

SAPS closes in on gangsterism in W Cape

The South African Police Service (SAPS) is putting more effort into dealing with gangsterism in the Western Cape.



SAPS is currently implementing a Gang Combating Strategy, which started in July last year, that is designed to both combat gang violence as well as eliminate the criminal economy of these gangs.

"This is an integrated strategy and ... it incorporates various pillars, such as visible policing, investigations, crime information management and importantly, the support and involvement of communities," South African Police Service (SAPS) spokesperson Zweli Mnisi said on Tuesday.

The police's crime analysis indicates that the implementation of the strategy has resulted in the stabilisation of Lavender Hill, Grassy Park, Hanover Park and Manenberg over the last three months.

However, Nyanga remains the sore point in the province, having experienced 100 cases of murders, 62 attempted murders, 47 arrests for illegal possession of firearm/ammunition and 613 for possession of drugs, Mnisi said.

"Comparatively, for the same period, statistics indicate that Manenberg experienced 14 murders, 56 attempted murders, 53 arrests for illegal possession of firearm/ammunition and 1 148 for possession of drugs," Mnisi said.

Police have attributed this to the deployment of more police in these areas.

Gang violence had resulted in the closure of 16 schools in Manenberg, which reopened on Monday.

According to Mnisi, during the period 1 June 2013 to 14 August 2013, there was only one murder in June, seven in July and two in August. Fifty-four firearms had been seized in Manenberg since the beginning of June 2013.

Police activities are now seeing gang and drug wars being displaced to other areas such as Delft, Heideveld, Ravensmead, Bishop Lavis, Langa, Athlone, Khayelitsha, Kleinvei, Gugulethu, Mfuleni, Elsies River and Atlantis.

Since the beginning of January 2013, four prominent gang leaders have been evicted from the area after court orders were obtained in the Cape High Court.

This was achieved through working together with the Cape Town Metro through their legal department.

Through high level investigation interventions, Mnisi said police have also closed down 13 illegal drug laboratories, and successfully concluded three thorough investigations that resulted in the take down of three syndicates, whose kingpins are currently being prosecuted.

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