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NGT asks for Action Plan on E-waste in Three Months

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National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked Ministry of Environment forest (MoEF) to submit an action plan for enforcement of rules and taking actions against violators E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016, and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

The NGT was disposing of a plea against unauthorised “recycling, collection, dismantling, burning, selling” of e-waste and other solid waste on roadsides and riverbanks in violation of E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016, and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

E-waste

- 'E-waste' means electrical and 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.
- E-Waste is short for Electronic-Waste. It is the term used to describe old, end-of-life or discarded electronic appliance. It includes computers, mobiles, consumer electronics etc.
- India is the fifth largest producer of e-waste in the world with annual e-waste generation of more than 18 million tonnes.

Why should E-waste be managed properly?

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

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.
- Making the norms stringent, 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.
- 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.