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World news in brief



A man wears a mask in the Honduran capital Tegucigalpa as pollution levels spike (AFP via Getty)

Pollution kills 135 million people in four decades

Air pollution caused around 135 million premature deaths worldwide in the past four decades, one of the most expansive studies to date has found. Researchers from Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, who examined data from 1980 to 2020, said Asia had the highest number of premature deaths caused by pollution at over 98 million, with the bulk in China and India.

In a report published in the journal *Environment International*, the researchers blamed the deaths on high concentrations of

PM2.5, fine particulate matter that can penetrate the lungs and enter the bloodstream, causing chronic diseases such as asthma and bronchitis as well as heart attacks and strokes. They also found that weather patterns like El Niño and changes in ocean temperatures made the impact of air pollution worse.

Steve Yim, an associate professor at Nanyang's Asian School of the Environment, who led the study, said: "This highlights the need to understand and account for these climate patterns when tackling air pollution to protect the health of the global population."