

# *More than 43 gang members arrested in police operation in San Salvador*

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**We have as a government the commitment to clean the area to hand it over to all the good Salvadorans | Photo: EFE**

San Salvador, December 26 (RHC)-- Military and National Civil Police (PNC) officers arrested more than 43 criminals over the weekend, in an operation conducted in the community of Tutunichapa, in San Salvador, capital of El Salvador, police sources reported.

"We decided to make the Tutunichapa siege for different reasons. This community was stigmatized for more than 40 years by criminals who were dedicated to distributing and selling drugs from this

community," informed the Minister of Justice and Security, Gustavo Villatoro.

"Here we have gang members of the Mara 18R that became entrenched in this community. As a government, we are committed to cleaning up the area and handing it over to all good Salvadorans," said the official.

According to reports from the Presidential House, the operation aims to hit drug traffickers and gangs that commit crimes in the area and in the first actions firearms, more than 10 thousand dollars, abundant amounts of marijuana and crack portions were found.

For his part, the Minister of Defense, Vice Admiral René Merino, reported that more than a thousand soldiers, more than 130 members of the Anti-Narcotics Division and 11 units of the canine technique are being used in the siege.

According to authorities, one of the first people arrested in the operation was a gang leader who for more than 40 years directed operations in Tutunichapa.

Authorities are focusing their efforts on the fight against gangs to ensure the celebration of the Christmas and New Year's holidays. In this sense, the General Director of Civil Protection, Luis Amaya, said that since November 17 all the forces of the National Civil Protection System have been on alert.

The Weapons and Explosives Division (DAE) of the PNC occupied on Saturday more than 50 thousand units of prohibited gunpowder in several clandestine rocket shops located in the department of San Salvador, official sources informed.

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