

Waste to Wealth: How circular economy on the rise in India

Startup Elima believes future resources already exist above ground as e-waste growing by leaps and bounds

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What inspired Elima's vision to build a circular economy ecosystem in India?

Elima was founded on a simple but powerful belief: the resources needed to build the future already exist above the ground. As India's cities expanded, so did the volume of waste, especially electronic waste, highlighting the environmental and economic cost of repeatedly extracting virgin raw materials.

Elima saw an opportunity to challenge this linear model. Instead of materials being discarded after use, the goal was to recover, reuse, and reintroduce them into the economy. While the journey began with e-waste, the larger ambition was always to build a scalable ecosystem where circularity is practical, commercially viable, and aligned with India's industrial growth. At its core, Elima's vision is to make products intrinsically sustainable by design — where circularity is embedded into how value is created and preserved, not treated as an afterthought.

As a Hyderabad-headquartered company, how does Elima contribute to Telangana's circular economy?

Telangana is both Elima's operational base and a strategic growth partner. The company operates two facilities in Ranga Reddy district across 8.5 acres, with a current processing capacity of 17,820 tonnes per annum, expanding toward 73,920 TPA.

Elima supports local manufacturing by recovering ferrous and non-ferrous materials such as iron, copper, aluminium, and plastics that are reintroduced into supply chains. This reduces dependence on virgin resources while strengthening Telangana's industrial ecosystem.

Equally important is formalization. By operating technology-enabled facilities, Elima ensures higher recovery yields, consistent quality, and regulatory compliance — shifting material flows from fragmented informal systems to structured industrial processes.

The facilities also generate skilled and semi-skilled jobs across operations, quality control, logistics, and refurbishment, while creating pathways for informal workers to

transition into safer, structured employment.

Andhra Pradesh aims to generate Rs4,000 crore to Rs5,000 crore from the circular economy by 2030. How do you view this?

The target signals a shift in how circularity is perceived — from compliance activity to structured industrial value chain. Achieving this scale depends on integrating circular initiatives with manufacturing, logistics, and enterprise demand. Revenue at this level will be driven by large-scale recovery of metals and plastics, refurbishment and resale of usable assets, and secondary manufacturing that converts recovered materials into industrial inputs. Circularity becomes economically viable when recovered outputs meet manufacturing-grade quality and are reliably absorbed by downstream industries. Key enablers include zoned industrial land, efficient logistics, long-term financing, predictable enterprise material flows, and experienced operators capable of running compliant, high-efficiency facilities. Even beyond state borders, such policy frameworks strengthen India's broader circular ecosystem by building scale, standardization, and investor confidence.

From a business standpoint, where are the biggest circular economy opportunities today?

Two major opportunities stand out: electronics refurbishment and material recovery. Shorter device replacement cycles and price sensitivity have created a strong market for high-quality refurbished electronics. This extends product lifespans, generates commercial value, and reduces pressure on raw material extraction. Refurbishment is now emerging as a mainstream market rather than an informal side segment. Material recovery is the second growth engine. As electronic and industrial scrap volumes rise, the ability to extract metals and plastics at consistent quality standards becomes economically significant.

These recovered materials are increasingly accepted in domestic manufacturing, reinforcing circular supply chains. Together, these segments show that circular models can drive revenue while strengthening resource efficiency and industrial resilience.

Amid rising pressure on businesses to optimise resources and reduce waste, Hyderabad-based start-up Elima is emerging as a key player in the circular economy space. The company operates a unified recommerce and recycling platform that extends product lifecycles and streamlines waste management through technology-driven solutions. In an exclusive interview with Bizz Buzz, Co-Founder and CEO Abhishek Agashe



Abhishek Agashe
Co-Founder and CEO, Elima

said, "future manufacturing will rely largely on over-the-ground material reserves rather than conventional

Can you share insights into Elima's recycling and ITAD infrastructure?

