



PHOTO: STAR

Gono Sanghati stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Living with dirty air may boost heart attack risk

REUTERS, New York

Fatal heart attacks may be more likely among people who spend decades living in heavily polluted areas, Swedish researchers report.

While there was no association between people's exposure to various pollutants over a 30-year period and overall heart attack risk, such exposure did appear to be associated with a greater risk of fatal heart attack, especially heart attacks occurring outside hospitals, Mats Rosenlund of the Stockholm County Council and colleagues report.

The researchers also found that people who had ever lived in pollution "hot spots" with particularly dirty air had a 23 percent increased risk of heart attack, and a 40 percent increased risk of fatal heart attack.

The health effects of short-term exposure to air pollution are fairly well understood, but it is much less clear how long-term pollution exposure affects health, Rosenlund and associates point out in the journal *Epidemiology*.

Pollution exposure could contribute to heart attack risk by causing chronic inflammation, speeding the progression of atherosclerosis (hardening of the coronary arteries) and altering heart function, they note.

To investigate, they reviewed information on pollution exposure for 1,397 men and women living in Stockholm County who had suffered heart attacks for the first time between 1992 and 1994 and 1,870 healthy controls.

The researchers estimated carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide exposure by linking an

individual's address to historical data on emissions and atmospheric dispersion of the pollutants.

Overall, there was no link between pollution exposure and heart attack risk. However, the risk of fatal heart attacks appeared to have some association with pollution exposure, especially among people who died outside the hospital.

Heat wave epidemic in France, 22 die

AP, Paris

A wave of scorching heat across France has killed 22 people, a French health official was quoted as saying yesterday.

The head of France's Health Surveillance Institute, Gilles Brucker, told *Le Parisien* newspaper that the situation was not comparable with the deadly summer of 2003, when 15,000 people died from a heat wave, many of them elderly people left alone while families vacationed.

"However, the current situation is

rather serious," he said.

"Despite prevention measures, too many people are taking risks," he said. "But the heat wave epidemic is already killing people, it's already a reality for 22 people."

In a visit to central France, Health Minister Xavier Bertrand urged people to reach out to at-risk neighbors. He also asked surgeons and some other doctors who are planning to strike Monday to reconsider because of the heat.

"I need them in the operating rooms," he said. "I am ready to meet them, to talk with them."



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Besarkari Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote takes out a procession at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday demanding 100 per cent salary from the government exchequer.

