Largest lithium reserves in india

Largest lithium reserves in india

Months after lithium reserves were discovered in Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, and Karnataka, it is now being reported that a reserve of the cosmic mineral has been discovered in Jharkhand as well. The eastern state--surrounded by Chhattisgarh, Bihar and West Bengal--is already known for reserves of Uranium, Mica, Bauxite, Granite, Gold, Silver, Graphite, Magnetite, Dolomite, Fireclay, Quartz, Feldspar, Coal (32 per cent of India), Iron, Copper (25 per cent of India) etc.

Popularly known as "white gold", lithium is one of the most sought-after minerals globally amid the push towards electric vehicles (EVs), owing to climate change. Only a handful of countries in the world have lithium reserves, be it in the form of salt lake brine or mines. Yet China, without having the largest lithium reserves, continues to dominate lithium mining and processing.

India has an ambitious target of achieving 30 per cent EV share in new vehicle sales and increasing non-fossil energy capacity to 500 Gw by 2030. However, India is dependent on neighbouring countries for its lithium requirements, primarily Hong Kong and China. Earlier, Prahalathan Iyer, Chief General Manager-Research & Analysis, India Exim Bank, had told Business Today earlier, "India"s annual lithium-ion battery market is expected to grow to 116 GWh by FY30 from 2.6 GWh in FY21, with EVs accounting for 90 per cent of the overall market (according to a report by JMK Research and The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis)."

The discovery of lithium reserves in India isn"t new. It was first discovered in Jammu & Kashmir in 1999, but back then, lithium was a non-glamorous metal. Although it was used in sectors like specialty chemicals, glass, and pharmaceuticals, it made sense to import lithium for these various needs instead of further progressing with the finding and venturing into mining. More so because two decades ago lithium mining was a resource devourer and wasn"t profitable. But as nations today, individually yet collectively, are fighting climate change; lithium has suddenly become the most sought-after metal for EVs and battery storage, reversing the economies of mining.

Also, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) had carried out 14 projects on lithium and associated elements in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Karnataka and Rajasthan during the approved annual Field Season Programme (FSP) between 2016-17 and 2020-21. And during the current FSP 2021-22, GSI has taken up five projects on lithium and associated minerals in Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir and Rajasthan.

Experts told Business Today that the discovery of lithium reserves in India can prove to be of strategic importance as it improves India"s energy security by securing critical mineral supplies and building self-sufficiency. This can also contribute to reducing the country"s import bill and trade deficit, and the reserves could also help India achieve its net-zero emissions target by accelerating green transportation and

green energy adoption.

However, most of these lithium reserves are G3 exploration--i.e., preliminary exploration or initial assessment--which identifies the reserves. This has to be followed by G2 (general exploration) and G1 (detailed exploration), and mining can begin only after G1 classification. It can take anywhere between six and eight years to bring the mines to full capacity commercial production.

Also Read: Q2 results dates: TCS to share earnings on October 11, Infosys & HCL Tech on October 12. Full list

The Union Ministry of Mines recently announced the major discovery of lithium reserves in India in Jammu and Kashmir. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has established 5.9 million tonnes of inferred lithium resources in the Salal-Haimana area of Reasi District in Jammu and Kashmir. Lithium is considered a strategic element because of its use on batteries used in Electric Vehicles (EVs). The finding of the reserves is being considered as a game-changer in India’s transition towards green mobility.

Mineral Reserve: Economically mineable part of measured and/or indicated mineral resource.

Probable Mineral Reserves: Economically mineable part of indicated or in some cases, a measured mineral resource.