



News

The world's first carbon-neutral town could end up in the planet's most polluted country

In November 2015, Thomas Isaac, a 64-year-old economist and finance minister for the Indian state of Kerala, traveled to Paris to present a paper on waste disposal at the United Nations Climate Change Conference. He came back to Kerala with an audacious plan: Turn Meenangadi, a south Indian settlement of some 34,000 people, into the country's first carbon-neutral village by 2020. India is battling a pollution crisis. The country is poised to overtake China to become the country with the most air pollution-related deaths in the world; according to the State of Global Air Report 2017, a joint study by the Health Effects Institute in Boston, Massachusetts, and the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation in Seattle, Washington, 1.1 million Indians die annually because of toxic air. The state of India's water bodies is no better; 80% of its surface water is polluted. [Read more...](#)

Date: 05 March 2017

Source: <https://qz.com>**Trees wouldn't be cut if they could vote: HC**

It found that one of the reasons for the pollution was decline in the green cover in Delhi and surrounding areas. Delhi government standing Counsel Rahul Mehra opposed this argument and claimed that green cover has increased in the city. The bench listed the matter for further hearing on March 9. New Delhi: The Delhi high court on Monday observed that if "trees could vote they would not be hacked" for infrastructure projects. Hearing a PIL related to the rising air pollution in the city, HC also said that there should be a CAG audit of timber generated by encroachers or authorities for various projects in the national capital. HC told the government that wherever encroachments have been identified, the people there have to be relocated. Amicus Curiae Kailash Vasdev said that due to inaction by the government, forest cover has gone down since the encroachers keep felling trees to widen open area to settle in. "The income (from trees cut for timber) has to be accounted for, hence the need for CAG audit," the bench said. The court also took note of the fact that Delhi government has not adhered to timelines fixed early last year for identifying encroachments in the Asola-Bhati sanctuary and removing them. [Read more...](#)

Date: 07 March 2017

Source: <https://www.nyoooz.com>**'If Metros really reduce pollution, why is Delhi's air so toxic?'**

The Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation chief is of the opinion that while the "loss of 2,800 trees" might look horrifying, there are several environmental gains that will accrue from the under-construction Colaba-Seepz Metro project (Metro III). I beg to differ with several of her claims that were made in an interview with this newspaper yesterday. First of all, Mumbai's citizens, including yours truly, look forward to the setting up of a well-connected Metro network, but not in a manner that rides roughshod over environmental concerns. We cannot afford to have a model that is not environmentally inclusive in a city in which temperatures have touched 38 degrees even before summer has set in. Lesser trees mean higher temperatures. The justification that Metro systems reduce air pollution and traffic doesn't hold when you look at Delhi or Kolkata. Delhi, with its toxic air, despite having a great Metro network, is an example of how the myth stands exposed. And, then there are playgrounds that will be swallowed by Metro projects.... [Read more..](#)

Date: 08 March 2017

Source: <http://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com>**Mumbai civic polls: in F-North ward, the grass is not green**

Keki Limboowalla, 85, one of the oldest residents of Parsi Colony, Dadar, rues the polluted air that has now engulfed the green belt. Once known as green lung of the island city, the historic Five Gardens, Hindu Colony and Parsi Colony in the F-North ward breathe poison now because a large number of vehicles need to pass through Sion to reach the eastern and western suburbs, or the island city, and take detours through these areas. Air pollution seems to be a major concern for the citizens of the F-North ward — home to many senior citizens. Residents blamed the deteriorating air quality on ill maintained open spaces, which could have absorbed the increasing nitrogen levels to keep the air clean. "It is a known fact that open spaces in the region are not maintained. Citizens are rarely taken into confidence when any work is carried out on Five Gardens. Any changes to these open spaces affect us but we are rarely consulted," said Limboowalla, who has been residing in the area since 1932.... [Read more...](#)

Date: 13 March 2017

Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com>**Ancient Peoples shaped the Amazon rainforest**

Some of the trees species that are abundant in Amazonian forests today, like cacao, acai and Brazil nut, are probably common because they were planted by people who lived there long before the arrival of European colonists, says Nigel Pitam the Mellon Senior Conservation Ecologist at Chicago's Field Museum and a co-author of the study. The team made the discovery by overlaying data from more than 1000 Forest surveys on a map of more than 3000 archaeological sites across the Amazon. By comparing forest composition at varying distances from archaeological sites, the analysis generated the first Amazon-wide picture of how pre-columbian peoples influenced Amazonian biodiversity. The study focused on 85 tree species known to have been domesticated by Amazonian peoples for food, shelter, or other uses over the last several thousands years. The Researchers found that throughout the Amazon basin, these species were five times more likely to be common in mature upland forest than nondomesticated species. In some parts of the basin, domesticated species were found to be both more common and more diverse in forest closer to archaeological sites.... [Read more...](#)

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Executive Editor

Dr. Pankaj Kumar Srivastava

pankajk@nbri.res.in**Compiled By**

Dr. Shivani Srivastava, Yashpal Singh, Deepmala Yadav

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