

CS reviews implementation of 4 new Labour Codes

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the implementation status of the four new Labour Codes, one of India's most significant labour reforms aimed at simplifying compliance systems and improving worker welfare across Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary Labour & Employment, Secretary IT, Secretary Law, Labour Commissioner, Director Industries & Commerce Jammu and other senior officers. CS noted that consolidation of multiple labour legislations into four streamlined codes marks a major milestone in enhancing the ease of doing business while reinforcing rights and protections for the workforce.

He called for strengthening the institutional and legal frameworks required for the smooth adoption of these codes in the UT. Stressing the importance of stakeholder outreach, he directed the Labour & Employment Department to

roll out a sustained IEC campaign and undertake comprehensive capacity-building programmes for employers, workers and implementing agencies.

The Chief Secretary also emphasised the need to ensure full integration with the National Labour Portal so that the reforms are implemented uniformly and transparently. The Chief Secretary further instructed the department to expedite amendments in rules and issue all essential notifications to ensure that compliance under the new regime becomes faster, easier and less cumbersome for all stakeholders.

On this occasion Secretary, Labour & Employment, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, explained that 44 Central labour laws have now been subsumed into four comprehensive codes, creating a unified and modern regulatory framework. He informed that the Code on Wages, 2019 streamlines legislation relating to minimum wages, wage payment, bonus and equal remuneration, ensuring a statutory minimum wage for every worker and introducing a national floor

wage to bring uniformity across sectors. The code also eliminates gender-based discrimination, explicitly protecting transgender workers, and shifts minor offences from criminal to monetary penalties to prevent harassment.

Regarding the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 it was revealed that the same integrates laws governing trade unions, standing orders and industrial disputes, providing a single framework for industrial relations.

It introduces fixed-term employment with benefits at par with permanent staff, raises the applicability threshold for Standing Orders from establishments with 100 to 300 workers and provides for two-member Industrial Tribunals to expedite dispute resolution. It also mandates a 14-day notice period for strikes and lockouts and lays down clearer criteria for recognising trade unions.

The Secretary further explained that the Social Security Code, 2020 consolidates nine major social security laws related to EPF, ESI, gra-

tuity, maternity benefits, employment exchanges and welfare boards. It extends social security to gig workers, platform workers and other unorganised sector workers, who are formally recognised for the first time.

The code also establishes a dedicated Social Security Fund for unorganised workers, reduces EPF appeal deposits to ease employer burden and expands the definition of dependents to include grandparents and in-laws for female employees. Likewise, the Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions (OSH&WC) Code, 2020 merges 13 laws on workplace safety and working conditions, enabling single electronic registration for establishments with 10 or more workers, ensuring uniform safety standards across industries and simplifying licensing procedures through a consolidated framework. It also strengthens protections for contract labour and interstate migrant workers.

Further the Labour Commissioner, Charandeep Singh informed the meeting

that the rationalisation of labour laws has led to a substantial reduction in compliance requirements. He noted that the number of sections has been reduced from 1,228 to 480, rules from 1,436 to 351, registrations from eight to one, and licenses from four to one.

Similarly, the number of forms has come down from 181 to 73, registers from 84 to eight and returns from 31 to a single consolidated return. The number of sections prescribing imprisonment has been reduced from 87 to 22, and new mechanisms such as improvement notices and compounding of offences have been introduced to prioritise corrective measures over punitive action.



GMC Jammu to host APCON 2025-a historic academic event in Pathology Education today

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Postgraduate Department of Pathology, Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu, announced that it is set to host the prestigious 73rd Annual Conference of the Indian Association of Pathologists and Microbiologists (IAPM) and the Indian Academy of Pathology - Indian Division (IAP-ID) - APCON 2025 - scheduled from 3rd to 7th December 2025 at GMC Jammu.

Addressing a press conference, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, Principal & Dean, GMC Jammu, said, "Hosting APCON 2025 is a moment of immense pride for GMC Jammu. This conference will bring together the finest minds in pathology and significantly strengthen our academic and diagnostic ecosystem. It reflects our commitment to advancing precision pathology and improving patient care across the



Principal & Dean, GMC Jammu Dr. Ashutosh Gupta briefing media.

region."

Dr. Gupta highlighted that 21 free hands-on workshops have been arranged for capacity building in advanced diagnostic practices. "These workshops, led by eminent national and international faculty, will benefit nearly 600 participants," he said. Of the 21 workshops, two will be conducted at AIIMS Jammu, one at SMVDU Kakryal, and 18 across various departments of GMC Jammu.

