



UPSC &amp; STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

# Critical-Minerals Diplomacy: On India, Korea and De-risking

INDIAN EXPRESS

22 June 2026 · IR · GS2 · GS3

CURATED &amp; WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator &amp; Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

**BharatNotes**Free UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**[bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com) →

ADVERTISE

**Advertise with Ujiyari**

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

[epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)



# Critical-Minerals Diplomacy: On India, Korea and De-risking

 **The Indian Express**

22 June 2026

**GS2**
**GS3**

 Source: [ujyari.com](http://ujyari.com) — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped

**INTERVIEW ANGLE**

*"How can India build trusted critical-mineral supply chains without simply swapping one external dependence for another?"*

 Source: [Original editorial](#)
[The Indian Express](#)
 **Every fact web-verified against primary sources** (<https://ujyari.com/how-we-verify/>)

## WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

The External Affairs Minister's visit to the Republic of Korea and Mongolia placed semiconductors, artificial intelligence and **critical minerals** (<https://ujyari.com/terms/critical-minerals/>) at the centre of the agenda. It signals that India's diplomacy is now organised around economic security, with trusted-partner supply chains seen as a way to de-risk from over-concentration in a single supplier, principally China.

## THE CRUX IN 60 WORDS

Critical minerals and chips are the new currency of strategic partnerships. India is weaving them into foreign policy through ties with technology-rich Korea and resource-rich Mongolia, aiming to de-risk rather than decouple from China. Diversification reduces single-source dependence but can be costlier and may shift dependence. Domestic processing and recycling must complement external partnerships to build resilience (<https://ujyari.com/vocab/resilience/>).

## THE ISSUE, DECODED

Ujjiyari Current Affairs - [ujjiyari.com](https://ujjiyari.com) - Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

ELEMENT	WHAT IT IS	WHY IT MATTERS
Critical minerals	Lithium, cobalt, nickel, rare earths	Inputs for clean energy, electronics, defence
De-risking	Reducing single-source dependence	Resilience without full decoupling ( <a href="https://ujjiyari.com/vocab/decoupling/">https://ujjiyari.com/vocab/decoupling/</a> )
Korea CEPA	Comprehensive economic partnership	Gateway to chip and battery technology
Mongolia's reserves	Rare earths and coking coal	A non-coercive alternative supplier

## THE ANALYSIS: ECONOMIC SECURITY AS DIPLOMACY

- ❶ **Minerals are strategic, not merely commercial.** Concentrated processing makes them a geopolitical chokepoint (<https://ujjiyari.com/vocab/chokepoint/>), exposed by recent export controls.
- ❷ **Partnerships are being re-tooled.** Korea offers technology, Mongolia offers resources, and India offers a large trusted market.
- ❸ **De-risking beats decoupling.** Severing trade with China is impractical; reducing single-source exposure is realistic.
- ❹ **Domestic value addition is the missing link.** Without processing and recycling at home, India risks staying a buyer rather than a resilient node.

## DATA AND INSTITUTIONS VAULT

**Key minerals:** *Lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite, rare earth elements.* **Domestic frame:** *National Critical Mineral Mission (<https://ujjiyari.com/schemes/national-critical-mineral-mission/>) and a strategic minerals list.*

**Partners in focus:** *Republic of Korea (technology), Mongolia (rare earths, coking coal).* **Concept:** *De-risking versus decoupling; trusted-partner supply chains.* **Linked goal:** *Net-zero by 2070 and semiconductor self-reliance.*

## THE DEBATE

**Argument for:** Building trusted-partner chains in minerals and chips reduces strategic vulnerability (<https://ujjiyari.com/vocab/vulnerability/>) and embeds India in resilient global supply networks.

**Argument against:** Diversified chains are slower and more expensive, and diversification may simply replace one dependence with another rather than achieving autonomy

**Balanced verdict:** De-risking through partnerships is the right strategy, but it works only when paired with domestic processing, recycling and stockpiles that add genuine resilience.

## HOW TO THINK ABOUT THIS (TRANSFERABLE SKILL)

*When evaluating a supply-chain strategy, distinguish diversification from genuine resilience. Spreading purchases across suppliers reduces single-point risk, but true resilience requires controlling a critical link in the chain, such as processing or recycling. Always ask whether a partnership removes the chokepoint or merely relocates it.*

## DIAGRAM-IN-WORDS

Concentrated mineral supply -> strategic chokepoint -> trusted-partner diplomacy plus domestic processing -> resilient supply chains

## THE WAY FORWARD

- ① Upgrade the India-Korea comprehensive economic partnership to deepen chip and battery cooperation.
- ② Convert mineral ties with Mongolia and other partners into firm offtake and investment.
- ③ Scale domestic processing, refining and recycling under the critical minerals mission.
- ④ Build strategic stockpiles of priority minerals against supply shocks.
- ⑤ Embed economic-security criteria into trade and investment diplomacy.

