



West Vs China's dominance: Fight for control over Rare Earth Elements (REEs)

China has advantage as it dominates the rare earth elements field, controlling a large part of global mining and also its processing—a big challenge to the strategic interests of US and several other major countries.

The Asian Tribune

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The most powerful nations are now eyeing the rare earth elements (REEs) that are the key to victory in technological race.

These elements are generally found concentrated and it is tough to separate and refine them. But they are important due to their use in tech sector. The light rare earths and heavy rare earths are the two major categories of rare earth materials.

For electric vehicles (EV) cars and wind turbine generators, hard drives and screens, LEDs, the components in phones, computers, industrial

motors as well as defense sector, F-35 fighters even submarines and drones, there is a need for the REEs.

This is the reason that any country that has them, will stay ahead in the race.

From use in medical imaging and equipment to hydrogen technologies or drones and in the field of communication, REEs are essential.

The reserves of REEs are in countries across different continents. But a constant supply is needed and the big challenge is control over these mineral resources.

This is cause of big strategic race between powerful nations. [Cond on Page 4].



Communal violence in Nepal is a cause of worry

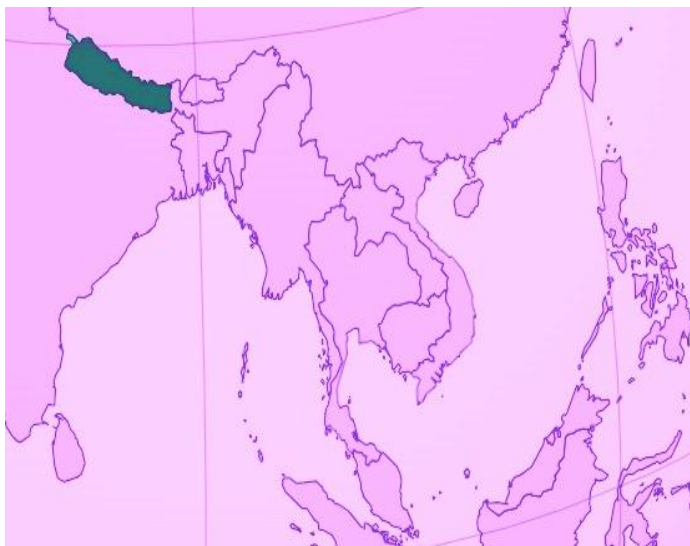
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The communal violence that occurred in Nepal is a signal that there are simmering tensions among communities. The fact that bigotry is raising its head, must be a serious cause of concern in the country. The violence began in Sunsari and soon spread to districts in Madhes region that is close to Nepal's border towards India.

The clashes were serious and the government took note of the fact, arresting dozens of persons who were involved in the ruckus and attacks. It is learnt that loud music and an incident of removing a flag, caused the outbreak of

Recent violence in the strategically located country that lies between India and China.



violence. The trouble had begun on July 26 in Dewanganj town that is barely 15-20 km from Indian border. The procession of Hindu devotees was returning when a green flag in a Muslim locality was allegedly removed.

It was apparently replaced with a Saffron flag. Some Muslim residents had also complaint about the DJ, loud music and slogans.

As clashes began and violence spread, the government took action. Curfew was imposed and the arrests began. But the violence in Nepal is worrying, as it led to three deaths.

Fears about implementation and concern about misuse, overreach of the law

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The Prevention of Insults to National Honor (Amendment) Bill, 2026, passed by both Houses of the Indian Parliament recently amends the 1971 Act to extend the same legal protection already given to the National Anthem (Jana Gana Mana) to the National Song Vande Mataram.

Specifically, it makes it a criminal offence to intentionally prevent the singing of Vande Mataram or cause disturbance to any assembly engaged in its singing. Punishment is imprisonment up to three years, a fine, or both (with a minimum one-year term for subsequent convictions). The stated rationale cites the Constituent Assembly's 1950 statement by Dr. Rajendra Prasad that the song (which played a major role in the freedom struggle) should be honored equally with the Anthem.

The law does not make it compulsory for individuals to sing the song, stand, or participate. Courts have previously held (in analogous National Anthem cases, such as Bijoe Emmanuel) that silent non-participation or refusal to sing does not by itself constitute an offence; liability requires intentional prevention or disruption of an assembly. The same interpretive approach

is expected to apply here. On one hand there are positive aspects, and also some reservations. It formalizes equal statutory status for a song deeply linked to the independence movement, addressing what supporters call a long-standing inconsistency. Proponents describe it as a measure of "national pride" that strengthens respect for shared historical symbols.

