

Government Takes Steps to Promote Domestic Recycling Capacity and Circular Economy in Solar Sector

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With the support of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, a think tank, has estimated that cumulative waste from existing and projected solar capacity installations in India could reach around 600 kilo-tonnes by 2030.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has notified the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022. These rules also cover environmentally sound management of e-waste generated from electrical and electronic equipment, including solar photo-voltaic panels. An online Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Portal for E-Waste management has also been made operational by the Central Pollution Control Board.

The Government has taken following steps to promote domestic recycling capacity and circular economy practices in the country:

The Government of India constituted committees to prepare action plans to expedite transition from linear to circular economy in 11 focus areas including Solar Panels. The MNRE had constituted a Committee on Circular Economy in Solar Panels.

The MNRE had launched an “Innovation Challenge for Circularity in Renewable Energy Technologies – Batteries and Solar Photovoltaic” to support research and innovation in recycling, second-life applications, and circular design of solar modules and batteries under the Renewable Energy Research and Technology Development (RE-RTD) programme.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST), issued a Call for proposal on “Recovery and Recycling of End-of-Life Solar PV Panels/Modules” to develop economically viable recycling processes and equipment through academia–industry partnerships.

Ministry of Mines (MoM) launched a recycling incentive scheme with an outlay of Rs. 1500 crore under the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) to develop domestic capabilities for recovering critical minerals from e-waste, lithium-ion battery waste, and components of end-of-life vehicles, supporting circular economy practices in clean-energy supply chains.

This information was submitted by Union Minister of State for New and Renewable Energy Shri Shripad Yesso Naik in a written reply to Rajya Sabha today.

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