

LOOMING CRISIS OF E-WASTE

An imminent threat



For India, effective management of e-waste is an idea whose time has not yet come. It's now ubiquitous. From the tablet to the swanky 4G phone, from the air-conditioner to the LED television, the microchips are staring at an expiry date. Here's a look at India's ambitious measures to manage the mammoth quantity of e-waste it churns out year after year.

[WAKE-UP CALL]

- Under the revamped E-waste Management Rules, 2016, producers have been made responsible for collection, recycling and disposal of electronic waste
- Role of States has been clearly spelt out
- Central Pollution Control Board is now the sole authority on permissions for recycling of e-waste to help prevent its flow to unauthorised recyclers

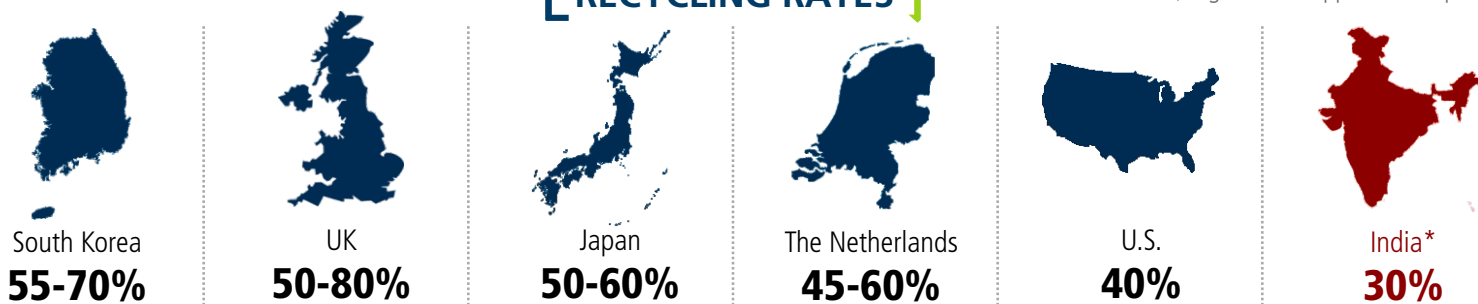


[THE DEFINITION]

Although electronic waste is a generic term, it covers any household or business item with circuitry or electrical components with power or battery

[RECYCLING RATES]

*(Target-based approach adopted)



E-waste is here to stay. In 2014, India produced 1.7 million tonnes of e-waste (5th largest producer).

95%

THE REALITY

Unorganised sector is estimated to handle around 95% of e-waste that India generates. Much of India's efforts to check e-waste will centre around professionalising this sector

➔ **1,700,000,000 kg** of e-waste..... **1**

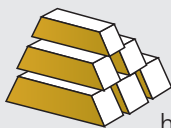
➔ **10,100,000 kg** Net weight of Eiffel Tower..... **2**

1 / **2** = **165**

India produces e-waste equivalent to 165 Eiffel Towers (by weight) a year

GOLD STANDARD

The unorganised sector in India is cally eyeing the gold pie in a mound



EXTRACTING GOLD FROM E-WASTE

Pyrometallurgy: Is a process to extract the gold using high temperatures. This method is energy intensive

Hydrometallurgy: In this, leaching chemicals like aqua regia (a mixture of concentrated nitric acid and hydrochloric acid) are used. The process is expensive and toxic.

PRIME POLLUTERS

U.S. alone discards **14-20 mn** personal computers and peripherals every year. Asia discards an estimated **12 million tonnes** of e-waste



CONSEQUENCES

Exposure to chemicals from e-waste could injure the brain and nervous system, kidneys, liver and lead to birth defects



45% ILLEGAL DUMPING

Estimates from 2015 indicate that 45 per cent of e-waste from Europe alone are being exported to Asia and Africa



To not act on e-waste could be the mistake of the century - UNCTAD

Courtesy: The Hindu