Elima's infrastructure is designed for manufacturing-scale operations with strong process control and recovery quality. Its Telangana facilities handle complex electronics and appliance waste streams using standardized industrial processes. Product-specific dismantling lines for washing machines, air conditioners, and refrigeration equipment ensure predictable throughput. Standardized toolkits, preventive maintenance, and optimized material flow reduce downtime and minimize handling losses across metal and polymer streams. A multi-skilled workforce and structured training programs improve productivity, while quality control is embedded through segregation by material category and contamination risk, supported by defined inspection checkpoints.

How is Elima's ITAD offering different from traditional asset disposal models?

Traditional disposal models often prioritize removal over governance, leaving regulated enterprises with limited visibility. For BFSI, IT services, and global firms, this no longer meets risk or compliance expectations. Elima's ITAD model emphasizes assurance and decision certainty. In many regulated environments, reuse is restricted due to data security



polices. Elima ensures secure processing that eliminates the possibility of data recovery, aligning with enterprise governance frameworks. At the same time, structured evaluation enables lifecycle-based decisions. Assets are assessed for residual value, distinguishing those suitable for refurbishment from those that must be securely decommissioned. This replaces informal judgment with a controlled, auditable process, helping enterprises move from transactional disposal to governed lifecycle management.

How are AI and digital systems enabling scale with compliance?

As volumes grow, digital systems bring structure and discipline to operations. Elima uses integrated data capture across the lifecycle of materials to track movement, recovery outcomes, and performance. AI-assisted assessment helps determine appropriate processing pathways with greater consistency. Digital traceability creates verifiable records that support audits and ESG reporting without reliance

on manual documentation. Data platforms also enable continuous performance monitoring and process optimization, ensuring that operational growth is matched with transparency, accountability, and compliance.

able circular outcomes that stand up to governance and stakeholder review.

There is strong demand for traceable, auditable data that provides confidence in reporting. The focus is less on volume targets and more on credibility, documentation, and lifecycle visibility. Elima increasingly works as a circular economy partner, helping enterprises interpret regulations, understand material flows, and align circular initiatives with ESG goals while maintaining governance discipline.

How does Elima view urban mining as a strategic opportunity?

Demand for rare and critical materials is rising across EVs, renewables, electronics, and defence, while global supply chains remain concentrated and vulnerable. Urban mining offers a way to recover these materials from end-of-life products already within the economy.

For India, this could reduce import dependence and strengthen supply-chain resilience. For Telangana, it aligns with ambitions in electronics and advanced manufacturing, where access to recovered materials can become a competitive advantage.

Elima sees urban mining as part of the next phase of circular evolution, requiring research, technology development, and policy support to enable safe, scalable recovery of high-value materials.

What are enterprises seeking beyond basic EPR compliance?

ESG has moved to the boardroom, and disclosures now carry financial-level scrutiny. Enterprises are shifting from "checkbox-the-box" compliance to measur-

ing, requiring long-term investment in infrastructure to recover value from diverse waste streams. For this it requires companies and start-ups who are ready to play the long game and build physical and digital infrastructure and technologies to collect, store, transport and refine these raw materials through various waste streams such as electronics, plastics packaging, batteries, paper and paper products and base metals."

Circularity in India is moving from a sustainability narrative to a core industrial and business priority. Resource constraints, supply-chain risk, and stronger ESG scrutiny will push enterprises to reduce reliance on virgin materials and adopt circular models that improve efficiency and resilience

Telangana, it strengthens local capabilities, industrial growth, and job creation.

How is Elima partnering to scale responsibly?

Circular infrastructure is capital-intensive and requires long-term alignment. Elima grows through collaboration rather than rapid footprint expansion. With governments, the focus is policy alignment and enabling frameworks. With enterprises, it is governance, traceability, and predictable material flows. With financial institutions, it is responsible capital deployment into durable, sustainability-linked assets. These partnerships ensure expansion is aligned with policy direction, enterprise demand, and financial resilience.

How can formalization of informal recycling create both social and business value?

