



# Right to Repair Movement

## Why in News

In recent years, **countries around the world** have been **attempting to pass effective 'right to repair' laws**.

- The **movement traces its roots back** to the very dawn of the **computer era in the 1950s**.
- The goal of the movement is to **get companies to make spare parts, tools and information on how to repair devices** available to **customers and repair shops** to increase the lifespan of products and to keep them from ending up in landfills.

## Key Points

### ▪ Right to Repair:

- The **Right to Repair electronics** refers to **government legislation** that is **intended to allow consumers the ability to repair and modify their own consumer electronic devices**, where otherwise the manufacturer of such devices require the consumer to use only their offered services.
- The **idea originally originated from the USA** where the **Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act 2012**, required the manufacturers to provide the necessary documents and information to allow anyone to repair their vehicles.

### ▪ Benefits:

- This will **help boost business for small repair shops**, which are an **important part of local economies**.
- It will **help reduce the vast mountain of [electrical waste \(e-waste\)](#)** that piles up each year on the continent.
- It will **save consumers' money**.
- It will contribute to **[circular economy](#)** objectives by improving the life span, maintenance, re-use, upgrade, recyclability and waste handling of appliances.

### ▪ Reason for Encouraging the Movement:

- **Electronic manufacturers** are encouraging a culture of **'planned obsolescence'**.
  - **'Planned obsolescence'** means that **devices are designed specifically to last a limited amount of time and to be replaced**.
- This can lead to **immense pressure on the environment and wasted natural resources**.
  - **Manufacturing an electronic device** is a highly polluting process. It makes use of polluting sources of energy, such as fossil fuel, which has an adverse impact on the environment.

### ▪ Reason for Opposing:

- **Large tech companies**, including Apple, Microsoft, Amazon and Tesla have argued that **opening up their intellectual property to third party repair services or amateur**

repairers could lead to **exploitation and impact the safety and security of their devices.**

▪ **Right to Repair Movement around the World:**

- The **United States President** has signed an executive order calling on the Federal Trade Commission **to curb restrictions imposed by manufacturers that limit consumers' ability to repair** their gadgets on their own terms.
- The **UK, too**, introduced **right-to-repair rules** that should make it much easier to buy and repair daily-use gadgets such as TVs and washing machines.

**E-waste in India**

▪ **Official Data:**

- 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.

▪ **Indian Initiatives:**

- [E-Waste Management Rules, 2016:](#)

- The rules **aim to enable the recovery and/or reuse of useful material** from e-waste, thereby reducing the hazardous wastes destined for disposal and to ensure the environmentally sound management of all types of waste of electrical and electronic equipment.

- [E-Waste Clinic:](#)

- Aimed at **segregating, processing and disposal of waste.**

**Way Forward**

- Right to Repair law could be **especially valuable in a country like India**, where service networks are often spotty and authorised workshops are few and far between in the hinterland.
- **India's informal repair sector** does a good job with jugaad. But the **quality of repair and maintenance services** could improve substantially if such legislation was adopted.

[Source: IE](#)

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