He added that the academic endeavour will "greatly

enhance knowledge upgradation, modernize diagnostic modalities, and contribute to more targeted therapeutic planning." On 4th December 2025, IAP-ID will host its prestigious one-day international conference, expected to attract nearly 1000 delegates. This will be followed by the three-day flagship IAPM conference from 5th to 7th December, featuring eight parallel scientific halls hosting orations, CMEs, panel discussions, paper and poster presentations, and high-level

deliberations.

For the first time, APCON will host both the IAPM Undergraduate Pathology Quiz - Final Round and the PG Quiz - Final Round, with results to be announced on 7th December.

The inaugural ceremony, scheduled for 4th December at 5:30 PM, will be inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor of J&K, Manoj Sinha. Guest of Honour will include Arvind Gupta, MLA Jammu West, and Syed Abid, Commissioner Secretary, Health & Medical Education. Leaders of national pathology bodies, including Dr. Usha Kinni, Dr. Ranjan Agrawal, Dr. Harendra Kumar, Dr. Reeni Malik, and Dr. Varsha Dhume, will also attend. Concluding the briefing, Dr. Gupta said, "APCON 2025 is not just an event - it is a milestone for Jammu & Kashmir, positioning GMC Jammu as a national centre of academic excellence in pathology."

Bikram Chowk Subway reopens for commuters

■ MAALU SHARMA

The noise of vehicles at Bikram Chowk had always defined life for those who lived and worked near Jammu's busiest intersection. This pedestrian underpass, when built with grand intentions, had suffered a slow decline into a damp, dimly lit passage citizens quickly learned to fear and avoid.

This morning, however, the Chowk's soundtrack had a counter-melody: the sound of hopeful footsteps at the subway.

The revival of subway brings relief to commuters. Shreya, a college girl and one of those who earlier played 'Frogger' twice a day, crossing the deadly junction to get to her stop, was the one first to get to the subway. As she went down the stale air had vanished and was replaced by a cool, anti-septic efficiency of modern ventilation. But the sense of safety wasn't only aesthetic; it was structural. Perched above the entrance and every fifty feet down the long curve were sleek, black domes of the new CCTV surveillance system. For female commuters, who had always worried about harassment in the old, dark corners, the CCTV cameras are the strongest deterrent.

"Before, this was a place you ran through," said Sunita Sharma, a retired



bank employee and an evening walker: Now we could confidently use the passage for access to the other side. She added, "Now, it is a path you walk with confidence. The lights show us the way, and the cameras ensure we are watched over. It is the perfect coordination of civic convenience and security."

The real testimony was from the vendors operating in the area. Ramesh, who sell fruits near the Chowk for decades, shared,

"Earlier, customers would risk their life for a five-minute errand. The underpass was a ghost town. But now, the flow is smooth, constant, and safe."

Locals appreciate that the authorities didn't just clean it; they put technology in place to protect it for the future. The reopening of the Vikram Chowk underpass turned a liability into an asset, finally allowing the people of Jammu to walk beneath the chaos with confidence and security.

Punjab facing state of 'economic emergency': Chugh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Tuesday strongly criticised the Punjab Government for the continuous decline in capital expenditure, saying that under Bhagwant Mann, the state has sunk into severe financial disorder-almost an economic emergency.

In a statement, Chugh said that in the first half of the 2025-26 financial year, Punjab's capital expenditure fell by 36 percent to merely Rs. 1,760 crore, and the government could spend only 17 percent of its own budgeted provision. This, he said, clearly shows that the government has failed on every front and is more focused on political theatrics and serving the so-called Tihar Gang Trio in Delhi than on fulfilling its responsibility towards the people of Punjab.



Chugh said the persistent fall in capital expenditure under the AAP Government has become an alarming signal for the state's economy. He said that incomplete roads, stalled projects, shrinking job opportunities, and a collapsing basic infrastructure all reflect a government that has gone into deep slumber. The decline in capital expenditure, he said, directly means halted roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, and development projects across the

state. It means the pace of development has come to a standstill, industries and investors are avoiding Punjab, and both rural and urban infrastructure have begun to suffer, he added.

Chugh said the government's approach has pushed Punjab into the category of states that are steadily falling behind in development.

He said the financial condition of Punjab has deteriorated to the extent that the government is no longer able to spend on development. With no serious financial management in place, the state's economy has entered a dangerous phase. He warned that this crisis is shaking Punjab's financial credibility and will increase the cost of borrowing in the future, and will directly impact public services and essential facilities.

