



Recyclers storing e-waste hazardously: govt. report

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Highlights

- Many of India's electronic-waste (e-waste) recyclers aren't recycling waste at all.
- While some are storing it in hazardous conditions, others don't even have the capacity to handle such waste, says a new report prepared by the Union Environment Ministry.
- India now has 178 registered e-waste recyclers, accredited by the State governments to process e-waste.
- India generates more than two million tonnes of e-waste annually, and the bulk of it is processed in the informal sector.
- In 2017, the Centre brought into effect the E-waste Rules, which require companies that make or sell electronic equipment to collect a certain percentage of e-waste generated from their goods once they have reached their "end-of-life."
- In 2017-2018, the companies were supposed to have collected 10% which would rise to 70% by 2023.
- But doing this would require these firms to work with licensed e-waste recyclers and ensure that all e-waste is properly disposed off.
- The Environment Ministry conducted checks at 11 registered recyclers and one unregistered recycler in May this year. The recyclers were located in Kanpur, Thane (Mumbai), Vapi (Gujarat), Kolkata, Bengaluru, and Alwar (Rajasthan).

Conclusions of check by the Environment ministry in a letter to CPCB

- A number of transgressions were seen committed by the recycling facilities such as adopting non-environmentally sound methods of storage, handling and processing of e-waste
- Non-compliance with guidelines of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)
- Certain recycling facilities were non-operational or seemed to be inadequate to handle the capacity of e-waste

No disposal yard

- The reality is that all firms registered as recyclers are all effectively dismantlers.
- Recycling requires specialised equipment, which is too expensive.
- The CPCB and the State Pollution Control Boards are empowered to check whether recycling agencies are complying with the rules.
- A CPCB official said there were plans to inspect each of the 178 recyclers.