



Patel working on policies to enhance decent work
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Economic Development Minister, Ibrahim Patel says the issue of decent work is at the absolute centre of economic policy and in line with the current debate on labour brokers. Patel says he is working on economic policies that will enhance decent work, as opposed to existing forms of temporary work and poor pay, which are often experienced under labour brokers.

The Economic Development Ministry is holding a series of policy discussions about challenges to economic growth in South Africa. Labour unions and the ANC have called for the banning of labour brokers - accusing them of exploiting workers, poor pay and no job security. The economic development minister has joined the debate on labour brokering.

“The Department of Labour is doing the legislative work on labour brokering. But, what economic development is trying to do is to develop economic policies that enforce decent work that in fact does not reproduce the insecurity in the labour market that we currently see,” says Patel.

Patel is using research into income inequalities and the rising gap between the rich and the poor since 1994, as a cornerstone of his policy

Meanwhile, the Congress of the People (COPE) says the outright banning of labour brokers will make the unemployment situation in the country worse. COPE's national spokesperson Philip Dexter says the exploitation of workers is not exclusive to the labour broker industry, it also happens to permanent employees. He says there must be a register of all labour brokers and the industry needs to be properly regulated, by itself and by the labour department.

The Democratic Alliance says there is a need to address the allegations of exploitation of temporary workers by labour brokers. The party's spokesperson on Labour, Andrew Louw, says however that there is a place for labour brokers and temporary workers in the labour market.

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