

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINES  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2823**  
ANSWERED ON 18.08.2025

**DEVELOPMENT AND SUBSTITUTION OF CRITICAL MINERALS**

2823 SMT. SUDHA MURTY:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has developed any contingency plans or alternatives in case of future disruptions in the supply of critical minerals, and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any Government funded or collaborative research has been undertaken to explore the possibility of synthetically producing critical minerals or materials with similar properties; and
- (c) if so, the amount allocated for such research and whether any tax relief or other incentives are being provided to private entities undertaking such research?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) The Government has taken several measures to safeguard the supply of critical minerals against future disruptions, *inter alia*, the following:
  - i. On 29 January 2025, the Government has approved setting up of the National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM) with an expenditure of ₹16,300 crore for the period from 2024–25 to 2030–31, to secure a long-term, sustainable supply of critical minerals and strengthen India's value chains across all stages- from exploration and mining to beneficiation, processing, and recovery from end-of-life products. This also includes acquisition of critical minerals in other countries.
  - ii. Geological Survey of India (GSI) has intensified the exploration of critical and strategic minerals. GSI has carried out 195 critical mineral exploration projects in 2024–25. During 2025-26, GSI has taken up 230 projects for various critical minerals across the country.
  - iii. To encourage private participation in exploration, the Ministry of Mines has notified 33 private exploration agencies (NPEAs) for taking up exploration projects through funding from National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET).
  - iv. Central Government has auctioned 34 blocks (during 2024-25 and 2025-26) for 24 critical and strategic minerals.

- v. The Notice Inviting Tenders (NITs) for the first tranche of auction of 13 mineral blocks for grant of Exploration Licence has been issued on 13th March, 2025. This comprises of some blocks for critical minerals like Rare Earth Elements (REE), Platinum Group of Elements (PGEs), Vanadium etc.
- vi. In November 2024, The Ministry of Mines has launched the First Tranche of Auction for 13 mineral blocks in the offshore areas including 7 blocks of polymetallic nodules and crusts which have several critical minerals.
- vii. The Government has eliminated/reduced customs duties on most of the critical minerals.
- viii. The Ministry of Mines is providing funding for Research and Development (R&D) projects related to critical minerals to various Institutions/Laboratories/Start-ups/MSMEs etc.
- ix. The Ministry of Mines has recognized 7 institutes – 4 IITs and 3 R&D Labs – as Centres of Excellence (CoE) under NCMM.
- x. For the 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 in an area of 15703 Hectares.
- xi. The Ministry of Mines is also engaged in various multilateral and bilateral platforms such as Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), India-US Strategic Mineral Recovery Initiative, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), and UK-India Technology Security Initiative (TSI), etc, for strengthening the critical minerals value chain.

(b) & (c) Ministry of Mines has funded the following project in December 2020:

S. No.	Project Title	Organization	Allocation (in ₹ lakhs)	Duration
1.	Preparation of synthetic zircon from zircon minerals of beach sand, its characterization and value addition as thermal and electrical insulator.	C.V. Raman Global University, Bhubaneswar	10	1 Year

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