

Green body warns India against electronics boom

India should restrain from giving a thumbs-up to the electronics sector, which generates waste leading to contamination of groundwater and rivers, leading global organisation Greenpeace warned Thursday.

India is witnessing an explosive consumption of electronic goods and equipment, and is on its way to becoming the preferred destination for electronics manufacturers, the green body said in a report.

Quoting a Frost and Sullivan study, it said the consumption of electronic equipment in the country would rise to \$363 billion by 2015 from \$28.2 billion in 2005 at a compound annual growth rate of 29.8 percent. The Indian electronic equipment production grew at 25 percent in 2005 and is expected to reach a growth rate of 50 percent in 2010.

'As India gears up to become the destination of choice for electronics manufacturing, it is imperative that it pays heed to the alarm bells being sounded on the environmental and human health front. It is time the IT ministry in India realised its responsibility to regulate the toxic impact of this industry hand in hand with promoting its growth,' said Vinuta Gopal, a Greenpeace activist.

'Even as governments worldwide, including China, recognise that toxic contamination from e-waste is a looming environmental disaster, and enforce phase-out of toxic chemicals, India does nothing. The IT ministry and ministry of environment and forests are abdicating their responsibilities', Gopal said.

Greenpeace released a report titled 'Cutting Edge Contamination: A study of environmental pollution during the manufacture of electronic products' about e-waste's role in contaminating rivers and underground wells.

The report also said that places around semiconductor manufacturing units have high level of toxic chlorinated volatile organic chemicals (VOCs) and toxic metals including nickel.

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