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## Labour broker ban 'will see jobless soar'

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Mawande Jack LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

TEMPORARY employment agencies and labour experts have warned of huge job losses if trade unions succeed in pushing the government to legislate a total ban on labour brokers.

Adcorp Holdings chief executive Richard Pike said the number of job losses should the temporary employment services industry be banned would be so high that it would make the current spate of retrenchments pale into "insignificance".

Affiliates of Cosatu are expected to engage in a countrywide mass protest today towards a final push to have the industry totally banned, as in Namibia.

Workers will hold pickets and lunch-hour demonstrations at various plants in Port Elizabeth and the Eastern Cape, said National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) general secretary Irvin Jim. He said all attempts by the union to have the industry regulated "have failed", hence the resort to a total ban.

Labour broking in South Africa is a R20-billion industry which provides temporary jobs to about 500000 assignees a day.

Labour analyst Prof Eddie Webster warned of "unintended consequences" if the banning of labour brokers took place.

He said the government should first examine how the practice of labour brokers had been dealt with in other parts of the world.

The Wits University academic will present a paper on "Policy framework for the progressive realisation of the goal of decent work" today when the Federation of Unions of SA (Fedusa) celebrates the World Day of Decent Work.

The decent work campaign is part of the International Trade Union Confederation's (ITUC's) efforts towards ending precarious work, which includes labour broking.

Another labour law consultancy, Andrew Levy and Associates, also warned of huge unemployment problems if the ban took effect, as the industry "serves a useful purpose".

Levy said he was in support of the Confederation of Associations in the Private Employment Sector (Capes) to have the industry regulated.

Capes spokesman John Botha was adamant that what was at issue was the lack of effective law enforcement on the part of the Labour Department, rather than transgressions by labour brokers.

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