

GP leading in housing delivery - Mmemezi

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11 Jun 2012

JOHANNESBURG: Gauteng is leading the other eight provinces in terms of building houses and upgrading hostels, says Local Government and Housing MEC Humphrey Mmemezi.

"As Gauteng, we are still far ahead of other provinces in terms of building houses and upgrading hostels for the poor, it's a fact, we are the best and we are followed by KwaZulu-Natal," he said.

"There is no other upgrading that can equal that of Jabulani in Soweto, even those that we've earmarked to upgrade in Wardville, Kwamazibuko and Thokoza will not be matched," said Mmemezi.

The MEC was speaking during a site inspection at the Sethokga Hostel in Tembisa where 214 hostel family units are being built. The building of the new and modern three blocks has already reached the roof level and the interior of most rooms have been plastered.

Mmemezi, who is himself a former hostel dweller, said he was happy with the progress being made at the construction site.

"I am delighted to see the job that has been done so far because these people are not doing a shabby job - once completed, our people will be moved out of the old and dilapidating hostels. We are not talking theory here because sometimes theory does not help, we are in real action," he said.

The three floor units comprise one and two rooms with a kitchen and a shower and they are being constructed adjacent to the old dilapidated hostels and not far away from Oakmoor train station.

The new hostel residents will be expected to pay a monthly fee, said Mmemezi, adding that prices will differ per unit across the province.

"We want to make [that] clear because our people who have been staying in those old and inhumane hostels are not used to paying, but as the units will be electrified and have clean water, we will expect them to pay for those basic services....really as government, we expect our people to meet us half-way," he said.

However, indigent beneficiaries will be exempted from all these fees.

The MEC allayed fears that the new units are being built in a middle of a strip of dolomite. "This situation is totally different to Thembelihle near Bapsfontein," he said.

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