

have a smartphone. Men have greater access to smart-phones than women (Refer EPIC May 2022, Digital Gender Gap). This will further reduce participation of women; **(5) Lack of proper training:** This leads to errors in recording attendance, ultimately leading to loss of wage; **(6) Lack of Assessment of Effectiveness:** The Ministry has not provided much information on the extent of corruption in NRERGA. There is no clarification how the NMMS will address the issue, ensure quicker payments and how the App's performance will be measured.

Experts argue that instead of purely technological solution, the Government should make the process of social audit more robust to check corruption and leakage of funds.

6. The Right to Repair

News: The Government has set up a committee to develop comprehensive framework on the Right to Repair. Consumers in Western Countries are already demanding the Right.

What is the Right to Repair? – **(1)** It is a right to give users and third-party companies the required tools, parts and manuals related to a product. This would enable them to **repair a product on their own** instead of depending on the manufacturers; **(2)** The rationale behind the right is that the **individual who purchases a product must own it completely**. Besides the right to use, consumers must be able to repair and modify the product the way they want to; **(3)** Repairing is becoming unreasonably expensive because of the technology becoming obsolete. Companies avoid the publication of manuals that can help users make repairs easily. Manufacturers have proprietary control over spare parts and most firms refuse to make their products compatible with those of other firms.

What are the reasons to provide Right to Repair? – **(1) Pricing:** In the absence of repair manuals manufacturers hold near-monopoly over repair workshops. They charge exorbitant prices; **(2) Tackle planned obsolescence:** Planned obsolescence is a policy of producing consumer goods that become obsolete after a certain period of time. Consumers have to buy the new product once the existing product becomes unusable. It is achieved by frequent changes in design, termination of the supply of spare parts, and the use of non-durable materials. Buying a replacement becomes cheaper and easier than repairing. With the right to repair, companies would be induced to make durable and long-lasting devices; **(3) Right to Choose:** Monopoly on repair processes infringes the customers' 'right to choose' recognised by the Consumer Protection Act, 2019; **(4) Boosting Local Economy:** Right to repair allows opening up of small repair shops in the local area that adds to the revenue of the region and also creates sufficient employment; **(5) Environment protection:** Allowing repair will prevent faster dumping of electronic devices and help reduce e-waste. Manufacturing electronic devices is a highly polluting process. Improving longevity of electronic devices will reduce the impact on environment.

REPAIR is better than Recycling

Making things last longer is more efficient and more cost-effective than mining more raw materials.

REPAIR saves Money

Repairing things is cheaper than replacing them. Self-repair saves money.

REPAIR saves the Planet

Repairing things increases their longevity. It reduces resource consumption and waste generation.

Adapted from iFixit, the community leading the Right to Repair Movement



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