

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINES  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2664**  
ANSWERED ON 24.03.2025

**CRITICAL MINERAL BLOCKS**

2664. SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is engaging with resource-rich countries for access to critical minerals as well as domestic exploration and auction of critical mineral blocks;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the reasons for auctioning critical and strategic minerals including the number of critical mineral blocks notified for auction?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES  
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) & (b) Yes. For acquisition of overseas mineral assets, the Ministry of Mines has established a joint venture company, Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL). KABIL has signed an Exploration and Development Agreement with CAMYEN, a state-owned enterprise of Catamarca province of Argentina, for exploration and mining of five Lithium Brine Blocks in Argentina with an area of 15703 Ha. An MOU has also been signed between KABIL and Critical Mineral Facilitation Office (CMFO), Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISER), Government of Australia for carrying out joint due diligence and further joint investment in Lithium & Cobalt mineral assets of Australia.

The Ministry of Mines is also actively participating in various international forums where efforts are also made to encourage junior mining or exploration companies from resource-rich countries to take part in exploration of critical minerals in India through auction route.

(c) The Central Government has amended the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957 through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2023, whereby Central Government has been empowered to auction 24 critical and strategic minerals in part D to the Schedule-I of the MMDR Act, 1957.

The amendment aims to enhance and fast-track exploration and mining of critical and strategic minerals, ensuring self-sufficiency in sectors like high-tech electronics, renewable

energy, transport, agriculture, defence etc. and contribute towards increased economic growth.

So far, the Ministry of Mines, Government of India has put 48 critical mineral blocks for auction, out of which 24 mineral blocks have been successfully auctioned.

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