Like many broad public-order or honour related laws in India (and the existing Anthem provisions), enforcement depends heavily on police discretion at the state level. Critics note that such provisions can be (and historically have been) invoked unevenly—against political opponents, protesters, students, or members of minority communities—rather than applied neutrally. False or exaggerated claims of "disturbance" or "prevention" could lead to arrests, especially in polarized local contexts. Data on the parent Act (1,102 arrests and only 60 convictions since 2014 under related provisions) already illustrates low conviction rates and the possibility of process-as-punishment.

Effect on the free speech, expression, and conscience are also some of the concerns that have been expressed in recent days. Even if courts ultimately proactively protect the silent



non-participation, the existence of a criminal penalty can deter criticism, satirical commentary, academic discussion, or peaceful refusal to participate for religious, for ideological, or personal reasons. Concerns have been raised under Articles 19(1)(a) (speech), 21 (personal liberty), and 25 (freedom of religion/conscience). Later stanzas of the original song contain imagery some interpret as invoking Hindu deities, which has long made full-version compulsion sensitive for certain communities. Past experience with similar honour related laws

show risk of overreach. The Constituent Assembly and earlier Congress resolutions had deliberately limited official use primarily to the first two stanzas and did not place the Song on identical constitutional footing with the Anthem (Article 51A(a) mentions the Flag and Anthem but not the Song). Critics argue the Bill reopens a nearly 76-year compromise, also risks polarization and may be seen as majoritarian rather than purely nationalist displays of patriotism.

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Educationist Dr Mumtaz Ahmed Khan, a role model who set up colleges & institutions



Dr Mumtaz Ahmed Khan had his goals clear from the beginning. He dedicated himself to setting up institutions. The colleges that were built due to his efforts, brought up an entire generation of educated youth. Today he is remembered as a visionary and an educationist.

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Dr Mumtaz Ahmed Khan was a leading educationist, social worker apart from being a visionary and humanitarian in the true sense.

He was lovingly called Baba E Talim in Karnataka due to his achievements in setting up institutions and colleges.

His services for the society and his lifelong dedication to setting up institutions, made him a personality who was widely respected.

He was born in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu on September 6, 1935. His father Yusuf Ismail Khan was a lawyer and his mother Saadatun Nisa was a graduate in pre-independent era.

Both had got their degrees from AMU. The son inherited his parents' love for education. In 1963, he finished his MBBS degree from Madras University.

He did MS in surgery from Stanley Medical College, Chennai. At the age of 31, he set up the Al Ameen Society in Bengaluru.

Under the society, 250 institutions are running all over the country. Al Ameen Hospital in Bangalore [now, Bengaluru] is also one of his achievement.

He had realized that the need for institutions, educational as well as those in other important sectors.

Al Ameen College in Bijapur is yet another example. For a long time, he was printer and publisher of the Bengaluru's famous Salar Urdu daily as well.

Not just colleges, schools and hospital but sports clubs, amaanat bank, ensuring mechanism to provide loan to needy without interest, scholarships to students who came from financially weak background and not keeping his work to just Karnataka, but expanding it outside too.

Al Ameen has presence in many other states, from Maharashtra to Gujarat, UP and North East. Set up colleges, institutions and left

behind a rich legacy. It took vision, commitment and sacrifices.

Tens of thousands of students who come out of these institutions year after year, it's a testimony to the vision of Mumtaz Ahmed Khan. He had passed away on May 27, 2021. Former Union minister K Rahman Khan had paid glowing tributes and said that it was late Mumtaz Ahmed Khan's immense contribution that led to setting up of the Al Ameen institutions and he left them for the welfare of the community. He was also termed as 'Sir Syed of South'.



Changing US-China dynamic and rivalry for control over Rare Earth Elements

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China paid attention to the REE and over the years, due to the state support and a policy, it went ahead and emerged as a nation that dominates this sphere.

REEs have unique magnetic, luminescent, catalytic and electrochemical properties that make them essential (and often hard to substitute without major performance or size, weight penalties) in modern technology.

Permanent magnets (especially neodymium-iron-boron with dysprosium, terbium for heat resistance, and samarium-cobalt): The dominant high-value use. Critical for electric vehicle (EV) motors, wind turbine generators, hard drives, speakers, industrial motors, and countless actuators.

Phosphors (europium, terbium, yttrium) for screens and LEDs; lanthanum in camera lenses; components in smartphones, computers, and fiber optics.

Catalysts: Petroleum refining (lanthanum, cerium) and automotive catalytic converters. Defense and aerospace: Precision-guided munitions, radar, sonar, night-vision, lasers, jet engines (e.g., yttrium coatings on turbine blades), F-35 fighters (hundreds of kg of REEs each), submarines (thousands of kg), drones, and communications.

