

## Tshwane mayor is booed in Soshanguve

**Cops spirit him to safety as Mashatile calms the crowd**

KENNEDY MUDZULI

**Disruptions for a year after DA wrested Cape Town from ANC**

But a day earlier, they had greeted Msimanga with thumbs-down gestures and rotating hand movements used to signal a time for change.

A week ago, the DA-led council speaker Katlego Mathebe and MMC Michael Mkhari were rescued by police from people wearing ANC T-shirts while opening the Klip-Kruisfontein Cemetery.

The mob made it clear that city officials were not welcome in Soshanguve and had no business taking the glory for a project initiated by the former ANC administration. Mgobozi said the cemetery hand-over would be rescheduled.

And on Saturday, the group claimed it was angry because Mathebe's car hit a resident while fleeing from the cemetery. The alleged victim was also present, sitting in a wheelchair.

Mgobozi stated that the leaked base-line document to destabilise the new administration was evidence that the ANC had not taken lightly to losing power in the city. The party's conduct in council and misinformation peddled in the media were clear evidence it had not, he explained.

He said feuds were normal after a change of power. "This is the first time we have taken over the city, but following the DA's takeover of Cape Town, the ANC also attempted to cause this kind of chaos for at least a year. So yes, it is normal, but it doesn't have to be."

ANC Tshwane spokesperson Teboho Joala said the party had nothing to do with the disruptions at the cemetery nor over the weekend.

He said the DA-led city government was merely diverting attention on the dire attention needed to service delivery in Tshwane, where there was a serious absence of service in the townships.

"We don't have a strategy to disrupt the functioning of the city nor the mayor and the executive," he said.

"These people could have been sent in order to hide the incompetence of the city with regard to the provision of services. We suspect they could even have been hired to deliberately tarnish the image of the ANC."

Joala said the current administration did not enjoy popular support in the townships as showed by the polls.

The ANC received the most votes in those areas and ANC councillors were making appearances regularly without a problem, he added.

"We are dealing with a stubborn administration that is anti-development in the townships and is trying to undo what the ANC achieved over the years.

"We conceded as the ANC, and have taken our position as opposition in the council, where we continue to represent our communities. We are not in denial about losing power, but are working hard to reclaim the city to continue with the transformation agenda."

Mashatile, meanwhile, called for tolerance. "I told the community that when we work as government, we have to work with the municipalities that is why I came with the mayor.

"Some of the things that have to be

PICTURES: OUPA MOKOENA



**WHISKED AWAY:** Tshwane mayor Solly Msimanga is escorted from a community hall in Soshanguve after his address was disrupted by disgruntled ANC supporters.



**DISRUPTIVE:** Rowdy ANC supporters protest outside the venue while police keep a watchful eye on them.

Mashatile seemed visibly startled, but managed to keep his composure and asked the angry protesters if the meeting could continue. "High discipline and high moral comrades; we are both here to serve the community. Give us a chance," Mashatile pleaded.

But they were having none of it and continued to boo the mayor each time he tried to speak. He was eventually taken away under heavy police presence.

The disruptions followed numerous rowdy scenes in the council, as well as protests by Vat Alles workers – part of the Expanded Public Works Programme – in which the DA-led administration was ridiculed.

However, Mgobozi said the DA anticipated the challenge and resistance after wresting control of the city from the ANC in last August's polls.

"We never thought for a moment that the task ahead of us would be easy, but we knew we would make progress, which we are and will continue to make," he said.

TSHWANE mayor Solly Msimanga remained committed to serving the people despite being sent packing from Soshanguve on Saturday, where he and Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC Paul Mashatile were engaging the community on service delivery.

"He will do that no matter how difficult it proves. We are making progress despite resistance, often rooted in nefarious party political considerations and not in the best interests of the people who need services," his spokesperson Samkelo Mgobozi told The Star's sister paper, the Pretoria News.

Msimanga had to be whisked off by police after angry crowds booed him off the stage and prevented him from speaking in the KT Motubatse Community Hall. In contrast, Mashatile received a roaring ovation, as did the ANC councillors.

The same crowd, the majority of them singing pro-ANC songs, warmly received MECs Panyaza Lesufi and Jacob Mamabolo when they opened the Soshanguve East Secondary School yesterday.

done in municipalities have to be done by them,” he said. “We do not encourage communities not to listen to government leaders, that is why I tried to plead with them, but it was clear that people did not want him.”

Mashatile added that service delivery issues raised by the people would receive the utmost attention from him and Msimanga. – Additional reporting by Sakhile Ndlazi