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India pulls out of Russian-backed Mali lithium project over security risks

Published On: 13-02-2026



India has decided to withdraw from a **lithium exploration project** in Mali that was backed by Russia's Rosatom.

The decision was made because of serious security concerns in Mali.

Why India pulled out

Mali is politically unstable with rising militant attacks, especially by groups linked to al Qaeda, making it unsafe for foreign projects.

Western countries have also warned their citizens to leave Mali due to security risks.

India did not want to risk losing its investment in a dangerous situation.

Who was involved

The project in Mali was backed by Russia's state nuclear company Rosatom.

Indian state firms Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL) and NLC India Ltd were part of the plan.

Importance of lithium for India

Lithium is a critical mineral used in batteries for electric vehicles and other green technologies.

India is focused on securing lithium supplies because it is expanding electric vehicle use and aiming to reduce carbon emissions.

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Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040
Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477** / Whatsapp : **09710729833**

What India will do now

Instead of Mali, India is seeking lithium deals in more stable countries like Argentina, Australia and Chile.

In 2024, KABIL signed a lithium exploration pact with an Argentinian state firm, showing India's effort to secure critical minerals.

Security and investment balance

India's move shows it is prioritising safety and protection of funds over risky overseas mineral projects.