

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3764
ANSWERED ON 18.12.2024

SELF-RELIANT IN CRUCIAL MINERALS

3764 SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken steps to make India self-reliant in crucial minerals;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has introduced any legislation or amendment to streamline the self-reliant aim; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): In order to make India self-reliant in critical minerals, Ministry of Mines is taking a multipronged approach, as following:

- i. To enhance the exploration program for identifying potential mining sites in order to boost domestic production for the critical and strategic minerals, Geological Survey of India (GSI), in current year 2024-25, has taken up 196 mineral exploration projects for critical and strategic minerals across the country.
- ii. Central Government has successfully auctioned 24 blocks for critical and strategic minerals.
- iii. Ministry has also focussed on funding various projects of mining exploration through National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET). So far, NMET has funded 139 projects of critical minerals through various exploration agencies.
- iv. To encourage private participation in exploration, Ministry of Mines has notified 28 private exploration agencies (NPEAs). These agencies are taking up exploration projects through funding from NMET.

v. KABIL, a JV of Ministry of Mines, has acquired an area of 15703 Ha in the Catamarca province of Argentina, for exploration and mining Lithium.

(c)&(d): Yes Sir, The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR) has been amended through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2023 w.e.f 17.08.2023. The Amendment Act, 2023 provides for:

i. A list of critical and strategic minerals in Part D of Schedule-I.

ii. Omission of six minerals from the list of 12 atomic minerals in Part B of Schedule-I namely Lithium, Titanium, Beryl and beryllium bearing minerals, Niobium, Tantalum and Zirconium bearing minerals and their inclusion in the list of 24 critical & strategic minerals.

iii. Section 11D of the Act, which empowers Central Government to exclusively auction mining lease and composite licence for critical & strategic minerals specified in Part D of the Schedule-I.

iv. Provision for grant of Exploration Licence (E.L.) for 29 minerals included in Schedule-VII of the Act.

In addition, Ministry of Mines has been empowered to auction blocks for grant of Exploration Licence through an order dated 21st October, 2024 under section 20A of the MMDR Act 1957.