Demand is surging with electrification, renewable energy build out, AI-data centers, robotics, and advanced defense systems. A typical EV needs significantly more mineral content than a conventional car, much of it tied to magnets and related components. Without reliable REE supplies, production of EVs, wind turbines, electronics, and military hardware can halt or face severe delays.

Demand is surging with electrification, renewable energy build out, AI-data centers, robotics, need for EVs and for the advanced defense systems.

China holds overwhelming dominance, especially in the critical midstream i.e. separation, refining and downstream i.e. magnets and alloys stages.

Mining: Roughly 60–70% of global production in recent years (e.g. 270,000 tonnes REO equivalent in 2025).

Processing, refining: Almost 90–91% overall; near 99–100% for many heavy rare earths.

Permanent magnets: Around 94% of sintered NdFeB production.

Reserves: Largest by far (at 44 million tonnes), though significant deposits exist in Brazil, Australia, the US, Vietnam, Russia, and elsewhere. This is not purely geological. China built the industry over decades through state support, lower environmental standards historically, industrial policy, and consolidation, while Western production (notably the US Mountain Pass mine) largely exited the market in the late 20th, early 21st century due to costs and regulation. China also restricted exports of processing technology & imposed quotas, licensing.

The strategic race is underway, intensifying sharply in recent times amid broader US-China trade and technology tensions. China has used export controls as leverage—controls on seven heavy or medium REEs and related magnets, expanded later, causing immediate shortages, production pauses at automakers & price spikes (for Yttrium, Dysprosium & Terbium). Temporary truces and partial suspensions have occurred like high level meetings.

In fact, China has smart in this regard and it has kept eye on the foreign firms that are active in this field.

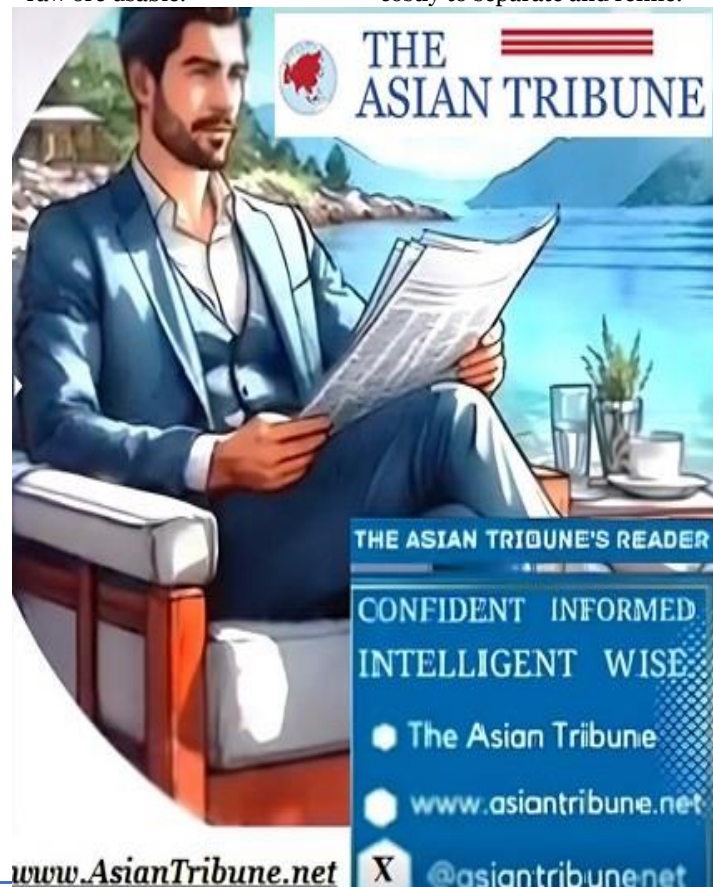
China dominates the rare earth elements (REE) field, controlling roughly 69% of global mining and nearly 90% to 91% of processing, refining, and magnet manufacturing. This gives Beijing unmatched accessibility and leverage over the worldwide high-tech and defense supply chains.

Holds the world's largest natural rare earth reserves at roughly 44 million metric tons.

Midstream processing: Controls the complex chemical separation and refining tech required to make raw ore usable.

The country utilizes state-backed conglomerates like the China Rare Earth Group to manage production quotas and apply strategic export restrictions.

Rare earth elements (REEs) are a group of 17 chemically similar metallic elements: the 15 lanthanides (lanthanum through lutetium) plus scandium and yttrium. They are not truly rare in crustal abundance—cerium is roughly as common as copper, and even the scarcest are more abundant than gold—but they are rarely found in concentrated, economically extractable deposits and are extremely difficult and environmentally costly to separate and refine.



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