

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2592
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.08.2018

SHORTAGE OF CRITICAL MINERALS

2592. DR. KIRIT P. SOLANKI:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India is likely to face acute shortage of critical minerals necessary for developing clean-energy application, infrastructure for its solar mission and for manufacturing high-technology products in the near future and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the country is likely to become largely dependent on China in the coming years to source such materials for its manufacturing sector and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps/measures taken by the Government to reduce such dependence and to develop mines and unleash the untapped potential of the vast mineral resources?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINES
(SHRI HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (c): India is dependent on imports for many critical elements like rare earths elements, selenium, germanium, rhenium etc. required for clean-energy applications and high technology products. As far as solar energy is concerned, silica is required for the production of solar cells and there is no shortage of the same in the country.

Exploration for minerals is a continuous process and the quantity of resources is updated on a regular basis. Geological Survey of India (GSI), an attached office of the Ministry of Mines, is taking up measures to increase the mineral exploration activity at deeper levels to discover different mineral deposits through its Annual Field Season Programmes. Atomic Minerals Directorate, Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited, State Directorates of Geology & Mining, State/Central Undertakings and Private Enterprises are also engaged in detailed exploration to identify mineral deposits.

In pursuance of the MMDR Amendment Act 2015, the Government has established the National Mineral Exploration Trust with the prime objective of promoting regional and detailed mineral exploration in the country. Further, the Government has also formulated the National Mineral Exploration Policy, 2016 for accelerating mineral exploration in the country through diverse measures like open dissemination of baseline geosciences data, launching of National Aero-geophysical Mapping Programme, attractive revenue sharing model for inviting private investment in mineral exploration etc. All these are aimed towards exploration and discovery of mineral deposits including critical minerals.
