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Increased Recycling of E-waste in India

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Why in News

Recently, the government has informed that **E-waste recycling has doubled** in the country compared to 2017-18.

The government has reported that the **recycling rate of 10% in 2017-18 has risen to 20% in 2018-19.**

E-waste

- E-Waste is short for Electronic-Waste. It is the term used to describe old, end-of-life or discarded electronic appliances. It includes computers, mobiles, consumer electronics etc.
- It majorly includes electronic equipment, completely or in part discarded as waste by the consumer or bulk consumer as well as rejects from manufacturing, refurbishment and repair processes.

Why should E-waste be managed properly?

- E-waste consists of toxic elements such as Lead, Mercury, Cadmium, Chromium, Polybrominated biphenyls and Polybrominated diphenyl.
- Non-Disposal and burning of e-waste can have serious implications on human health and can cause air, soil pollution and groundwater contamination.

Key Points

- **Production of E-waste in India:**
 - According to the **Global E-Waste Monitor 2017**, India generates about **2 million tonnes (MT)** of E-waste **annually**.
 - India ranks **fifth among E-waste producing countries**, after the US, China, Japan and Germany.
 - But the government has stated that the **E-waste produced in India is lower than estimates by international agencies**.
- **Management of E-waste:**
 - **Producers:**
 - The government has implemented the **E-waste (Management) Rules (2016)** which enforces the **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**.
 - Under EPR principle the producers have been made responsible to collect a certain percentage of E-waste generated from their goods once they have reached their **“end-of-life”**.
 - **State Governments:**
 - They have been entrusted with the responsibility for maintaining industrial space for e-waste dismantling and recycling facilities.
 - They are also expected to establish measures for protecting the health and safety of workers engaged in the dismantling and recycling facilities for e-waste.
- **Recycling of E-waste:**
 - Most of India's **e-waste is recycled by the informal sector and under hazardous conditions**.
 - A report by the Union Environment Ministry in 2018 found that many of India's e-waste recyclers didn't have the capacity to **handle a large quantity of waste**.
 - **India's first e-waste clinic** for segregating, processing and disposal of waste from household and commercial units will soon be set-up in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.

E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016

- The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** notified the E-Waste Management Rules, 2016 in supersession of the e-waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 2011.
- The new E-waste rules included Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) and other mercury containing lamps, as well as other such equipment.
- For the first time, the rules brought the producers under **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**, along with targets. Producers have been made responsible for the collection of E-waste and for its exchange.
- Various producers can have a separate Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) and ensure collection of E-waste, as well as its disposal in an environmentally sound manner.

- **Deposit Refund Scheme** has been introduced as an additional economic instrument wherein the producer charges an additional amount as a deposit at the time of sale of the electrical and electronic equipment and returns it to the consumer along with interest when the end-of-life electrical and electronic equipment is returned.
- The **role of State Governments** has been also introduced to ensure safety, health and skill development of the workers involved in dismantling and recycling operations.
- **A provision of penalty for violation of rules** has also been introduced.
- Urban Local Bodies (Municipal Committee/Council/Corporation) has been assigned the duty to collect and channelize the **orphan products** to authorized dismantler or recycler.

Source: TH