

India's Minerals' Diplomacy: Towards Building Resilient Supply Chains

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Critical minerals is a topic globally abuzz with diplomatic activity in recent times. Forming the basis of materials used in critical technologies ranging from AI to renewable energy tech and military components, critical minerals have added yet another dimension to the drivers shaping the geopolitics of technology in the 21st Century. The newfound interest in critical minerals is further driven by the skewed state of the global supply chains. Particularly post-pandemic, efforts from major global tech leaders have focused on diversifying supply chains while rendering them highly resilient to geopolitical risk. In this background, "a country's efforts to secure critical minerals for economic and national security, with an aim to mitigate risks has come to be referred to as "minerals diplomacy".

In pursuit of these broad goals, India has also been laying substantial impetus on minerals diplomacy in the post-pandemic era. India's approach to mineral diplomacy is both proactive and multipronged. Most recently, India's diplomatic apparatus has sought to [leverage economic ties](#) with the United States of America (USA) and the European Union to secure for itself a resilient critical minerals supply chain. India's mineral diplomacy consists of [two pillars](#): bilateral engagements with countries rich in critical minerals. Engagements with multilateral agencies such as the International Energy Agency as well as informal coalitions in the form of minilaterals such as the Quadri-lateral Security Dialogue (Quad) constitute the second pillar.

As a part of the [first pillar](#), India has extensively engaged with partners including Australia, Argentina and Central Asian countries. Forming Joint Ventures, through the Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL), a Public sector Undertaking under GoI, has been a central means which has been utilised. KABIL has so far signed JVs with entities in Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Kazakhstan. The recent upgradation of the India-Chile Preferential Trade Agreement to a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is particularly significant for India's minerals diplomacy. The agreement allows India access to Chile's vast wealth in lithium, a crucial element employed in manufacturing batteries.

The Indo-Pacific assumes particular significance within India's critical minerals strategy. It is a part of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) launched by former US President Joe Biden in November 2022. Under the IPEF, the Agreement Relating to Supply Chain Resilience which entered into force in 2024 di-

rectly pertains to critical minerals and has instituted mechanisms including the Crisis Response Network to ensure access in a contingent situation. India also joined the Mineral Security Partnership in 2023. The [stated objective](#) of this minilateral is to "is to ensure that critical minerals are produced, processed, and recycled in a manner that supports the ability of countries to realize the full economic development benefit of their geological endowments." As a member of the Quad, India stands as a major voice in its initiatives which seek to secure and diversify critical and emerging technologies supply chains.

India has also proposed an India-Central Asia Rare Earths Forum. In addition to strengthening collaboration in critical minerals, the initiative seeks to promote mutually beneficial and transparent partnerships. The Forum further [prioritises](#) capacity building and exchange of geological and other relevant information. India's Ministry of Mines signed a MoU with the International Energy Agency to strengthen cooperation on critical minerals, helping India to "streamline its policies, regulations, and investment strategies in the critical mineral sector, aligning them with global standards and best practices".

By forging strategic alliances and deepening engagement in multilateral frameworks, India's mineral diplomacy has sought to ensure stability in its critical mineral supply chains while mitigating geopolitical risks. In addition to strengthening India's position in the global minerals landscape it reinforces India's will to achieve its security and development goals. Driven by its foreign policy ethos grounded in transparency, mutual benefit and sustainability, India has indeed emerged as a major stakeholder in the global governance of critical minerals. As mineral security becomes central to international trade and cooperation, India's multipronged strategy highlights its ambition to be a resilient and proactive player, shaping a future where resource accessibility is safeguarded amid evolving global dynamics.