

# System tackles workers' issues

**By STHEMBISO LEBUSO**

EXPANDED public works programme beneficiaries can look forward to faster payment with a new biometric system.

The system was launched by the Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development yesterday. The flip side is, government will be able to monitor workers closely when they clock in and out of work.

Speaking at the Lutsinga Infrastructure House in Joburg, MEC Jacob Mamabolo said the new identity system used a combination of facial and fingerprint recognition to identify workers. He said his department had been working to modernise the programme to help beneficiaries enjoy being part of it.

The programme has been plagued by allegations of workers not being paid on time or not in full and also by reports of managers exploiting people to get sexual favours.

The MEC said the new system would help deal with such cases.

“Beneficiaries will be registered on the system. We will have all their details and where they are supposed to be stationed. We will be able to track how long they work, are they coming to work, are they working the specified hours, and that they are paid on time.”

Mamobolo said ghost workers would also be eliminated. He said supervisors would still need to ensure workers did actual work.

Chairwoman of the infrastructure oversight portfolio committee, Lindiwe Lasindwa, welcomed the new system but said it should also reach informal areas.

Worker Musa Mtshali (45) from Orange Farm, south of Joburg, hoped they would now get pay slips to apply for loans and get UIF.