



## News

**Moss-covered City Tree bench designed to combat urban pollution**

A mossy "living wall" with the pollution-absorbing power equivalent to hundreds of trees has been installed in London's Piccadilly Circus in a bid to combat the city's unsafe air quality levels. Designed by German startup Green City Solutions, the CityTree is billed by the company as the world's first intelligent biological air filter. It was created in response to research conducted by the startup, which revealed that approximately 9,000 Londoners and 50,000 Britons die prematurely each year from respiratory, cardiovascular and other illnesses associated with pollutants.

Each bench is equipped with a so-called "living wall", which is filled with a variety of moss types that naturally absorb pollution. The whole design takes up a fraction of the space that would be needed to yield the same air-purifying results using 275 real trees. "The ability of certain moss cultures to filter out and absorb air pollutants such as particulates and nitrogen dioxide makes them ideal air purifiers – but in towns and cities where air pollution presents the greatest challenge, mosses are barely able to survive, due to their need for constant water and shade," said the firm.....[Read more...](#)

**Date:** March 21, 2018

**Source:** <https://www.dezeen.com/>

**Bombay HC seeks report on charges of ecological damage by builder**

Bombay high court on Monday directed that a report by a two-member committee appointed to check allegations of ecological damage by developers of Nahar Amrit Shakti township in Chandivli be placed before it. A division bench of Justices Abhay Oka and Riyaz Chagla was hearing a public interest litigation filed by local resident, Prakash Agrawal, who alleged there was no environmental clearance for the project and a hillock was damaged by the builders.

The court has scheduled the matter for directions on April 4. "Between 2004-17, the developers constructed an area of over 5 lakh sq metres without required prior environmental clearance and social impact assessment in violation of principles of sustainable development," said the PIL. "Large structures have been constructed without necessary permission.....[Read more...](#)

**Date:** March 27, 2018

**Source:** <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

**Plants, fungi and bacteria work together to clean polluted land**

Highly complex interactions among roots, fungi and bacteria underlie the ability of some trees to clean polluted land, according to a novel study by bioinformatics and plant-biology experts from McGill University and Université de Montréal.

Fast-growing trees, such as willows, are known to tolerate and even rejuvenate soil contaminated with petroleum by-products or heavy metals. The clean-up of soil in this way is known as phytoremediation, and the process is commonly attributed to "secondary metabolism"—the production of specialized compounds in plants that helps them cope with environmental stress.

New findings by the Montreal researchers, published in the journal *Microbiome*, suggest that a more intricate symbiosis of microbial life underpins willows' ability to thrive in these stressful conditions. Using advanced techniques for analyzing the simultaneous expression of genes from multiple organisms in an ecosystem, the scientists examined the roots of willows grown on a polluted site in suburban Montreal. They found that complex interactions among a range of ectomycorrhizal fungi—which form symbiotic sheaths around the roots of plants—and certain bacteria appeared to drive the degradation of hydrocarbons in the ground.....[Read more...](#)

**Date:** March 28, 2018

**Source:** <https://phys.org/>

**Air pollution is a major cause of concern even inside your home; here's how to minimise it**

Add more plants to your decor and keep a tab on your appliances to keep a check on the indoor pollution at your home, say experts. Gita Ramanan, Architect and Interior Designer, Founder, Design Cafe, and Anuj Srivastava, Co-Founder and CEO, Livspace, share some tips. Plants not only brighten up a space, but also are a source of fresh air. These Indian plants: Areca Palm, Mother-in-Law's Tongue and Money Plant (all common names) will actually grow fresh air for you. Ensure you use low VOC (Volatile organic Compounds) paints in your home, which ensure that toxic gases and substances are not released indoors during hot/cold variations in temperature indoors. A common problem that is not addressed indoors is fixing your water leakages. Very often, we ignore water leakages into the home, which then allow the growth of fungus, mould, and mildew, which causes or worsens conditions such as asthma, wheezing, and sinus. Taking precautions such as fixing of leakages, maintenance repairs to prevent loss of heat/ cold indoors, will ensure better air quality inside. Keep a tab on your appliances. Appliances like your refrigerator and oven can emit.....[Read more...](#)

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