

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4319
ANSWERED ON 18.03.2026

KEY OBJECTIVES OF NCMM

4319. SHRI BIPLAB KUMAR DEB:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the key objectives and components of the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM);
- (b) the role of Centres of Excellence and industry-academia partnerships in advancing research and development in the processing of the critical mineral;
- (c) the initiatives undertaken to encourage private sector participation and investment in exploration and refining of critical minerals; and
- (d) the details of the measures adopted by the Government to strengthen domestic capacity, reduce import dependence and align the sector with national clean energy and strategic goals?

ANSWER

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

(a): The objectives of the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) are:

- i) To secure India's critical mineral supply chain by ensuring mineral availability from domestic and foreign sources.
- ii) Strengthening the critical mineral value chains by enhancing technological, regulatory, and financial ecosystems to foster innovation, skill development, and global competitiveness in mineral exploration, mining, beneficiation, processing, and recycling.

The components of the NCMM are:

1. Increasing Domestic Critical Minerals Production
2. Acquisition of Critical Mineral Assets Abroad
3. Recycling of Critical Minerals
4. Trade and Markets
5. Scientific Research & Technological Advancement for Critical Minerals
6. Human Resource Development
7. Developing Effective Funding, Financing and Fiscal Incentives

(b): Ministry of Mines has recognised nine premier institutes as Centres of Excellence (CoEs) under the NCMM to carry out Research & Development (R&D) and strengthen domestic capabilities in critical mineral processing. Each CoE operates as a consortium, on a Hub & Spoke model, to leverage the core competence of constituent industry and academic spokes. CoE plays a key role in advancing R&D in critical mineral processing by:

- undertaking focused research to raise Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) up-to 7/8 in critical raw materials;
- developing beneficiation, separation, extraction and recycling technologies for a wide range of primary, secondary and tertiary feedstocks;
- designing and fabricating innovative process equipment, specialty chemicals and reductants essential for mineral processing; and
- applying data analytics for optimisation of beneficiation and extraction processes.

(c): Ministry of Mines has taken several initiatives to boost private-sector participation and investment, as under:

1. Exploration Licenses (E.L.) regime has been introduced for deep-seated and critical minerals, under which, a share of auction premium will be payable to the EL holder, who explored it.
2. 43 Private Exploration Agencies have been notified for taking up exploration projects with funding from National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT).
3. The Ministry provides funding for Research and Development (R&D) projects to various Institutions/Laboratories/Start-ups/ MSMEs etc.
4. To encourage, and incentivize private-sector participation in mineral exploration, scheme for partial reimbursement of exploration expenses has been introduced for holders of Composite Licences (CL) (reimbursement of up to 50%, subject to a ceiling of ₹8 crore) and holders of Exploration Licence (EL) (up to 50% of expenses, with a maximum limit of ₹20 crore).

(d): To strengthen the critical mineral sector, the Ministry has undertaken several measures, which inter alia include:

- Geological Survey of India (GSI) intensified exploration of critical and strategic minerals. GSI carried out 195 critical mineral exploration projects in 2024–25, and 230 projects in 2025–26 across the country. Additionally, NMEDT has sanctioned 62 projects for exploration of critical minerals during 2024-25 and 65 during 2025-26.

- The Mines and Mineral Development Act (MMDR), 1957 Act amended to expand the scope of NMEDT for supporting critical mineral exploration and mining overseas.
- The Ministry of Mines has successfully auctioned 46 critical mineral blocks. Additionally, the Central Government has also successfully auctioned 7 blocks of Exploration License, which include three blocks of critical minerals.
- The Union Cabinet approved a ₹1,500 crore Incentive Scheme to develop recycling capacity for the separation and production of critical minerals from secondary sources. The Scheme Guidelines were issued by the Ministry on 02.10.2025 and scheme rolled out.
- Guidelines for funding Pilot Projects for Recovery of Critical Minerals from overburden/tailings/fly ash/ Red mud etc. issued on 14.11.2025.
- 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.