India's informal recycling sector plays a vital role but often lacks safety, structure, and traceability. As circular activity scales, formalization becomes essential. Elima integrates informal workers into structured facilities with defined roles, safety standards, and skill development. This provides stable employment while improving operational efficiency. From a business perspective, formalization enables consistent segregation, documentation, and monitoring, strengthening recovery quality and enterprise confidence in reported outcomes.

The goal is integration, not displacement — combining inclusive employment with greater efficiency, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

AI structurally changing IT biz mix, Jefferies warns of managed services shrinkage ahead

The brokerage warns that AI-led shifts will likely shrink the traditional 'managed services' segment while increasing the consulting and implementation

NEW DELHI

THE IT services sector is set for a structural shift as AI reshapes the core business mix, which will not only increase 'cyclicality' but also require an overhaul of talent and operating models, "thus adding risks", a report by Jefferies has said.

The brokerage in its note 'P(AI) n Not Over Yet; Stay Selective' warns that AI-led shifts will likely shrink the traditional 'managed services' segment while increasing the consulting and implementation. Despite a 16 per cent year-to-date fall, stocks still offer higher downside than upside, according to the report. Jefferies suggests the 'P(AI)n' is not over, leading the firm to cut price targets by up to 33 per cent in some cases. It has also downgraded some industry leaders, including TCS and Infosys.

It is pertinent to mention that in the past few weeks, investor sentiment in the global tech sector, and traditional IT services and software space, has become notably jittery as sophisticated models like AI-disruptor Anthropic's Claude evolve from assistants into tools capable of executing complex tasks. "Nifty IT has fallen by 14 per cent and underperformed Nifty50 by 12 percentage points year to date. While 3Q results led to earnings upgrades for nearly all IT firms, recent developments in AI have raised concerns on the medium- to long-term growth outlook for IT firms and driven up to 27 per cent derating," Jefferies said.

This suggests that stock performance will more likely be tied to the longer-term business outlook rather than earnings delivery in



The plunge raised fresh fears about the durability of traditional consulting and infrastructure revenues. Globally, cybersecurity and software firms, including CrowdStrike, Datadog and Zscaler, too faced pressure as investors tempered growth expectations in segments previously considered relatively insulated from disruptions

the near term. Jefferies has predicted a structural change in the business mix ahead. "While IT firms should remain relevant, the nature of their client engagements is likely to structurally shift towards advisory and implementation, with application managed services (22-45 per cent of revenues) seeing sharp revenue deflation," it warned. The extent and timing of this deflation are likely to exacerbate as AI tools become better, it further said. "Moreover, the rising share of advisory and implementation engagements would not only increase the 'cyclicality' in revenue growth, but would also demand an overhaul of talent strategy and operating

models. Such changes in operating models are not easy to execute, and investors must factor in this risk in PE multiples," according to Jefferies.

Its calculations suggest that at the current market price, stocks are pricing in revenue CAGR of 6-14 per cent for large IT firms and 9-17 per cent CAGR for mid-sized IT firms over FY26-36. "In our view, maintaining the long-term revenue growth trajectory in line with the previous decade is the best case outcome for IT firms (case 1)...The worst case outcome could be 3 per cent lower revenue CAGR over FY26-31 (15 per cent cumulative deflation), followed by no growth beyond FY31 (case 3)," it said, playing out three different scenarios. Recent launches from Anthropic's Claude - including Claude Code, aimed at automating legacy code modernisation, and Claude Code Security, an AI-powered vulnerability detection tool - have intensified debate that swathes of labour-intensive, legacy IT services and software layers could soon become automated, even commoditised.

As a result, the conversation on AI has shifted from a narrative of a productivity booster to an imminent disruptor of long-standing IT business models. It is in this

turbulent juncture that investors and analysts are actively debating whether such tools could displace human-led teams across programming, application modernisation, legal processes, cybersecurity audits and other conventional service areas. The market reaction has been sharp - in India and outside. Technology heavyweights, such as IBM, suffered significant declines, with shares plunging more than 13 per cent in a single session on Monday, marking the steepest fall in over 25 years following claims about Claude Code's ability to streamline modernisation of a legacy programming language.

