

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 293#
ANSWERED ON 02.02.2026

PROGRESS MADE UNDER NATIONAL CRITICAL MINERALS MISSION

293# SHRI SHAMBHU SHARAN PATEL:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the progress made since the approval of the National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM), particularly with regard to the exploration, auctioning and processing of critical minerals;
- (b) the status of strengthening domestic value chains for critical minerals across the stages of exploration, enhancement, recycling and research & development;
- (c) the details of the Centers of Excellence established under NCMM and their role in technological development and industry collaboration; and
- (d) the steps taken to reduce dependence on imports and to secure foreign mineral assets through international cooperation?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The Union Cabinet approved the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) on 29.01.2025 with the objectives of securing India's critical mineral supply chain and strengthening the critical mineral value chains. The progress made under the mission, *inter-alia*, includes the following:

- Geological Survey of India (GSI) has intensified exploration of critical minerals. GSI carried out 195 critical mineral exploration projects in 2024-25, and took up 230 projects in 2025-26 across the country. In addition, the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) sanctioned 62 projects for critical mineral exploration during 2024-25 and 60 projects during 2025-26 (upto January 2026) to Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEAs)/Notified Exploration Agencies (NEAs).
- The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act (MMDR Act), 1957 has been amended in 2025 whereby the scope of NMEDT has been expanded to support critical mineral exploration and mining overseas.

- Since the amendment to the MMDR Act in 2023, Central Government has successfully auctioned 46 blocks of Critical and Strategic Mineral. In addition, 7 blocks have been auctioned under the Exploration Licence regime, out of which 3 are critical mineral blocks.
- The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹1,500 crore Incentive Scheme to promote critical mineral recycling. The Scheme Guidelines were issued and the Scheme was launched on 02.10.2025.
- Guidelines for funding pilot projects for the recovery of critical minerals from overburden/ tailings/ fly ash/ red mud, etc were issued on 14.11.2025.
- Under NCMM, ₹500 crore has been earmarked to support domestic critical mineral processing capabilities by developing mineral processing parks using existing infrastructure.

The Government has recognised nine premier institutes as Centres of Excellence (CoEs) under the NCMM to carry out Research & Development (R&D) for strengthening domestic capabilities in the critical mineral value chain. Each CoE operates as a consortium, on a Hub & Spoke model, to leverage the core competence of constituent industry and academic spokes. These CoEs undertake consortium-based R&D to accelerate technological advancement and R&D capacity in the mining sector, foster the development of indigenous technologies, and support a self-reliant and resilient critical minerals supply chain. Details of the CoEs are given below:

- i. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
- ii. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad
- iii. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee
- iv. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indian School of Mines (ISM), Dhanbad
- v. Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore
- vi. CSIR – Institute of Minerals & Materials Technology (IMMT), Bhubaneswar
- vii. CSIR – National Metallurgical Laboratory (NML), Jamshedpur
- viii. Non-Ferrous Materials Technology Development Centre (NFTDC), Hyderabad
- ix. Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (CMET), Hyderabad

Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL), under Ministry of Mines, 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 covering an area of 15703 Ha. KABIL regularly holds meeting with other PSUs (CIL, OIL, OVL, NLCIL etc) to discuss potential opportunities to acquire critical mineral assets abroad. Further, to strengthen the critical mineral sector and cooperation with mineral resource rich countries, the Ministry has entered into bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a number of countries, such as Australia, Argentina, Zambia, Peru, Germany.
