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Environmental Science & Other Innovations:

Environmental Science

Urban Tree Safety Initiative: In Bengaluru, India, the city's civic body, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), is taking an unconventional approach to prevent accidents from falling trees and branches. They are hiring 10 environmental science and biodiversity graduates to conduct physical inspections of trees on main and arterial roads. The initiative comes after five deaths and numerous injuries in the last eight months due to such incidents. The BBMP is also exploring a new insurance policy to cover injuries and fatalities caused by falling trees.

Persistent Air Pollution: Delhi has not had a single "good air day" (Air Quality Index of 0-50) in nearly two years, despite experiencing several days of heavy rainfall. Experts say that high background levels of pollution and inadequate systemic action for pollution control are to blame.

Green Development Festival: The "District Level Forest Festival 2025" in Buxar, Bihar, emphasized the importance of community involvement in tree plantation and conservation. The event, which included a street play and student competitions, highlighted the need for public participation to combat the growing challenges of climate change.

Threat to Rapa Nui's Moai: Advanced computer modeling suggests that by 2080, sea level rise and powerful waves could flood up to 51 cultural treasures, including the sacred Moai

statues, on Rapa Nui (Easter Island). This emphasizes the urgent need for protective measures to preserve the island's cultural heritage.

Microplastics in Soil: A study from Murdoch University in Australia found that agricultural soils now hold approximately 23 times more microplastics than the oceans, highlighting a significant and under-reported environmental concern.

Other Innovations

AI and Business Partnerships: NTT DATA and Google Cloud have announced a global partnership to accelerate AI-powered cloud innovations, focusing on developing industry-specific AI solutions. Separately, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in India has partnered with Hero MotoCorp to support early-stage startups in future mobility, clean technology, and deep technology.

Innovation Hubs: The state of Karnataka in India is considering establishing a dedicated Printed Circuit Board (PCB) Park in Mysuru to boost its electronics and semiconductor sector. In Kerala, Litmus7, a tech company, has opened a new AI Innovation Office to focus on generative AI and neural intelligence.

Materials Science Breakthroughs: Researchers have developed a new bioplastic from grapevine waste that degrades at room temperature. The material is strong and clear, offering a potential solution to plastic waste. Separately, scientists at Carnegie Mellon University have created a new class of "self-healing" polymer hybrid material.





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Sustainable Building Materials: Innovations are moving self-healing concrete and electrochromic windows from theory to practice, with the goal of helping to control emissions from hard-to-abate sectors like construction.

AI in Agriculture: The use of AI in agriculture is transforming Indian farms. AI is being used for precision farming to optimize resource use, predict yields and risks, and help farmers get better access to markets. However, some opinions are starting to raise concerns that an over-reliance on AI could erode farmers' critical thinking skills and lead to a concentration of power in the hands of large corporations.

New Method for Generating Electricity: Scientists have reported a new method of generating electricity from falling rainwater, which is capable of converting over 10% of the water's energy into electrical power.

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MCQS

1. Why is the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) hiring environmental science and biodiversity graduates?

- a) To plant more trees in the city
- b) To develop a new biodiversity park
- c) To physically inspect trees and prevent accidents from falling branches
- d) To research new methods of air pollution control

Answer: c) To physically inspect trees and prevent accidents from falling branches
The BBMP is taking this step to "conduct physical inspections of trees on main and arterial roads" and prevent accidents.

2. According to the news, what is the primary reason Delhi has not had a single "good air day" in two years?





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- a) A lack of rainfall
- b) An increase in vehicle emissions
- c) High background levels of pollution and inadequate systemic action
- d) An increase in construction activity

Answer: c) High background levels of pollution and inadequate systemic action

The news states that "high background levels of pollution and inadequate systemic action for pollution control are to blame."

3. What cultural treasures on Rapa Nui (Easter Island) are threatened by sea level rise and powerful waves?

- a) The Sacred Cenote
- b) The Great Pyramids
- c) The Moai statues
- d) The Terracotta Army

Answer: c) The Moai statues

The article mentions that "sea level rise and powerful waves could flood up to 51 cultural treasures, including the sacred Moai statues, on Rapa Nui."

4. A study from Murdoch University found that agricultural soils contain approximately how many times more microplastics than the oceans?

- a) 2 times
- b) 5 times
- c) 10 times
- d) 23 times

Answer: d) 23 times

The study found that agricultural soils hold "approximately 23 times more microplastics than the oceans."

5. Which two entities have partnered globally to accelerate AI-powered cloud innovations?

- a) Microsoft and Amazon
- b) NTT DATA and Google Cloud
- c) IBM and Oracle
- d) Hero MotoCorp and DPIIT

Answer: b) NTT DATA and Google Cloud

The news states that "NTT DATA and Google Cloud have announced a global partnership to accelerate AI-powered cloud innovations."

6. Where is the state of Karnataka considering establishing a dedicated Printed Circuit Board (PCB) Park?

- a) Bengaluru
- b) Mysuru
- c) Mangaluru
- d) Hubballi

Answer: b) Mysuru

The news indicates that Karnataka is considering establishing a "Printed Circuit Board (PCB) Park in Mysuru."

7. What is a potential negative consequence of the over-reliance on AI in agriculture, as mentioned in the news?

- a) It will increase the cost of farming.
- b) It could lead to a concentration of power in the hands of large corporations and erode farmers' critical thinking skills.
- c) It will make farming less efficient.
- d) It will increase water usage.

Answer: b) It could lead to a concentration of power in the hands of large corporations and erode farmers' critical thinking skills.

The article highlights concerns that "an over-reliance on AI could erode farmers' critical thinking skills and lead to a concentration of power in the hands of large corporations."





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8. A new method for generating electricity from falling rainwater is capable of converting what percentage of the water's energy into electrical power?

- a) Less than 1%
- b) 5%
- c) Over 10%
- d) 50%

Answer: c) Over 10%

The new method is "capable of converting over 10% of the water's energy into electrical power."

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