1. Circular Economy- Economy

Finland to hold road shows on circular economy in India next year. India is transitioning toward a regenerative Circular Economy, projected to create $2 trillion in value and 10 million jobs by 2050, through initiatives like GOBAR-Dhan and E-waste rules. As India prepares to host the World Circular Economy Forum 2026, the focus is on shifting from a "take-make-dispose" model to one of reuse and waste elimination, despite challenges in funding and technical expertise.

Context- India & The World Circular Economy Forum

Hosting Responsibility- India is set to host the World Circular Economy Forum 2026.

Pre-Event Activities- In preparation for this major event, Finland will conduct roadshows across major Indian cities.

Objective- These roadshows aim to- Promote awareness regarding the circular economy. Explore potential business opportunities and collaborations.

Conceptual Framework

Definition- It is a production model specifically designed to prioritize waste reduction or elimination.

Scope- It covers the entire product life cycle, moving away from the traditional "use and throw" method.

Stages involved- Raw material extraction - Manufacturing -Usage -Disposal -Reuse.

Comparison- Linear vs. Circular Model

Feature	Linear Economy	Circular Economy
Core Principle	Take- Make -Dispose	Reduce - Reuse - Recycle
Resource Use	Finite consumption; resources are exhausted.	Regenerative; resources are kept in use for as long as possible.
End of Life	Product becomes waste (land-fill).	Product becomes a resource for a new cycle.
Focus	Maximizing production volume.	Maximizing ecosystem sustainability and product longevity.

Economic Projections for India

Market Valuation- India's circular economy sector is projected to reach a market value of $2 trillion by the year 2050.

Employment Potential- The sector is expected to generate 10 million new jobs by 2050, driven by new sustainable industries.

Significance of Circular Economy

Global Economic Opportunities- According to the UNDP, transitioning to circular models globally could yield $4.5 trillion in economic benefits by 2030. It assists significantly in reducing carbon emissions, aligning with climate goals.

Job Creation- The model expands the labor market in specific "green" sectors.

Key Sectors- Recycling, refurbishment, remanufacturing, and sustainable product design.

Competitive Advantage for Business- Companies adopting these models gain a market edge.

Consumer Trend- There is a rising consumer preference for sustainable and eco-friendly products.

India's Leadership & Policy Initiatives

India has implemented several schemes to embed circular principles into governance-

Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban (SBM-U)- Focuses on strengthening urban waste management systems. Operates strictly on the 3R Principles- Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

GOBAR-Dhan Scheme (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan)-

Objective- Promoting "Waste-to-Wealth" initiatives.

Method- Utilizing biogas and organic waste processing.

Current Status (as of Feb 2025)- Coverage extends to 67.8% of total districts in India**.** 1,008 biogas plants are fully operational.

Regulatory Frameworks

E-Waste Management Rules (2022)- Enacted to strengthen circular practices specifically for electronic waste disposal and recovery.
Plastic Waste Management- EPR Implementation- Rolled out Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) to make industries accountable for the plastic waste they generate.
Ban- India enforced a ban on single-use plastics in 2022.
Regional Cooperation-
Event- The 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific.
Location/Date- Held in Jaipur, India, in March 2025.
Outcome- Marked a significant milestone in regional cooperation for sustainable waste management.

Challenges in Implementation

Technical Knowledge Gap- There is a lack of technical expertise among key stakeholders. Businesses, municipalities, and citizens often lack the specific knowledge required to implement circular principles effectively.
Financial Barriers
High Initial Capital- Establishing circular systems (e.g., advanced recycling infrastructure or redesigning products) requires substantial upfront investment.
Uneven Corporate Adoption- While large corporations may adapt, MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) are largely not onboard. Since MSMEs form the backbone of India's economy, this leads to a non-uniform transition.
Policy & Enforcement Issues- While frameworks exist, enforcement remains weak. There are limited incentives for companies to voluntarily switch to circular models.

Way Ahead

The Trickle-Down Effect- Strategies must ensure that circular economy concepts permeate all levels of industry, moving beyond just large conglomerates to reach SMEs and the informal sector.
Promoting Repair & Reuse Culture- Shift focus from recycling to extending product lifecycles. Encourage policies that make "Right to Repair" accessible to reduce resource consumption.
Strengthening EPR & Recycling-Improve recycling processes to prevent environmental pollution. Rigorously implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) to ensure manufacturers manage their products' end-of-life impact.
Source- https-//www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/finland-to-hold-road-shows-on-circular-economy-in-india-next-year/article70350734.ece