India–US Cooperation on Critical Minerals and Rare Earths

Published On: 28-05-2026

India and the United States have strengthened cooperation in the critical minerals sector through a new bilateral framework agreement focused on mining, processing, refining, recycling, and investment in critical minerals and rare earth elements.

The agreement was discussed during meetings between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on the sidelines of the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi.

The partnership aims to build secure and resilient supply chains for minerals that are essential for advanced technologies, clean energy systems, semiconductors, and defence manufacturing.

Key Highlights

The India–US framework focuses on the entire critical minerals value chain, including mineral exploration, mining, processing, refining, recycling, and investment cooperation.

Both countries agreed to enhance collaboration in technology development and supply-chain resilience to reduce dependence on concentrated global sources of critical minerals.

The agreement gains importance because many strategic minerals and rare earth elements are currently dominated by China in global processing and refining.

India and the US aim to diversify supply chains and ensure secure access to these resources for future industrial and technological needs.

Kamaraj IAS Academy
Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040
Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477** / Whatsapp : **09710729833**

Importance for India:

The partnership is expected to help India secure long-term access to strategic minerals required for:

Electric vehicles (EVs)

Renewable energy systems

Semiconductor manufacturing

Aerospace and defence industries

Electronics and advanced technology sectors

The agreement will also support India's initiatives such as Atmanirbhar Bharat, Make in India, Semiconductor Mission, and the National Green Hydrogen Mission. Increased cooperation can attract investments into India's mining, refining, and processing sectors while reducing import dependence.

What are Critical Minerals?

Critical minerals are minerals considered essential for economic growth, industrial development, and national security.

These minerals are widely used in clean energy technologies, digital infrastructure, defence systems, and modern electronics.

Important critical minerals include:

Lithium

Cobalt

Nickel

Copper

Graphite

Rare Earth Elements (REEs)

About Rare Earth Elements (REEs):

Rare earth elements are a group of 17 metallic elements used in technologies such as:

Wind turbines

Electric motors

Smartphones

Missiles

Fighter aircraft

Advanced communication systems

These elements are strategically important because they are essential for modern industrial and defence technologies.

Quad and Supply Chain Cooperation

The Quad countries — India, United States, Japan, and Australia — are increasingly cooperating on critical technologies, infrastructure, maritime security, and supply-chain resilience. The grouping has announced plans to mobilise major investments in critical mineral supply chains and related infrastructure to reduce global vulnerabilities.

Important Facts:

India identified a list of critical minerals in 2023.

India has joined the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP).

Rare earth elements consist of 17 metallic elements.

China currently dominates global rare earth refining and processing.

Important Personalities:

External Affairs Minister of India: S. Jaishankar

US Secretary of State: Marco Rubio