

War on tobacco comes to the city

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Deepa Suryanarayan

Next week marks an exciting time for health activists who have been fighting against tobacco. For the first time, the city will host the prestigious 14th World Conference on Tobacco or Health (WCTOH) from March 8 to 12.

The conference will see anti-tobacco advocates, health experts, scientists and educators from all over the world come together.

"We aim to develop awareness and build a network for stronger action against tobacco," said Dr PC Gupta, president of the conference.

Campaigns initiated in the past have not been sustainable for various reasons. However, the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act 2008 is a very good law. Along with this, the ban on smoking in public places is also in place, which is a good start, said Dr Pankaj Chaturvedi, associate professor, head and neck cancer surgeon, Tata Memorial Hospital.

"We have also received support from BMC, police, BEST and the government. The government has given a framework. Now it is up to the citizens to implement it," said Padmini Somani, director, Salaam Bombay Foundation.