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## Environmental Science & Other Innovations:

### Environmental News

**Tree Felling Controversy:** In Bhopal, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) issued a notice to the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) regarding a road-broadening project. Environmental activists have raised concerns over the planned felling of an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 trees for the 16-kilometer stretch, citing a disregard for previous NGT guidelines and the impact on the city's green cover.

**River-Linking Project Redesign:** The Bedti-Varada river-linking project in Karnataka, which had been previously stalled due to environmental concerns, has been redesigned to minimize its ecological impact. The new plan, submitted by the National Water Development Agency (NWDA), aims to channel water to the Varada River through two different routes to provide irrigation for districts like Haveri, Gadag, Koppal, and Raichur.

**Air Quality in Gujarat:** Despite a relatively better national ranking, Gujarat faced 53 days of poor or very poor air quality in the fiscal year 2024-25. Ahmedabad, Vapi, Vatva, and Ankleshwar were identified as significant hotspots, with environmental experts attributing the pollution to industrial emissions, vehicular pollution, and a lack of urban planning.

**International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples:** On August 9, the world celebrated the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The theme for this year was "Indigenous Peoples and AI: Defending Rights,

Shaping Futures," highlighting the role of traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation and the challenges and opportunities presented by artificial intelligence for indigenous communities.

### Innovations and Technology

**India's Digital Economy:** An opinion piece highlighted India's ambition to become a \$10-trillion economy by 2032, driven by digital-first thinking and collaborative innovation. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) was cited as a key success, now handling nearly half of the world's real-time payment transactions.

**Biochar as a Climate Solution:** Biochar is emerging as a promising carbon removal technology in India. Created by the pyrolysis of agricultural and organic waste, it is a carbon-rich byproduct that can be added to soil to act as a natural carbon sink. It is also being explored for its potential in agriculture, wastewater treatment, and energy.

**Mycelium Bricks:** The construction industry is exploring new low-carbon solutions, with mycelium bricks emerging as a bio-based alternative. These bricks are being developed to reduce the high carbon emissions associated with traditional fired clay bricks.

**Green Skills Development:** The CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI) has released its Green Skills Program Calendar for 2025-26 and is actively seeking AI-driven solutions to environmental challenges. The institute is dedicated to providing innovative, science-driven solutions for a cleaner and more resilient future.





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## MCQS

1. In Bhopal, which government body received a notice from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) regarding a road-broadening project?

- A. Public Works Department (PWD)
- B. National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)
- C. Municipal Corporation of Bhopal
- D. Forest Department of Madhya Pradesh

**Answer:** B. National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)

The news states that the NGT issued a notice to the NHAI regarding a road-broadening project that would involve the felling of trees.

2. The redesigned Bedti-Varada river-linking project aims to provide irrigation to districts in which Indian state?

- A. Kerala
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. Karnataka
- D. Andhra Pradesh

**Answer:** C. Karnataka

The news mentions that the Bedti-Varada river-linking project in Karnataka has been redesigned to provide irrigation for districts such as Haveri, Gadag, Koppal, and Raichur.

3. What was the theme for the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on August 9, 2025?

- A. Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change
- B. Indigenous Peoples and AI: Defending Rights, Shaping Futures
- C. The Role of Indigenous Peoples in Biodiversity
- D. Protecting Indigenous Languages

**Answer:** B. Indigenous Peoples and AI: Defending Rights, Shaping Futures







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The news states that the theme for the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on August 9, 2025, was "Indigenous Peoples and AI: Defending Rights, Shaping Futures."

**4. What is biochar, and how does it act as a climate solution?**

- A. A type of biofuel that replaces fossil fuels.
- B. A carbon-rich byproduct from agricultural waste that acts as a natural carbon sink in soil.
- C. A genetically engineered plant that absorbs more carbon dioxide.
- D. A new technology for capturing carbon from the atmosphere.

**Answer:** B. A carbon-rich byproduct from agricultural waste that acts as a natural carbon sink in soil.

The news describes biochar as a carbon-rich byproduct of agricultural waste that can be added to soil to act as a natural carbon sink.

**5. Which new bio-based material is being explored as an alternative to traditional fired clay bricks?**

- A. Bamboo composite
- B. Recycled plastic bricks
- C. Mycelium bricks
- D. Hempcrete

**Answer:** C. Mycelium bricks

The news mentions that the construction industry is exploring "mycelium bricks" as a low-carbon alternative to traditional bricks.

**6. Which institute has released its Green Skills Program Calendar for 2025-26 and is seeking AI-driven environmental solutions?**

- A. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)
- B. Indian Institute of Science (IISc)
- C. CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI)
- D. National Institute of Technology (NIT)

D. National Institute of Technology (NIT)

**Answer:** C. CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI)  
The news states that the CSIR-NEERI has released its Green Skills Program Calendar for 2025-26 and is seeking AI-driven environmental solutions.

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