



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Member of the Mayoral Committee

Councillor Mlungisi Mabaso

Human Settlements

Media Statement

For Immediate Release

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City shuts down illegal businesses in JOSHCO buildings

Seven businesses illegally operating in two Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO) buildings in the inner city were shut down this week following a multi-agency raid led by the MMC for Human Settlements, Cllr Mlungisi Mabaso.

The enforcement operation, conducted in partnership with JOSHCO, Environmental Health, JMPD, SAPS, Home Affairs, and the City's Group Forensic and Investigation Services (GFIS), targeted Textile House and African Diamond—both located on the corner of Kerk and Goud streets.

The action followed a recent discovery by Cllr Mabaso that the buildings were being misused as makeshift bus depots, with goods being packed and transported to other countries. Businesses affected included a luggage processing facility, electronics store, restaurant, and a supermarket operating without City approval.

During the raid, operators claimed they were paying rent to unnamed individuals and initially refused to vacate. After law enforcement intensified its presence, the businesses began clearing out, taking more than five hours to remove goods such as furniture, car parts, tools, and building materials.

Environmental Health officials also shut down a restaurant at African Diamond due to non-compliance. Four undocumented individuals were detained by Home Affairs.

Cllr Mabaso condemned the defiance shown by the illegal tenants. "They're running unauthorised businesses and had the audacity to argue with government officials. We've asked them to vacate so these spaces can be released to legitimate businesses."

The MMC added that the illegal occupants had partitioned the interiors, compromising building safety. "This is a JOSHCO-owned property, and we have legal tenants living upstairs. Their safety must be protected," he said.

He confirmed that of all the businesses in the buildings, only a salon and a supermarket were authorised. However, the supermarket was found non-compliant and shut down. "They applied to operate but failed to submit the necessary documentation. That's why they were not approved."

Suspicion of internal collusion also emerged during the raid. "We were told someone tipped them off about our operation. Only a few of us were aware of it. We will launch an internal investigation to uncover who alerted them and how they've been paying rent without lease agreements," he said.

GFIS has been tasked with probing possible fraud and corruption linked to the unauthorised use of these City properties.

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