

Msimanga gets tough in Sunnyside as Tshwane clean-up operation heads that way

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An illegally operating shop shut down in Sunnyside Tshwane during a clean up operation.

In his continued declaration of war on crime, Tshwane Mayor Solly Msimanga set his sights on Sunnyside.

There, he closed down several shops for alleged illegal trading and showed up at an apartment building where there was an apparent outstanding rates bill of more than R2 million.

"We have closed a number of illegally-operated shops. Other people were arrested for drug possession and dealing," said Msimanga.

"This is the declaration of war."

"We are declaring war on health issues. We are declaring war on unkept areas but more importantly, we are declaring war on crime and drug-related crimes," he said.

Msimanga, along with the Tshwane Metro Police Department (TMPD) and municipality officials, visited the area as part of an ongoing clean-up operation in Tshwane.

"We are responding to the people's cry that law and order needs to return to Sunnyside and surrounding areas and this is what we are doing, Msimanga said after several shops and a tavern were shut down.

Some shops allegedly had fake licences, while others allegedly failed to comply with by-laws and health regulations.

"We will close businesses operating with fake licences and we will investigate further in terms of how these people are obtaining these fake licences."

One of the shops reopened after officials closed it down, but Msimanga would have none. The mayor returned to issue a stern warning that the owners would be arrested if they ignored the law.

Msimanga also visited residential buildings, including those in Tambotie, which has a nefarious reputation for criminal activity.

He claimed one of the blocks of flats, which mostly housed police officers and which was owned by the Department of Public Works, had an outstanding rates bill of more

than R2 million. He also allegedly found illegal electricity connections and tampering with electricity and water meters.

In Tambotie, more tampered meters were discovered, and residents told the mayor that there were drug and prostitution issues in the area.

The mayor said they would have to get a bigger team in place to deal with the issues in Tambotie, and they should conduct a full sweep of all apartment blocks in the area.

"We will deal with the whole of Tombotie comprehensively."

Earlier this year, Msimanga along with the TMPD, raided several suspected drug dens and brothels in Pretoria West.

Armed with search warrants, TMPD officers broke down doors to flats and houses. In one of the suspected drug dens, a man was found in possession of Methcathinone, known as cat.

"They planted them on me, I don't even do drugs, I don't sell drugs. I don't even know what [those things are]," he told media. He made the same claims when Msimanga spoke to him and asked where he came from and who he supplied.

Msimanga also asked that his car be searched because he claimed his identification papers were in the vehicle.

Msimanga also walked into a suspected brothel where a couple were "caught in the act".

A male was found in possession of a white powder, which the narcotics team in the TMPD have taken for testing.

TMPD spokesperson Senior Superintendent Isaac Mahamba said two suspects were arrested for possession of drugs and drug dealing, and one was arrested for fraud.