## THE TAKEAWAY BOX

*Economic security as the organising principle of contemporary foreign policy. **Lift line:** “Economic security now sits at the core of Indian diplomacy.” **Prelims hooks:** National Critical Mineral Mission, rare earth elements, India-Korea CEPA, de-risking. **Ethics/Interview angle:** Balancing cost, speed and strategic autonomy (<https://ujjayanti.com/terms/strategic-autonomy/>) in supply-chain choices. **PYQ linkage:** UPSC has asked on India’s energy and resource security and on supply-chain resilience. **Connects to:** Semiconductor mission, clean-energy transition, Act East, China plus one.*

**Sources:** *Indian Express* (<https://indianexpress.com/section/opinion/editorials/>), *PIB* (<https://pib.gov.in/>)

Source: ~~Critical Minerals Diplomacy: On India, Korea and De-risking~~ [Ujjari.com](http://Ujjari.com) | Free UPSC & State PCS  
 Ujjari Current Affairs · [ujjari.com](http://ujjari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS  
 Editorial Analysis

● **KEY ARGUMENTS AT A GLANCE**

**India's foreign policy is increasingly organised around economic security, and building trusted-partner supply chains in critical minerals and chips is now a strategic imperative to de-risk from China.**

✓ **SUPPORTING**

- Critical minerals and semiconductors are the new currency of strategic partnerships.
- Diversification through partners like Korea and Mongolia reduces single- source dependence.
- De-risking, not full decoupling, is the realistic and resilient goal.

⚠ **COUNTER**

Critics warn that trusted-partner chains can be slower and costlier, and that diversification may merely shift dependence rather than remove it.

→ **WAY FORWARD**

Upgrade the Korea CEPA, deepen mineral ties with resource-rich partners, build domestic processing and recycling, and invest in stockpiles and trusted-supplier networks.


**MAINS ANSWER FRAMEWORK**

 Ujivari Current Affairs - [ujivari.com](http://ujivari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

**QUESTION**

*'Economic security has become a central driver of Indian foreign policy. Discuss with reference to critical minerals, semiconductors and the strategy of de-risking from a single supplier. (250 words)'*

**INTRODUCTION**

The External Affairs Minister's visit to the Republic of Korea and Mongolia illustrates a shift in Indian diplomacy. Foreign policy is increasingly woven around semiconductors, artificial intelligence and critical minerals, making economic security a primary driver.

**BODY**

Critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and rare earths underpin clean energy, electronics and defence. Their supply is concentrated, with China dominating processing in particular, creating a strategic chokepoint exposed by recent export controls.

India responds on two tracks. Domestically, it has launched a critical minerals mission, identified strategic minerals and sought to build processing and recycling capacity.

Diplomatically, it is weaving minerals and technology into partnerships. Korea offers advanced semiconductor and battery technology, making an upgraded comprehensive economic partnership valuable, while Mongolia holds significant rare-earth and coking-coal reserves and seeks a reliable non-coercive partner.

The governing logic is de-risking rather than decoupling: not severing trade with China, which is impractical, but reducing single-source dependence by building trusted-partner networks, stockpiles and alternative processing. The risk is that diversified chains are costlier and slower, and that diversification can shift rather than remove dependence.

The answer lies in combining external partnerships with domestic value addition so that India is not merely a buyer but a node in resilient supply chains.

**CONCLUSION**

Economic security now sits at the core of Indian diplomacy. Trusted-partner chains in minerals and chips, paired with domestic processing, can convert vulnerability into resilient strategic advantage.


**RELATED DAILY ARTICLES**

22 Jun [India's BRICS Chairship 2026 and the NSA Meeting in New...](#)

22 Jun [Jaishankar in Mongolia and South Korea: Act East...](#)

21 Jun [12th International Day of Yoga 2026: "Yoga for Healthy...](#)

21 Jun **India Elected FATF Vice-President: the AML/CFT...**

Ujjari Current Affairs · [ujjari.com](http://ujjari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

Ujiyari Current Affairs · [ujiyari.com](http://ujiyari.com) · **Free Daily** Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

CURATED &amp; WRITTEN BY

## Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator &amp; Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/editorials/2026/06/ie-critical-minerals-diplomacy-korea-derisking-2026/>

### ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

## BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → \[bharatnotes.com\]\(http://bharatnotes.com\)](#)

### 📌 OPPORTUNITY

## Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

**Ideal for:** Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · [ujiyari.com](http://ujiyari.com) · [bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com)