

# Dust storm shrouds Tokyo in haze

March 10 2013

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Tokyo's Ginza shopping district is hit by a dust storm on March 10, 2013. A huge dust storm hit Tokyo Sunday, blanketing the city with brown dust that darkened the skies and rapidly transformed what had been a clear and sunny day.

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Visibility in the capital deteriorated quickly as dry dust particles whirled through the air.

Meteorologists said the phenomenon was caused by a sudden cold front, and was not linked with the suffocating pollution that hung over the Chinese capital Beijing last winter.

"A rapidly developing low pressure system in the north was moving down south. It was bringing a snow storm in the north, and strong winds in Tokyo and surrounding areas," said a meteorologist at the Japan Meteorological Agency.

"In the Kanto region (Tokyo and surrounding areas), the strong winds picked up dry [dust particles](#) from the ground, which lowered visibility," he said.

The phenomenon was expected to be temporary, and rain should strip the dust from the air, he said.

Japan and other regional countries have voiced concern about the impact of [airborne pollution](#) drifting from their influential neighbor.

The toxic haze that periodically blankets parts of China has been blamed on emissions from coal burning in power stations but also on fumes from vehicles on the traffic-clogged streets of the world's largest largest [auto market](#).

Media reports have said that environment ministers from Japan, China and South Korea will meet in May will discuss ways to combat [air pollution](#).

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