emphasise that the goal was not to delay nor was it a romantic pursuit of anti-development. His technocratic past ensured that he was not subject to accusation of sentiment. Method has a way of hiding values. This much he knew and exploited.

He went further. He showed that given an era where the green bench is dormant, where the court insists that the Narmada Dam is a marker of sustainability, one needs to rework sustainability as a methodology, as a framework of law, as a model for justice. One needs methodology for both gross domestic product and Green Domestic Product. One needs a revaluation of wealth in a polluted society. He is quick to remind us that the phrase "sustainable development" was first coined by an Indian economist, Nitin Desai. He is equally quick to remind us that the systems of green accounting are still a patina of good intentions.

But Mr Ramesh has cleared the ground. He has shown we cannot use old fears, like the China syndrome, to create bad defence or development. Yet he intuitively realises that the battle for a green India needs the creativity of our society. His is an invitation to politics, to ethics which is asking us to go beyond his initial framework of methods. He is a harbinger of future but it is upto the society to claim the opportunity. This coming month is the month of the Earth Charter. One hopes India does not reduce it to the banality of empty proclamations.

■ SHIV VISVANATHAN is
a social scientist

"A seed was the image of the future, a stored heritage... It could not be handed over to the MNC... to hand over such knowledge was to hand over a way of life"

a circus of imaginations. Such a world could not be handed over to the MNC, for to hand over such knowledge was to hand over a way of life. It was to diminish a form of civilisation called agriculture.

Because of his literacy and openness to activists, Mr Ramesh understood this intuitively. He also realised democracy is a composite of imaginations where private science and market interests have major stakes. By creating a framework of debate through his hearings, by simultaneously inviting the six academics of science to evaluate Bt crops, Mr Ramesh created a pub-

hypocritical litany of development. Anyone interested to know the details should read a recent classic by Felix Padel and Sameendra Das on the role of aluminium cartels. I wish media would give *Out of this Earth* the publicity it reserves for the adolescent outpourings of the diaspora which everyone calls "literature".

Mr Ramesh realised the pending ethical issues of the mine. A whole nexus of cartels were eating into mineral wealth from iron ore to bauxite, with complete indifference to the local people and their ecology. Mr Ramesh realised that methodology of environmental clearances could

MoEF stalls Vedanta Aluminium's expansion

BS REPORTER

Bhubaneswar, 21 October

In a big blow to Vedanta Aluminium Limited (VAL), the Union ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) has refused to allow the company to expand its alumina refinery and its captive power plant (CPP).

The company had proceeded with the construction work on expansion at its alumina refinery at Lanjigarh (Orissa) from 1 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) to 6 mtpa and that of its CPP from 75 Mw to 300 Mw without prior environmental clearance, violating Section 19 of the Environment Protection Act of 1986.

The MoEF has, however, allowed VAL to maintain status quo and continue operations of its 1 mtpa refinery.

The ministry has further stated that the secretary (forest and environment), Orissa, shall take legal action under the provisions of Environment Protection Act, 1986, for violation of the EIA notification.

The MoEF has directed VAL to submit an unrevocable bank guarantee for an amount of ₹10 crore, valid for three years, within 15 days to the Orissa State Pollution Control Board for implementation of all environmental protection measures.

Moreover, VAL shall cover 25 per cent of the plant area by raising a green belt within two years and undertake continuous monitoring of ambient air quality.

वेदांता पर ओएनजीसी और पर्यावरण मंत्रालय की दोहरी मार

बिजनेस भास्कर नई दिल्ली

नियमगिरी की पहाड़ियों में बॉक्साइट खनन को मंजूरी नहीं देने के कुछ ही दिन बाद वेदांता रिसोर्सेज को सरकार ने एक और झटका दे दिया है।

वन एवं पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने पर्यावरणीय नियमों की वजह से कंपनी की ओडीशा की अल्युमिना रिफाइनरी की 5.8 अरब डॉलर की विस्तार योजना को मंजूरी देने से इनकार कर दिया है। वेदांता की दिक्कतें इस बात से दोहरी हो गई हैं कि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की कंपनी तेल एवं प्राकृतिक गैस निगम (ओएनजीसी) ने वेदांता-केयर्न सौदे पर अपना रुख कड़ा कर लिया है। उसने कहा है कि केयर्न एनर्जी को इस सौदे के लिए ओएनजीसी की सहमति लेना अनिवार्य है। ध्यान रहे कि केयर्न इंडिया की सभी दस परियोजनाओं में से ज्यादातर में

ओएनजीसी भागीदार है। लंदन में सूचीबद्ध वेदांता रिसोर्सेज का इरादा कालाहांडी जिले के लांजीगढ़ में अपनी रिफाइनरी की क्षमता को सालाना 10 लाख टन से बढ़ाकर 60 लाख टन करने का था। वन एवं पर्यावरण मंत्रालय की ओर से कंपनी को भेजे गए आधिकारिक पत्र में कहा गया है, 'संबंधित स्थल पर आपको यथास्थिति बनाए रखने का निर्देश दिया जाता है।

विस्तार परियोजना के तहत आगे और निर्माण गतिविधियां नहीं की जा सकती हैं।' केयर्न एनर्जी को लिखे एक पत्र में ओएनजीसी ने कहा है कि इन परिसंपत्तियों में हिस्सेदारी की बिक्री का पहला प्रस्ताव पहले उसके सामने रखा जाना चाहिए। ओएनजीसी चाहती है कि वेदांता को परिचालन सौंपे जाने से पहले उसकी तकनीकी क्षमता को परखा जाना चाहिए।