Calling it nothing less than an

"economic emergency," Chugh said the government is busy misleading people while the reality is that there is no development visible on the ground. He demanded accountability from the government, asking where the money has actually gone. Why is Punjab's capital expenditure declining so sharply? Why are thousands of crores kept for development not being spent? Is the government incapable, or is the money being diverted elsewhere? He said the people of Punjab have every right to know where their hard-earned tax money is being spent if not on development.



JMC Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav and others during the programme.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Under the Wall of Shame initiative, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) on Tuesday organized an impactful street play near Jewel Chowk Science College to spread awareness about cleanliness and responsible civic behavior. School students from St. Peters also participated enthusiastically. They painted on the surrounding walls, transforming the black spot into an

attraction for the visitors. The location, which was previously neglected and often used for open urination, emitted foul odors and remained unhygienic, was transformed to create public awareness. Natrang artists, along with school students, presented engaging street plays educating people about the importance of not throwing garbage or urinating in the open. The students further contributed by creating vibrant

and meaningful wall paintings that promoted hygiene and civic responsibility.

Commissioner, Municipal Corporation Jammu, Dr. Devansh Yadav, was present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Yadav stressed the need for collective participation to maintain cleanliness across the city. He said, "Every section of society-children, youth, elderly and women-must come forward to ensure cleanliness. Only when we all will become aware and stop spreading filth then our future generations inherit a clean and healthy environment. Without this collective effort, the dream of the Swachh Bharat Mission will remain incomplete."

The event also witnessed the presence of Joint Commissioner Health & Sanitation, Abdul Sattar, Health Officer, Dr. Vinod Sharma, Incharge IEC, Dr. Divya Sharma, Compost-cum-Transport Officers, Dharamveer Singh, Ranjan Sharma, school students, teachers, swachhta champions and local residents, all of whom contributed to the success of the awareness program.

Satish inaugurates Rooftop Solar Power Plant at JK Cable Car Corporation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: With a view towards strengthening the Jammu & Kashmir's renewable energy ecosystem, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, was on Tuesday inaugurated the 143 KW Grid-Connected Rooftop Solar Power Plant installed at the JK Cable Car Corporation, Bahu Jammu.

The inauguration-cum-awareness programme was organized by the Jammu & Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA) under the aegis of Science & Technology Department.

The event was attended by MLA Vikram Randhawa, CEO JAKEDA Dr. P.R.Dhar, Additional CEO JAKEDA senior officials from JAKEDA, Science & Technology Department, officers of JK Cable Car Corporation, engineers, project staff and local stakeholders.

The newly commissioned 143 KW rooftop solar plant is part of the UT's broader agenda to adopt renewable energy technologies across the government buildings and public infrastructure.

Having an Installed Capacity



Cabinet Minister Satish Sharma inaugurating solar power plant.

of 143 KW, the project costs ₹74.55 lakh and will generate 1.83 lakh units annually saving around ₹15 lakh through reduced electricity expenditure. It will also ensure reduction of 1.33 lakh kilograms of CO₂ emissions annually and has a System Life Expectancy of 25 years or more.

Speaking at the event, Satish Sharma said that the inauguration of this solar project marks a significant milestone in Jammu & Kashmir's march towards energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. He emphasized that the government is focused on accelerating the transition from conventional, fossil-fuel-based power sources to non-polluting renewable alternatives.

The Minister added that the solar plant at JK Cable Car Corporation will serve as a

demonstration model for other departments, showcasing how rooftop solar installations can drastically reduce operational costs, reduce carbon footprints and improve energy self-reliance.

Satish Sharma further highlighted the vision of the government to ensure large-scale adoption of rooftop solar systems and expansion of decentralized renewable energy solutions. This will strengthening the capacity of government institutions to reduce energy dependency, facilitating a cleaner and greener development trajectory for Jammu & Kashmir, he added.

The Minister also reviewed the operational readiness of the plant, interacted with the engineers and technical teams. He stressed the importance of periodic monitoring, system upkeep

and skill enhancement for ensuring long-term efficiency.

Satish Sharma directed the JAKEDA and the Science & Technology Department to identify more government buildings for immediate rooftop solar installation besides ensur-

ing timely completion of ongoing solar projects. He also called for strengthening awareness programmes for the public and institutional users and promote clean energy solutions across urban and rural pockets of Jammu and Kashmir.

LG presented with book 'Kashmir in the Line of Fire'



Major General Ranjan Mahajan (Retd.) presenting book to LG Manoj Sinha.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha was on Tuesday presented with a book authored by Major General Ranjan Mahajan (Retd.). The title of the book is "Kashmir in the Line of

Fire". The book provides a deeper understanding of Kashmir's historical, cultural, and strategic significance. It presents a compelling narrative that blends strategic insight with deeply moving human stories.