

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3720
ANSWERED ON 03/04/2025

INDIA'S STRATEGY FOR GEO-POLITICAL TENSIONS IN ARCTIC CIRCLE

3720. **SHRI MILIND MURLI DEORA:**

Will the Minister of **EARTH SCIENCES** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details regarding the steps undertaken by Government to advance its interests in the Arctic region; and
- (b) whether Government has any policy and is closely monitoring geo-political developments in the Arctic, specifically relating to rare earth exploration and maritime/shipping opportunities, if so, the details regarding the same and funding allocated/utilized in regards to the same?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
AND EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

- (a) The Ministry of Earth Science, through its autonomous institute, the National Center for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa is mandated to carry out the Indian Scientific Expeditions to the Arctic, which are multidisciplinary and multi-institutional in nature. Till date 15 successful Indian Scientific Expeditions to the Arctic have been carried out. Following steps have been taken to expand India's scientific interests in the Arctic region:
 - India unveiled its Arctic policy document titled 'India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development' On 17 March 2022. The policy lays down six pillars: i) strengthening India's scientific research and cooperation, ii) climate and environmental protection, iii) economic and human development, iv) transportation and connectivity, v) governance and international cooperation, and vi) national capacity building in the Arctic region. Implementation of India's Arctic Policy is overseen by an inter-ministerial Empowered Arctic Policy Group chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences.
 - Regularizing India's presence in the Arctic since December, 2023 by facilitating the year-round scientific expedition and operations and occupying the Indian research station Himadri for more than 300 days in a year.
 - Participation by Indian researchers in the Central Arctic Ocean Cruises in collaboration with Norway in year 2022 and 2023.
 - Initiation of the Canadian Arctic Expedition in the summers of 2023 and 2024.

- (b) Yes Sir. India has released its Arctic Policy in the year 2022. The Government of India closely follows the developments in the Arctic region. As outlined in India's Arctic policy titled 'India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development', the Arctic region contains reserves of mineral deposits-copper, phosphorus, niobium, platinum-group elements and rare earths. India's engagement with the countries of the Arctic Council, including in the field of economic and commercial cooperation, forms an important component of India's outlook or engagement in the Arctic region. In the region, India seeks to build and strengthen partnerships for sustainable resource exploration. In last three year about Rs. 45 Crore have been allocated/utilized towards India's scientific and research endeavors in the Arctic.
