

# Dust, smoke eclipse Indirapuram

**POLLUTION** Residents say NGT orders flouted, garbage burning and construction debris on roads a common sight in the area



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**GHAZIABAD:** Residents of Indirapuram are struggling with increasing air pollution. Dust from numerous construction sites in the area pollute the air and garbage burning is also a routine activity in the area.

The authorities seem to have turned a blind eye to the issue despite the national green tribunal's (NGT) orders in September prohibiting burning of garbage.

Residents are restricted to their homes as smoke from the burning garbage and dust from construction sites have made it difficult for them to get a breath of fresh air. Residents say they also have to keep the windows and doors of their homes closed. I feel uneasy when I go out for an hour-long walk in the area. The pollution also affects the greenery. Plants along the roads look lifeless," said Anil Rathore, a resident of Ahinsa Khand-1.

One of the most rapidly developing areas of the city, Indirapuram is the worst affected by this crisis.

"Every year, a new residential complex is developed here. Areas which were designated for community facilities and recreational activities are being turned into construction sites for sky-high buildings. Movement of heavy vehicles carrying construction material and debris, which pollute the air, is common here," said Alok Kumar from apartment owners' association (AOA), Indirapuram.

Vehicular pollution, especially from those on NH-24 and those stuck in jams on internal roads, is another matter of concern. "The rise in population is leading to a rise in vehicles. This contributes to the already-high level of pollution as well as congestion on roads," said Shalini Sinha, a resident of Gyan Khand-3, Indirapuram.

"The removal of construction material would be undertaken soon in Indirapuram. The issue of burning municipal solid waste near Kanawani will be looked into and action taken," said RS Diwakar, executive engineer, GDA.



■ Residents are restricted to their homes as smoke from the burning garbage has made it difficult for them to step out.

SAKIB ALI/HT PHOTO

## they say

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ALOK KUMAR, apartment owners' association, Indirapuram

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NEERAJ VIRMANI, resident of Sector 77, Noida

## Noida suffers ill-effects of rampant construction

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**NOIDA:** Rampant dumping of construction debris on roadsides in most of the newly developed sectors of Noida has become a serious health concern for residents.

People living in these areas complain that they are experiencing respiratory and skin-related problems due to excessive air pollution.

The worst affected sectors include 74, 75, 76 and 77. The areas have many newly constructed and under-construction housing societies. Over 10,000 people are estimated to have shifted to newly built houses in the areas in the past few years.

Residents said construction material is often dumped in the open which makes the area dusty.

"Construction debris has

been dumped on the road just 50 metres from our society. Children and the elderly find it difficult to go out as it is dusty," said Amit Gupta, a resident of Prateek Wisteria, Sector 77.

"We do not even open our windows as layers of dust get deposited inside the house within hours," Gupta said.

Residents complained that the Noida authority and the district administration have turned a deaf ear to their complaints.

"We have been writing to the authorities for the past six months but no action has been taken so far. The builders are openly flouting the National Green Tribunal (NGT) norms for construction activities," said Neeraj Virmani, a resident of Sector 77.

In April this year, the NGT had issued strict directives to check pollution caused by



■ The worst affected sectors include Sectors 74, 75, 76 and 77. Debris is dumped on roadsides in these areas.

SUNIL GHOSH/HT PHOTO

construction activities. The bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar had directed builders to ensure that scaffolding around every building is covered with tarpaulin, to stop stor-

ing construction material on roads and keep them covered at construction sites and during transportation.

"The area has over 3,000 occupied flats, while around 40,000 flats are under construc-

tion. Neither is the under-construction buildings covered with tarpaulin sheets nor is water sprinkled on debris to keep dust from flying. Only one or two under-construction buildings that are near the main road have been covered with tarpaulin to evade action by the authorities," said Ravi Singh, a resident of Sector 74.

When questioned about the situation, Gautam Budh Nagar district magistrate NP Singh said strict action will be taken against people flouting norms.

"We are taking this issue seriously. I am soon going to hold a meeting with Noida authority officials and the police in this regard. They will visit the affected areas and fine those who are found flouting the NGT norms. Recently, challans were issued for some trucks which were found dumping debris in the open," Singh said.