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Department to assist Wits students

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THE Gauteng department of infrastructure development has come to the rescue of desperate Wits University students battling to find accommodation.

Department MEC Jacob Mamabolo made the announcement during his budget vote in the legislature in Johannesburg yesterday.

"Before universities reopen next month, working with the Department of Higher Education, we will be leasing the first building to assist Wits University to meet its challenge of students who need accommodation urgently," Mamabolo said.

He also announced that the department would now be able to effect 30-day payments to service providers as systems were now in place to remove bottlenecks and delays.

Mamabolo said the department had allocated R2.5bn to drive their 12-point plan as part of their contribution to the realisation of the popular and overarching vision of Transformation, Modernisation and Re-Industrialisation and the targets outlined by Premier David Makhura.

Mamabolo said that construction and built environment were highly regulated.

"If we do not enforce compliance, we will have similar problems like those recently experienced in Britain with a building that burned and killed so many people.

"If we do not enforce confidence, we will have problems like those we had at Charlotte Maxeke, where a roof col-



COMING TO THE RESCUE: MEC Jacob Mamabolo announced plans to help Wits students with accommodation. PICTURE: TWITTER

lapsed due to non-compliance by the contractor."

He said that the department cannot accept short cuts or rush projects at the expense of compliance.

Mamabolo said Project Readiness Matrix (PRM) will help the department manage construction sites in the most formalised and effective manner and with full compliance.

"The Charlotte Maxeke roof collapse has exposed the fact that our project managers relied too much on the service providers and were not playing their part in managing construction

project sites," Mamabolo said.

"We have now adopted as part of the PRM standards for construction site management with clear guidelines."

Mamabolo announced that the department had developed capacity to use their completed property portfolio for the immovable asset register valued at R32bn to provide land necessary for infrastructure delivery.

Meanwhile, economic development, environment, agriculture and rural development MEC Lebogang Maile said the budget allocation is R916m.

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