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2010 work comes under scrutiny

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Kea' Modimoeng

THE two-day international Multi-Sectoral Conference on "decent work in the 2010 World Cup" starts today at the Parktonian Hotel in Joburg.

The conference is hosted by the Building and Woodworkers' International, a federation of 318 construction trade unions around the world , and includes Cosatu affiliate, the National Union of Mineworkers.

Minister of Labour Membathisi Mdladlana will deliver the keynote address. Other speakers include Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi, Fifa international relations manager Itumeleng Dlamini, and Joni Musabayana, deputy director of the International Labour Organisation.

University of Cape Town academics Shane Godfrey and Pamhidzai Bamu of the Labour and Enterprise Policy Research Group will launch their research into labour broking in the stadiums today.



The two researchers found that construction companies prefer labour brokers because they save them the trouble of having to lay off workers in the "slow season". The research found that workers become completely disposable and can be replaced instantly should their bosses become displeased with them.

Bamu and Godfrey said: "Using labour brokers dispenses with the problems of unfair dismissal and retrenchment costs and a procedure, as the client has complete freedom to circumscribe the duration of the contract.

They also found that where sub-contractors are paid per unit of work done, "they do not employ enough skilled workers and tend to rely on unskilled workers whom they pay R80 per day".

This "compromises quality and efficiency", they said.

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