

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †827
ANSWERED ON 04.02.2026

KABIL

†827. SMT. ROOPKUMARI CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of India's total current demand for lithium, cobalt and rare earth elements that are being met through imports and the details of the countries on which such imports are dependent;
- (b) the concrete achievements made by the Government so far since the establishment of Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL) with regard to the acquisition of overseas mineral assets, production or supply security, project-wise details thereof;
- (c) the Government's short-term, medium-term and long-term roadmap for domestic exploration, commercial mining and processing of strategic minerals in view of the growing requirements of the EV, battery storage, defence and renewable energy sectors in the Country; and
- (d) whether the Government proposes to give a legal and/or policy form to a National Critical Minerals Strategy with respect to these minerals and if so, the time-bound details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a): India's import reliance for lithium, cobalt and REEs is significant. Top countries from which India imported these critical minerals during FY 2024-25 are given below:

Critical Mineral	Total Import (tonne) FY 2024-25	Major Source Countries
Cobalt	2425.6	Canada, Belgium, Germany, China, USA, Japan, UK
Lithium	2,997.1	Ireland, China, Chile, Argentina, Russia
REE	13,006	China, Malaysia, UAE, Japan, Kenya, Australia

Source: Department of Commerce.

(b): KABIL has signed an exploration and development agreement with a state-owned company of Catamarca Province of Argentina on 15.01.2024 and obtained exclusivity rights for exploration, development and mining in 5 brine type lithium blocks, covering an area of about 15,702 Ha, in the Catamarca Province, Argentina. First phase of exploration (non-invasive) has been completed.

Additionally, KABIL has done due diligence activities for identification of suitable projects of Lithium, Rare Earth Elements and other critical minerals for potential investment, on its own and with other Government companies of India, in various countries having critical minerals.

(c) and (d): The Union Cabinet has approved the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) on 29.01.2025, for a period from 2024-25 to 2030-31, which provides an overarching framework for securing India's critical mineral supply chain and strengthening critical mineral value chains.

Moreover, in view of the growing requirements of the critical minerals for EV, battery storage, defence and renewable energy sectors etc, the Government has adopted a comprehensive strategy and taken several initiatives, which inter-alia include the following:

- i. 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 to Notified Private Exploration Agencies (NPEAs)/Notified Exploration Agencies (NEAs).
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.

Further, the NCMM outlines the following outputs/targets:

Key heads	Total (FY 2024-25 to 2030-31)
Domestic Critical Mineral Exploration Projects	1200
Foreign Critical Mineral Mines	50
Incentive scheme for recycling - total materials recycled (kt)	400
Patents in critical mineral value chain	1000
Skill development	10000
Mineral Processing Parks	4
Centre of Excellence	3
Mineral Stockpile (cumulative)	5
