

Workers refuse to enter building

By **KARABO RAMMUTLA**

EARLY this month, a Gauteng Health Department building in Joburg caught fire!

Three firefighters lost their lives while fighting the flames.

It was later found that the building was not compliant with health and safety standards.

After the incident, most workers were reluctant to enter buildings that did not meet standards.

Since Monday, workers at the department of health in Tshwane have refused to enter the dilapidated building and downed tools.

They were led by the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union and Public Servants Association of South Africa to voice their concerns and frustrations.

Public Servants chairman Peter Moloi said challenges in the building included a leaking roof, falling ceilings, broken air conditioners and lifts that didn't work.

He said a report revealed that the building complied with only 20% of work environ-



Health Department workers staged a walkout of their building, saying the building was unhealthy and dangerous.

Photo by Morapedi Mashashe

ment requirements.

"We will not wait to die but will refuse to enter the building," he said.

The department announced on Monday that it was working with the department of public works to identify another building, where the 1 200 workers would be moved.

Health department spokesman Popo Maja said the move would only be temporary while construction workers repaired all the problems identified by engineers and inspectors from public works.

The workers said they would wait to be addressed by Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.