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## Coimbatore city to be made 'No Smoking' zone by January

K.V. Prasad

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*An air quality monitoring will be done in the city*

*Students will be a part of an awareness drive*

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COIMBATORE: The Coimbatore Corporation is embarking on an ambitious proposal to make the entire city a "No Smoking" zone by January next year.

A combination of enforcement and education measures will be taken up to rid the city of the menace of smoking, Assistant City Health Officer R. Sumathi says.

The project was cleared on Thursday after discussions with Mayor R. Venkatachalam and

Corporation Commissioner Anshul Mishra. Special enforcement squads of the Corporation will be formed to crack down on violation of anti-smoking rules. Enforcement of rules that forbid smoking in public places and the sale of tobacco products near educational institutions, sensitisation of the public to the dangers of tobacco use and also passive smoking are some of the measures that will be taken to meet the objective of the programme.

Mary Anne Charitable Trust has teamed up with the Corporation to carry out this programme. Already into a similar project in Chennai city, the trust will begin the one in Coimbatore with an opinion poll on smoking, says its Executive Director Cyril Alexander. An air quality monitoring will be done in the city and an intensive awareness drive on the hazards of smoking will be carried out. Students will be a part of this drive.

The trust will form four zone-level teams that will fan out to various parts of the city to seek the views of the public on the habit of smoking and on how it can be avoided.

"The aim is to get at least 2,500 samples of survey over the next five to six days," says Mr. Alexander. The survey will cover public places, offices and various other establishments.

Officials and staff of the Health Department will be given orientation on the rules.

The Corporation and the Trust will do a stock taking in January of the measures taken this month and in December, with focus on both awareness and enforcement.