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Project Monitoring Group for revival of bauxite mining in AP
The state government is also planning to set up industrial nodes at various points
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The Centre’s Project Monitoring Group (PMG) will soon take up the issue of stalled process of bauxite mining in Andhra Pradesh, state government officials said here today.

The clearances sought for mining of bauxite ore by the state-owned AP Mining Development Corporation (APMDC) was kept in abeyance under the UPA dispensation after then Union tribal affairs minister and Araku MP V Kishore.

Chandra Deo opposed the move.

The reversal of stand on bauxite mining came as a big blow to Anrak Aluminium Limited, one of the two companies with whom APMDC had signed the bauxite ore supply agreement in 2007. The company had heavily invested in an aluminium refinery project in Visakhapatnam.

Anil Swarup, chairman of the PMG, who reviewed the status of pending issues of over dozen projects in AP, on Friday told the officials he would take up the matter with relevant authorities in Delhi as the Centre had to take a decision on this issue.

Anrak, a joint venture company floated by Ras Al Khaimah and AP-based Penna group, had started operations by sourcing bauxite ore sourced from places such as Gujarat following the completion of the project last year. The investment proposed to be made into the alumina project by the JV was almost Rs 6,000 crore, according to the officials.

Other pending issues pertaining to Hinduja Power, Jindal Vijayanagar Steel, Petronet L&G, Gangavaram port, SR Steel, Kakinada regasification project, VBC Fertilisers, Mallavaram-Bhilwara-Bhopal gas pipeline project, Gujarat State Petroleum Limited (GSPL)’s Deen Dayal oil and gas fields and AP Paper Mills were also discussed in the meeting, according to the officials.

Earlier in the day, AP industries department secretary JSV Prasad said the government was negotiating with multilateral agencies like the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as well as Government of India for the required funding to develop industrial corridors in the state.
Online clearances for stalled projects

Around 44% of problems of all stalled projects are related to environmental issues

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Additional secretary and chairman of the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) in Cabinet Secretariat Anil Swarup on Friday said they would be launching web-based clearance system for issues pertaining to environment, mining and coal linkages of stalled projects from September.

“We have already launched the web-based forest clearances system. Now, we will be launching a similar web-based system for environmental clearances on September 1. For mining clearances on November 1 and for all coal-related clearances in the fourth quarter of the current financial year,” Swarup said after launching the state level investment tracking portal for the Andhra Pradesh government.

While 44 per cent of the problems relate to environmental issues, 60-65 per cent under the PMG radar are coal-based thermal power projects mostly awaiting coal linkages. Set up in June 2013 to clear bottlenecks for stalled mega projects with an investment size of Rs 1,000 crore and above, the PMG had so far cleared 165 projects worth Rs 5.5 lakh crore while about 230 projects involving an investment of Rs 11 lakh crore are under processing, according to Swarup.

The PMG had already put in place a paperless complaining system for projects referred to by respective companies. Clearances that are pending would also be issued online once the new initiatives come into operation.

Swarup said the main issue with stalled power projects was the implementation of fuel supply agreements. Fuel supply agreements were signed with projects with a capacity of 72,000 Mw of the 76,000 Mw capacity approved for clearances by the previous government, according to him.

Since 50 per cent of the problems of these stalled projects was in the purview of the state governments, the PMG was actively engaging them to launch a similar monitoring mechanism for those in the investment bracket of Rs 100 crore to Rs 1,000 crore, he said.

AP is the 13th state to launch a similar online project monitoring portal so far.

Responding to questions on the Hyderabad metro rail project, Swarup stated the Telangana government had been proactively supporting the project and there were no issues as far as the project alignment was concerned.