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Growth vs green issues: Jayanthi compares herself to the *mridangam*

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ON the eve of World Environment Day, Environment Minister Jayanthi Natarajan said that the Environment Ministry is usually criticised by environmentalists as well as the industry for “coming in the way of industrial growth and also for not doing enough for environment”.

“I feel like a *mridangam* (a percussion instrument), which is beaten from both sides,” she said on Monday at a function for the release of Green Rating for the Iron and Steel Sector done by environmental NGO CSE and supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

“I am on the side of the engine. I am the environment minister and it is a personal commitment and the commitment of the government to ensure that our environment is protected at all costs,” she said. Asking industry to demonstrate it can be responsible with environment management, the Minister said that non-compliance of environmental norms by industries for the sake of growth was not acceptable. “If growth happens in the way industry is operating today ..then clearly we have a problem,” she said.

The green rating rated iron and steel producing companies, including some of the biggest steelmakers and came out with “below average” rating for the whole sector.