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1 Representation of the People Act, 1950 and Representation of the People Act, 1951 (Source: The Hindu)

Representation of the People Act, 1950

Enacted by parliament to deal with the electoral system of the nation at the national and state levels.

Provisions

- Allocation of seats in the House of the People, the State Legislative Assemblies, and the State Legislative Councils.
- Delimitation of Parliamentary, Assembly, and Council Constituencies.
- Election officers, such as the chief electoral officers, district election officers, and electoral registration officers.
- Electoral rolls for Parliamentary, Assembly, and Council constituencies.
- Manner of filling seats in the Council of States to be filled by representatives of union territories.
- Local authorities for purposes of elections to the State Legislative Councils.
- Barring the jurisdiction of civil courts.

Representation of the People Act, 1951

Constitutional backing of the Act - Articles 327 and 328 of the Constitution confer on Parliament the power to make rules for elections to Parliament and the state legislatures.

Features

- Conduct of elections of the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State.
- Details about the structure of administrative machinery for the conduct of elections.
- Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of those houses.
- Corrupt practices and other offenses at or in connection with such elections and the decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections.

Spending Limits of Candidates under RPA, 1951

- Conduct of elections of the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State.
- Details about the structure of administrative machinery for the conduct of elections.
- Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of those houses.
- Corrupt practices and other offenses at or in connection with such elections and the decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections.

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Disqualifications under RPA, 1951

- Conduct of elections of the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State.
- Details about the structure of administrative machinery for the conduct of elections.
- Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of those houses.
- Corrupt practices and other offenses at or in connection with such elections, and the decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections.

Election Offenses Covered under the RPA, 1951

- Any form of gratification for electors for voting or refraining from voting, and to the candidates for withdrawing or not withdrawing nomination, is considered a corrupt practice.
- It includes any direct or indirect interference with the free exercise of any electoral right by the candidate or his election agent.
- Appeal to vote or refrain from voting on the grounds of his religion, race, caste, community, language, etc.
- The promotion of feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of the citizens of India on grounds of religion, race, caste, community, or language.
- The propagation of the practice or the commission of sati or its glorification.
- The publication of any false statement of fact in relation to the personal character or conduct of any candidate.
- Booth capturing by a candidate or his agent or other person.
- Obtaining any assistance from any person in the service of the Government for the furtherance of the prospects of that candidate's election.

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2 Impact of Sand Mining on Riverine System (Source: The Hindu)

Geomorphological Impacts

- **Riverbed Degradation**: Causes widening and lowering of the riverbed, leading to deepening of rivers and enlargement of river mouths
- **Bank Erosion**: Increases water velocity, which erodes river banks and can force rivers to change course
- **Groundwater Depletion**: Sand aquifers recharge water tables; their depletion causes a lowering of groundwater levels in nearby areas
- **Saline Water Intrusion**: In coastal areas, increased turbidity and river deepening lead to saline water ingress into fresh groundwater and rivers
- **Flooding**: Altered flow patterns and reduced sediment delivery increase flood risk in rivers and coastal areas
- **Altered River Course**: Excessive mining affects the regular course of the river, leading to changes in river ecology across India.

Ecological & Biological Impacts

- **Destruction of Benthic and Riparian Habitats**: Sand and gravel form the substrate for bottom-dwelling organisms (benthos), aquatic plants, and insects. Mining destroys these breeding grounds.
- **Threat to Endangered Species**: Gharials (Fish-eating crocodiles): Depend on pristine sandbanks for basking and nesting. Sand mining directly destroys their breeding sites (e.g., in the Chambal River).
- **Disruption of Food Webs:** High turbidity (cloudiness) caused by mining equipment blocks sunlight, reducing photosynthetic activity in aquatic plants. This triggers a collapse up the trophic levels, severely impacting local fisheries.

Socio-Economic Impact

- **Damage to Critical Infrastructure**: Bed degradation exposes the foundations of bridges, piers, and underwater pipelines, leading to structural failures (e.g., the collapse of the Mahad bridge in Maharashtra).
- **Increased Flood Vulnerability**: The destruction of natural floodplains and the alteration of river channels reduce the river's capacity to absorb high-velocity flows, leading to flash floods downstream.
- **Loss of Livelihoods**: Depleted groundwater harms agriculture, while destroyed habitats decimate traditional fishing communities, driving rural distress.

