

India engages consultants to identify critical mineral assets in Australia

Our Bureau
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The Centre has engaged consultants to identify Australian assets and companies in critical minerals and to support to Indian public and private sector firms to acquire those assets.

According to Vivek Bhardwaj, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, the Indian and Australian governments "have commissioned consultants. The government of India and Australia are both working together to identify companies in critical minerals industry in the next two months. We are willing to offer these opportunities to private companies also after having done the necessary due diligence on our behalf."

Bhardwaj was talking to newsmen on the sidelines of the Global Mining Summit



PROSPECTING ABROAD. Vivek Bhardwaj, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, at the Global Mining Summit 2022 in Kolkata DEBASISH BHADURI

(GMS) and International Mining Machinery Exhibition (IMME) organised by CII in partnership with Ministry of Mines and Coal here on Thursday.

EXPLORING ARGENTINA

The government is also planning to send a team of geologists to look for opportunities in Argentina by this month

end. There are two varieties of lithium available in Argentina.

"There are companies operating at different levels (in Australia) - one could be in exploration, one could be in early stages of finding minerals and companies which have off take agreements," he said highlighting the possibility of acquiring these to enhance India's critical mineral resources base.

To overcome land acquisition hurdles in mining minor minerals and to curb illegal mining, the West Bengal government has come out with a policy allowing mining of minor minerals such as blackstone, limestone and quartz, among others on private plots.

According to Shashi Panja, Minister for Industries, commerce and enterprises, "The State Cabinet has approved a policy for mining licenses on private land. The license will be handed over to the land owner and all the onus will be on them for clearances and responsible mining. This policy will be applicable only for minor minerals. The regulations will be ready by December," a senior state government official said.

Birbhum, West Burdwan, Purulia, West Midnapore, and Bankura are some of the districts where there is minor minerals potential.