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India Discovers Rare Earth Deposits in Andhra Pradesh, Aiming to Reduce Reliance on China

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India has announced the discovery of substantial rare earth element (REE) deposits in Andhra Pradesh, a move likely to reshape its strategic position in the global tech and defence supply chain. The deposits, located in the state's Eastern Ghats region, include valuable heavy rare earth elements critical to high-tech manufacturing, military hardware, and green energy technologies.

The Indian Ministry of Mines confirmed that the exploration was conducted by the Atomic Minerals Directorate (AMD), a division of the Department of Atomic Energy. According to

their preliminary findings, the new site contains significant reserves of key minerals such as dysprosium, terbium, and neodymium, all essential for manufacturing permanent magnets used in electric motors, missiles, and advanced electronics.

The timing of the discovery is noteworthy. China currently controls over 85% of the global rare earth supply and has previously used its dominance as a tool in geopolitical disputes. India's move to secure its own supply chain is seen by analysts as a strategic effort to reduce external dependence and reinforce its national security.

India has previously identified rare earth reserves in states like Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu, but the Andhra Pradesh find is believed to be far richer in heavy REEs, a category far more difficult to source globally. Analysts note this may give India an edge in developing a homegrown supply chain for defence manufacturing, electronics, and future-facing industries such as space and aerospace technologies.

Government officials have already hinted at plans to collaborate with private industry to accelerate extraction and processing. A senior official from the Department of Atomic Energy stated, "This discovery is not just geological; it's strategic. It gives India the potential to compete globally in sectors that are currently import-reliant."

The country's broader industrial policy has also increasingly focused on securing critical minerals and materials. This is in line with India's ambition to become a global manufacturing hub and reduce its economic reliance on foreign powers in sensitive sectors.

If developed efficiently, the Andhra Pradesh reserves could provide a long-term boost to India's economic resilience and strengthen its hand in international trade negotiations. More detailed assessments and extraction plans are expected in the coming months.