The plunge raised fresh fears about the durability of traditional consulting and infrastructure revenues. Globally, cybersecurity and software firms, including CrowdStrike, Datadog and Zscaler, too faced pressure as investors tempered growth expectations in segments previously considered relatively insulated from disruptions. In India, major IT services companies such as TCS, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Wipro and Tech Mahindra witnessed notable sell-offs, dragging the Nifty IT index lower amid fears that AI adoption could structurally reduce demand for conventional outsourcing and managed services. Analyst opinion remains divided, though guarded - firms like Jefferies have downgraded several IT stocks and cut target prices, citing evolving revenue models and pricing pressures, while others contend that the correction may be excessive.

They contend that enterprises continue to view AI primarily as a productivity enhancer rather than a complete substitute for human capabilities.

FM launches National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 aimed at raising ₹16.72L cr

The second phase of the pipeline has been developed by NITI Aayog, in consultation with infrastructure line ministries, based on the mandate for 'Asset Monetisation Plan 2025-30'

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched the second phase of the asset monetisation pipeline of Central ministries and public sector entities - the 'National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0)' with an estimated monetisation potential of Rs 16.72 lakh crore in the next five financial years.

The second phase of the pipeline has been developed by NITI Aayog, in consultation with infrastructure line ministries, based on the mandate for 'Asset Monetisation Plan 2025-30' as announced in the Union Budget 2025-26.

The NMP 2.0 estimates aggregate monetisation potential of Rs 16.72 lakh crore, including private sector investment of Rs 5.8 lakh crore under the asset monetisation pipeline of Central ministries and public sector entities, over the five-year period from FY 2026 to FY 2030.

Sitharaman also noted that the ambitious five-year asset monetisation target for NMP 2.0 is over 2.6 times higher than that under NMP 1.0 and added that the Ministries and Departments must aim to surpass the indicated targets through proactive efforts.

The sectors included in the monetisation plan are highways (including MMLPs, ropeways), railways, power, petroleum and natural gas, civil aviation, ports, warehousing and storage, urban infrastructure, coal, mines, telecom and tourism.

NMP 2.0 was released in the presence of the NITI Aayog CEO and Secretaries of infrastructure line ministries included under the pipeline — Road Transport and Highways, Railways, Power, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Civil Aviation, Ports, Shipping, and



Waterways, Telecommunications, Tourism, Food and Public Distribution, Mining, Coal and Housing and Urban Affairs — along with the Secretaries of Ministry of Finance, Secretary Law, and the Chief Economic Adviser.

In her address at the launch, the Finance Minister complimented all the ministries and departments of the government and NITI Aayog for meeting nearly 90 per cent of the target of Rs 6 lakh crore set for 4 years in the implementation of NMP 1.0. Sitharaman said that the NMP 2.0 is aligned with the mission of achieving Viksit Bharat through accelerated infrastructure development and that the NMP has the potential to fuel India's growth momentum.

The Finance Minister observed that NMP 1.0 was the first of its kind of pipeline at a large scale, and best practices learnt by the authorities concerned should be leveraged in NMP 2.0. She underscored that the learnings and experiences of NMP 1.0 will serve as a guide to ensure that resources and opportunities are

optimised to achieve results in a time-bound manner.

She exhorted all the departments to focus on process simplification and standardisation so that monetisation becomes a seamless experience.

Highlighting the significance of asset monetisation, the Finance Minister said that the NMP enables recycling of productive public assets, thereby unlocking resources for reinvestment in new projects and capital expenditure. She noted that this approach facilitates efficient mobilisation of funds for CAPEX in public assets while minimising the budgetary outgo of the government.

NMP 2.0 is a culmination of insights, feedback and experiences consolidated through multi-stakeholder consultations undertaken by NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance and line ministries. Several rounds of discussion have been held by NITI Aayog with the stakeholders. This is a whole-of-government initiative, according to an official statement.