

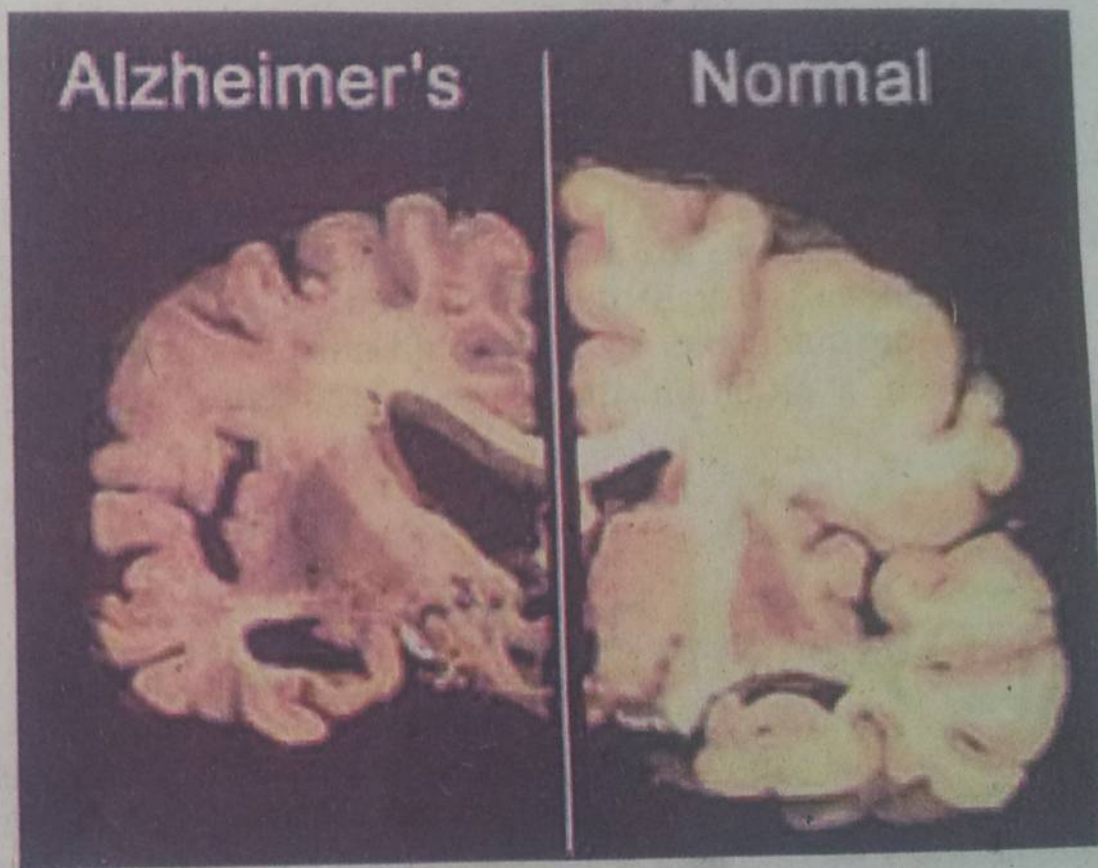
Study of exhaust particles hints at Alzheimer's risk

PARIS: Microscopic particles, possibly from air pollution, have been found in human brain tissue, according to a new study which flagged an Alzheimer's risk.

The study authors urged further research into any "possible hazard to human health", even as outside experts cautioned it was premature to draw a definitive link between the particles and neurodegenerative disease.

A team of scientists from Britain, Mexico and the United States conducted magnetic tests on frozen brain tissue obtained from 37 people aged three to 92. They found nanoparticles of magnetite, a form of iron ore, which looked different from those which are formed naturally by the human brain.

Instead, the particles showed "compelling similar-



A cross-section of a normal brain (right) and another one damaged by advanced Alzheimer's disease. — PHOTO: AP

ity" to particulate matter formed by fuel combustion, found in urban air pollution — from car exhausts, factory fumes and indoor cooking fires, said the team.

"Previous work has shown a correlation between the amount of brain magnetite and the incidence of Alzheimer's disease," they wrote. — AFP

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