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3 Critical Minerals (Source: The Hindu)

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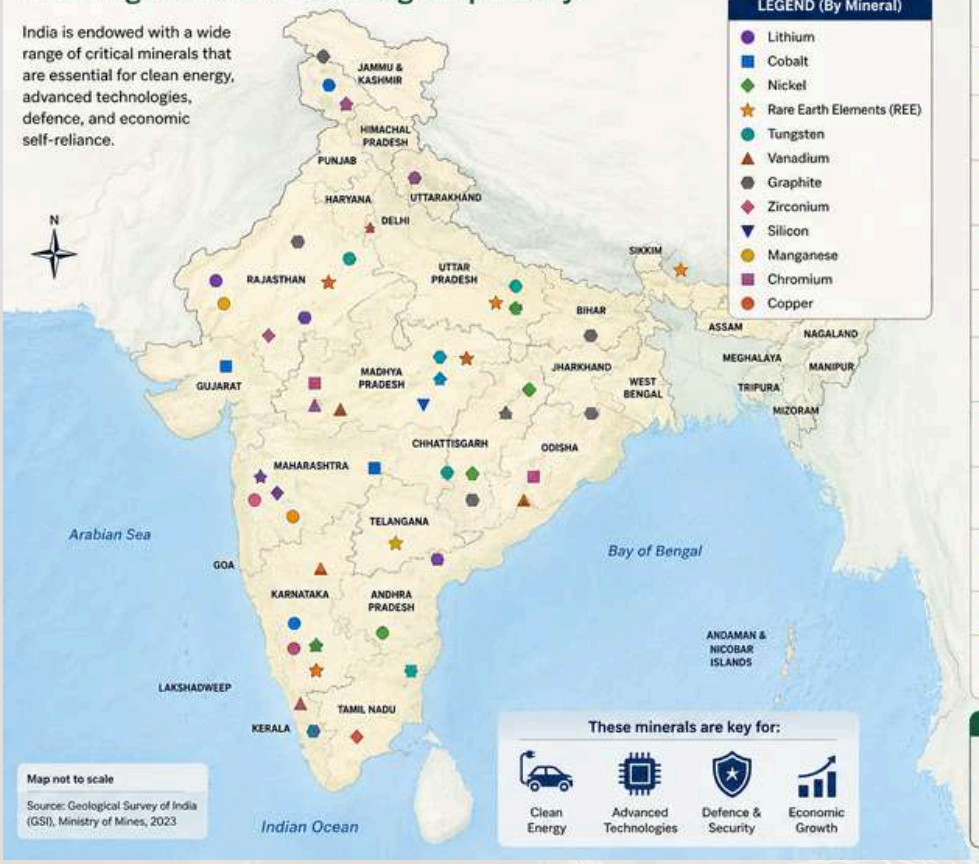
CRITICAL MINERALS DISTRIBUTION IN INDIA

Powering the Future. Sourcing Responsibly.

India is endowed with a wide range of critical minerals that are essential for clean energy, advanced technologies, defence, and economic self-reliance.



MAJOR CRITICAL MINERALS IN INDIA
(Where They Are Found)

- **LITHIUM** — Jammu & Kashmir (Salal-Haimina), Rajasthan (Degana), Karnataka (Mandya)
- **COBALT** — Madhya Pradesh (Jabalpur, Balaghat), Uttar Pradesh (Sonbhadra)
- **NICKEL** — Odisha (Sukinda Valley), Jharkhand (Singhbhum), Madhya Pradesh (Chhindwara)
- **RARE EARTH ELEMENTS (REE)** — Kerala (Idukki, Wayanad), Tamil Nadu (Nilgiris), Andhra Pradesh (Srikakulam)
- **TUNGSTEN** — Rajasthan (Banswara), Arunachal Pradesh (Tawang), Himachal Pradesh (Kinnaur)
- **VANADIUM** — Madhya Pradesh (Bhilwara), Karnataka (Chitradurga)
- **GRAPHITE** — Jammu & Kashmir (Ramban), Odisha (Keonjhar), Tamil Nadu (Salem, Namakkal)
- **ZIRCONIUM** — Kerala (Chavara, Kollam), Tamil Nadu (Nagapattinam), Odisha (Ganjam)
- **SILICON** — Rajasthan (Ajmer, Bhilwara), Andhra Pradesh (Visakhapatnam), Uttar Pradesh (Sonbhadra)
- **MANGANESE** — Madhya Pradesh (Balaghat), Maharashtra (Nagpur, Bhandara), Odisha (Keonjhar)
- **CHROMIUM** — Odisha (Kendujhar, Jajpur), Karnataka (Dharwad)
- **COPPER** — Rajasthan (Khetri), Madhya Pradesh (Malanjkhand), Jharkhand (Singhbhum)

KEY FACTS

- India has potential for 30+ critical minerals.
- Many are in early exploration stages.
- Sustainable exploration and value addition are key to self-reliance.