GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3142
ANSWERED ON 11.03.2025

DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTED RARE EARTH ELEMENTS

3142. MS SAYANI GHOSH:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has assessed India's dependence on imports of rare earth elements critical for automobiles, defence production, electronics, renewable energy and electric vehicles and if so, the details thereof;
(b) the details of quantity/value and share of China in India's rare earth imports since 2014, year and element-wise;
(c) whether the Government is aware that although India holds an estimated 6 to 8 per cent of global rare earth reserves, its share in global production is below one per cent and the reasons for this underutilisation and if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether the Government has evaluated the strategic risks arising from China's recent export restrictions on rare earth materials, particularly in 2025 and if so, the details thereof;
(e) whether any impact assessment has been undertaken to examine potential supply disruptions affecting automobiles, defence, EVs, semiconductors and electronics, if so, the details thereof, sector-wise; and
(f) the present status of domestic exploration, mining, separation and processing of rare earths including initiatives undertaken by Indian Rare Earths Limited?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR COAL AND MINES
(SHRI SATISH CHANDRA DUBEY)

(a) to (f): Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department Atomic Energy (DAE), carries out exploration for rare earth elements (REEs) along the coastal / inland / riverine placer sands of the country, which contain rare earths minerals including monazite. As on date, AMD has established an estimated resource of REEs as follows:

- Approximately 7.23 million tonne Rare Earth Oxides (REO) Equivalent contained in 13.15 million tonne monazite resource, occurring in the coastal beach and teri / red sand in parts of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat and in the inland alluvium in parts of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.
- 1.29 million tonne *in-situ* REO in hard rock terrains of Ambadungar area, Chhota Udepur district, Gujarat and Bhatikhera and Dantala area, Balotra district, Rajasthan.
- 2,000 tonne of heavy mineral concentrates containing ~2% xenotime (a phosphate mineral of yttrium and heavy rare earth elements) in the riverine placer deposits of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

IREL (lndia) Limited, a Public Sector Undertaking under DAE, is mandated to produce rare earth elements in the form of high purity rare earth oxides from Rare Earth bearing mineral Monazite in lndia. IREL has facilities for integrated mining and processing of mineral sands and for extraction and refining of Rare Earths.

While India has adequate rare-earth resources and capabilities for extraction and refining, commercial mining and processing of these minerals has been limited due to lack of adequate technology, and absence of mid-stream and downstream industries in the REE value chain. Presently, REE processing is dominated by one country. Recognizing this, the Government has taken several steps to increase domestic production and diversify sources of supply for critical minerals, including REEs.

The Government has approved the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) on 29 January, 2025 to secure a long-term sustainable supply of critical minerals (including REE) and strengthen India’s critical mineral value chain encompassing all stages from mineral exploration and mining to beneficiation, processing, and recovery from end-of-life products. The Union Budget for FY 2026–27 has announced support to the mineral-rich States of Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to establish dedicated Rare Earth Corridors to promote mining, processing, research and manufacturing.

Details of import data, country- and item-wise, are available on the Department of Commerce’s website (https://tradestat.commerce.gov.in).

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