



E-Waste Generation

Why in News

International E-Waste Day has been observed on **14th October** since 2018.

- The aim of the day is **to raise awareness** about the **millions of tonnes of e-waste generated worldwide** each year, which has a negative impact on the environment and natural resources.
- Earlier this year, the Principal Bench of [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\) issued directions](#) for the implementation of [E-Waste \(Management\) Rules, 2016](#).

International E-Waste Day

- This year's International E-Waste Day highlights the **crucial role each of us play in making e-product circularity a reality**.
- According to the [United Nations](#), by 2021, **each person on the planet would produce an average of 7.6 kg of e-waste**, resulting in a global total of 57.4 million tonnes of e-waste.
- **Only 17.4% of this electronic garbage**, which contains a combination of hazardous compounds and valuable materials, will be appropriately collected, processed, and recycled.

Key Points

▪ E-Waste:

- E-Waste is short for **Electronic-Waste** and the term is used to describe old, end-of-life or discarded electronic appliances. It includes their components, consumables, parts and spares.
- It is **categorised into 21 types** under two broad categories:
 - Information technology and communication equipment.
 - Consumer electrical and electronics.
- **Laws to manage e-waste** have been in place in India since 2011, mandating that only authorised dismantlers and recyclers collect e-waste. **E-waste (Management) Rules, 2016** was enacted in 2017.
- **India's first e-waste clinic** for segregating, processing and disposal of waste from household and commercial units has been set-up **in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.
- Originally, the [Basel Convention](#) (1992) did not mention e-waste but later it addressed the issues of e-waste in 2006 (COP8).
 - The **Nairobi Declaration** was adopted at COP9 of the **Basel Convention on the Control of the Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Waste**. It aimed at creating innovative solutions for the environmentally sound management of electronic wastes.

▪ E-waste Generation:

- This year's **Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)** will total about **57.4 million tonnes (MT)** and will be **greater than the weight of the Great Wall of China**, Earth's heaviest artificial object.
- According to the [Central Pollution Control Board \(CPCB\)](#), India generated **more than 10 lakh tonnes of e-waste in 2019-20**, an increase from 7 lakh tonnes in 2017-18. Against this, the e-waste dismantling capacity has not been increased from 7.82 lakh tonnes since 2017-18.
- **Challenges Related to Management of E-Waste in India:**
 - **Less Involvement of People:**
 - A **key factor in used electronic devices not being given for recycling** was because consumers themselves did not do so.
 - However, in recent years, countries around the world have been attempting to pass effective '[right to repair](#)' laws.
 - **Involvement of Child Labor:**
 - In India, about 4.5 lakh child laborers in the age group of 10-14 are observed to be engaged in various E-waste activities and that too without adequate protection and safeguards in various yards and recycling workshops.
 - **Ineffective Legislation:**
 - There is absence of any public information on most **State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/PCC** websites.
 - **Health hazards:**
 - E-waste **contains over 1,000 toxic materials**, which contaminate soil and groundwater.
 - **Lack of incentive schemes:**
 - **No clear guidelines are there** for the unorganized sector to handle E-waste.
 - Also, no incentives are mentioned to lure people engaged to adopt a formal path for handling E-waste.
 - **E-waste Imports:**
 - Cross-border flow of waste equipment into India- 80% of E-waste in developed countries meant for recycling is sent to developing countries such as India, China, Ghana and Nigeria.
 - **Reluctance of Authorities' involved:**
 - **Lack of coordination between various authorities** responsible for E-waste management and disposal including the non-involvement of municipalities.
 - **Security Implications:**
 - End of life computers often contain sensitive personal information and bank account details which, if not deleted leave opportunity for fraud.

Way Forward

- There are various startups and companies in India that have now started to collect and recycle electronic waste. We need **better implementation methodologies** and **inclusion policies** that provide accommodation and validation for the informal sector to step up and help us meet our recycling targets in an environmentally sound manner.
- Also, successfully raising collection rates required every actor to be involved, including consumers.

[Source: DTE](#)

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