

# 'Air pollution level to rise in city this winter'

**BDNEWS, Dhaka**

The concentrated air contaminants will create havoc in the city in winter due to unabated movement of the diesel-run automobiles.

"Recently, we have carried out a study on 3,000 vehicles to test the heart ridge smoke unit and got diesel-based automobiles as gross polluting vehicles in the city," Dr Nasiruddin Ahmed, project director of the Air Quality Management Project (AQMP), told BDNEWS.

"We are going to propose the government to limit driving of the diesel-based old vehicles shortly," said Dr Nasir.

During the winter, smoke opacity reaches to 80 percent in the city, much above the international standard, he said adding, "The situation will prevail for 100 to 110 days."

According to environment experts, during the winter, contaminants accumulate and remain trapped close to the ground in the "breathing layer".

This unhealthy condition continues often until midmorning when the sun heats the earth surface, causing the pollutant-laden layer to expand and the contaminants to disperse, they said.

Dr Nasir said the government has

floated tender to establish nine portable air monitoring stations in six divisional headquarters to monitor the air quality round the clock following successes of three such stations set up earlier in Narayanganj and Rajarbagh and Tejgaon in the city.

The air of the city is getting polluted quickly due to re-run of diesel-based vehicles (human haulers, maxis, rickshaws) following withdrawal of 2-stroke engines in 2003.

"We don't have equipment to test particulate matters (PM) lower than 2.5 micron," he said, adding, "pollution reading level could have been much higher if we have modern equipment."

As short-term effects, winter air pollution affect lung and blood circulation of the city residents, particularly, children. Asthma and respiratory problems will also increase during the winter, Dr Nasir added.

"Per capita health cost becomes three US dollar a day during winter for the Dhaka residents," he said quoting a World Bank study.

The environment department will pay close attention to curb pollution stemming from the engines during the winter, he added.

## Bangla advocacy toolkits on HIV/Aids

**BDNEWS, Dhaka**

The Unesco will distribute Bangla advocacy toolkits on HIV/Aids among the education officers throughout the country.

The distribution will take place through 20 workshops on "HIV/Aids and education" to be held in 20 districts.

The first workshop will be held at 9:00am today at the conference hall of the Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco (BNCU) at BANBEIS Bhaban in the city.

## Experts visit NUST site

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

A team of experts from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), Dhaka University and BFIDC recently visited the site of Noakhali University of Science and Technology (NUST) which is under construction at Sonapur in Noakhali.

The team included Buet Vice-chancellor Prof Mohammad Alee Murtaza and Prof Abul Khair, project director of NUST, a priority project of the prime minister.

The team suggested the engineers and the consultants to optimise the utility in constructing the entire complex including academic buildings, dormitories, libraries and labs.