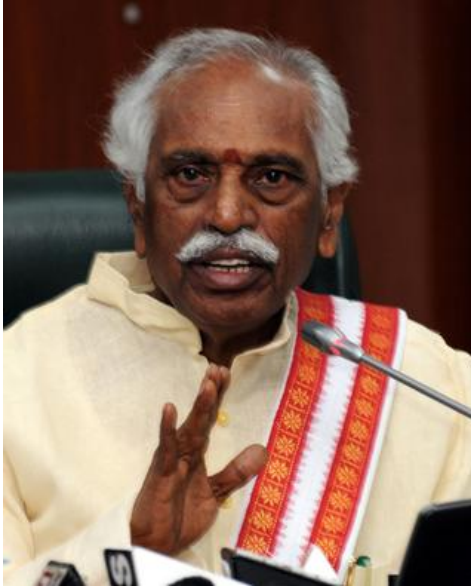


## Regional conferences to sensitise States on labour laws to be held

- Special Correspondent



*Managements found erring will attract hefty penalties and imprisonment: Dattatreya*

The Union Labour and Employment Ministry has decided to conduct six regional conferences across the country to sensitise the officials concerned about stringent enforcement of labour laws in different sectors.

Union Minister Bandaru Dattatreya said these conferences would be conducted in east, west, south, north and central India in addition to one in north eastern States and the dates will be finalised soon. Officials of the concerned departments as also the Ministers would attend the conferences to deliberate on the enforcement related aspects.

Responding to queries on the inadequate manpower for ensuring adherence to the existing laws, he said the Union government would entrust the State governments responsibilities of inspection and enforcement of the provisions. He outlined the various initiatives launched by the NDA government, including amendments to some key labour legislations, during the last two years.

Extension of maternity benefits to women to 26 weeks and amendment to prevent employing children below the age of 14 were among the legislations brought out by the present dispensation.

These amendments, he said, would mandate strict adherence by the managements, failing which they would attract penal provisions including hefty penalties and imprisonment. “Three of the eight legislations passed during the just-concluded monsoon session pertained to my Ministry. This reflects the importance attached to safeguard the interests of the working class,” he said.

### **Social security**

He informed that his Ministry had chalked out plans to launch health benefits and social security schemes covering the domestic workers. The scheme would be introduced on a pilot basis in New Delhi and Hyderabad and would be scaled up to other places based on the success. As part of the scheme, the employers or NGOs could contribute a nominal amount of Rs. 600 each on behalf of the workers and they would be entitled to medical services provided by the ESIC in addition to enrolment into the provident fund scheme.

An exclusive scheme catering to Anganwadi, ASHA and midday meal workers was also underway wherein they would be entitled to avail services of the ESIC.

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