

Lithium-Deal with Argentina | Chhattisgarh | 02 Jan 2024

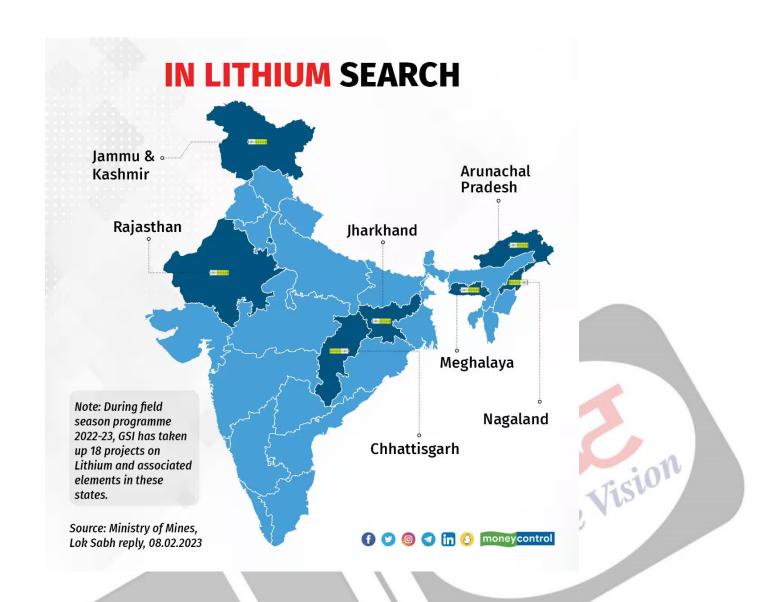
Why in News?

The **Ministry of Mines**, Government of India through the **state-owned** <u>Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL)</u>, has entered into a draft exploration and development agreement with Argentinan miner CAMYEN for possible acquisition and development of **five-odd** <u>lithium blocks</u>.

 The company has also entered into a non-disclosure agreement with Chilean miner ENAMI for "possible exploration, extraction, processing and commercialisation" of the mineral.

Key Points

- Lithium is an alkali mineral, also called 'white gold'. It is soft, silvery-white metal, the lightest metal of the periodic table.
- Major Properties of lithium include high reactivity, Low Density and Excellent Electrochemical Properties
- Lithium is found naturally in various minerals, including **spodumene**, **petalite**, **and lepidolite** and is extracted from these minerals and refined into lithium metal or its compounds.
 - The top producers of lithium are Australia, Chile, China, and Argentina.
- It is a crucial component of <u>rechargeable batteries</u> used in smartphones, laptops, electric vehicles, and other electronics.
 - Lithium compounds are used to strengthen glass and ceramics, making them more durable and heat-resistant.
 - It is used as a mood stabilizer in the treatment of bipolar disorder.
 - Lithium greases are used in high-pressure and high-temperature applications.
- 2023 saw a surge in lithium discoveries:
 - Massive reserves unearthed in Jammu and Kashmir (estimated 5.9 million tonnes).
 - **Deposits found in Rajasthan** (potentially meeting 80% of India's demand).
 - Additional reserves identified in Jharkhand.
- However, India has put up lithium blocks for auction: one in J&K and another in Chhattisgarh, with most of its domestic requirements, across categories like EVs. lithium-ion battery making, and other energy storage solutions, being met completely through imports.



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