CRIME - GAUTENG

1997
Crime and Land Invasions Top Council's Agenda

NEWS/9

By BROWNNY WILKINSON

[Image of a newspaper page with text and headline: Crime and Land Invasions Top Council's Agenda]
Probe into reporter’s assault

Urgent inquiry into market agents who manhandled reporter and photographer investigating allegations of theft at the City Deep fresh produce market

By Anso Thom
Crime Reporter

A urgent internal investigation has been initiated by the acting head of the Metropolitan Financial Services Lucas Opperman into the assault of a Star Line reporter and a photographer of The Star at the Johannes-
burg fresh produce market last Thursday.

About 15 people were involved in the assault of StarLine editor June Beatzi and Naashon Zalk during an ongoing probe into claims of corruption and theft involving hundreds of millions of rand at the City Deep fresh pro-
duce market.

The incident took place in Hall Number 1 when Beatzi took pos-
session of a large box of cash sales slips made out by W L Ochse staff for vegetable sales.

Market agents have been ac-
cused of skimming off millions by circumventing the market’s financial network and selling goods for cash on the floor.

When Beatzi approached Wil-
lie van der Walt who owns W L Ochse to question him about his apparent evasion of the market’s financial system, he became con-
frontational.

He and his staff manhandled Beatzi and Zalk and ordered them off the market floor. He later called security staff who helped the Ochse employees to remove the camera and reporter’s handbag. The camera was handed to Van der Walt and he ripped out the film.

Acting Town Clerk Stan Verri-
er said the matter was viewed in a very serious light and he has re-
quested that the findings of the in-
ternal investigation be available for assessment as soon as possible when a decision will be taken with regard to any further action on the matter.

In view of claims of alleged corruption, theft and mismanage-
ment made by Johannesburg cert-
tified fraud examiner Barthol-
omew Henderson in a StarLine article during September last year, the Greater Johannesburg Transi-
tional Metropolitan Council de-
cided to refer the matter to the Auditor-General.

An independent team has un-
dertaken an investigation into claims that the market was riddled with crooked deals and some agents were boosting their profits by skimming off millions in illegal cash sales.

A report was expected today.
Call for probe on market scams

BY JUNE BEAARZ
Star Line

Calls are being made for an independent inquiry into allegations of wholesale corruption and theft at the City Deep fresh produce market in Johannesburg.

There is evidence that market agents have been skimming as much as R400-million a year off the annual turnover. The acting town clerk, Stan Verrier, said on Friday that an investigation was being undertaken by the auditor-general's office and its findings would be released on January 22.

However, Johannesburg attorney Aaron Stanger maintains that a precedent should be set in having independent auditors. "When there are charges of corruption, the only way is to appoint a firm of entirely independent auditors."

Fresh produce market rotten to the core
Johannesburg fresh produce market now rotten to the core

Fraudulent dealings in the city market are spreading unchecked and the metropolitan council is accused of failing abysmally to eradicate them. June Bearzi reports.

The main thrust of Henderson's audit report was to disprove Craywagen's claims that "all is well at the market" and he details a litany of the blatant side-stepping of the computerised financial procedure controls. The report says that 10 agents and wholesalers could be involved and adds that the shocking state of the market's affairs was brought to the authorities' attention 19 months ago by a market inspector and later by himself.

Henderson's documents also allege that:
- Each week market goods worth R1 067 220 were removed from the food halls without being captured on the financial network. A dealer involved in the sale of tomatoes was one of the worst offenders in generating prohibited cash sales slips. These allowed buyers to remove the goods while the agents and wholesalers pocketed the cash.
- Wholesalers and agents on the market floor could have escaped the income tax net by circumventing the financial system because a fair lower income and turnover would be reflected.
- Possible cover-ups existed to conceal the massive shortfall of produce which was delivered but not reflected as sold on the computer system.
- The GTMC which owns and manages the market has failed to recover about R30-million as it takes a 5% share of the market's turnover.
- Certain agents kept two or more sets of books to conceal their sales figures.
- Some market employees stole farmers' produce valued at tens of thousands of rands and used the proceeds to gamble on the horses.
- Another market employee used stolen produce to stock his own greengrocer store.
- A market inspector who reported the theft to his seniors was later threatened with violence and dismissed.

Henderson deduces that, if the correct and far higher turnover at the market had been reflected, the GTMC would almost certainly have secured a higher selling price. At this stage the bid has been put on hold.

The fraud examiner and the writer have continued investigations and have found vast numbers of the prohibited slips are still being generated by agents and wholesalers.

In reply to Star Line queries Opperman said that allegations made by Henderson in April had been investigated by the internal audit department of the Johannesburg administration but had been found to be overstated. "Such matters of concern which were identified were reported on to the management of the market and remedial action recommended. At no time did anyone attempt to 'shut off' any aspect of this investigation."

He explained that the matter had been referred to the auditor-general's office on October 24 for the appointment of an independent team to investigate further. Opperman said a report was expected by January 22 and asked Star Line to pass all further information in its possession to the auditor-general for investigation.
Soweto's cry for help as mobsters hold sway

Community police forums cannot have meaningful role in fight against crime due to lack of funds and little support from Government

BY TROVE LUND
AND OWN CORRESPONDENT

The problem of funding CPFs still needs to be ironed out and the Safety and Security Ministry Sidney Mufamadi is scheduled to meet provincial safety MECs soon to discuss this the crime wave and other thorny issues such as the lack of vehicles, communication equipment and financing by community police forums (CPF).

In some communities, leaders of the forums fear to live at home because they have no protection against the very people they are supposed to be fighting against. Safety and Security Ministry Secretary Azhar Cachalia said "this kind of intimidation is alarming and needs to be addressed urgently" but he added that CPFs were primarily a provincial function.

In Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, the forums are also experiencing birth pains, their main problem being the infiltration of the forums by gangsters and politicians using them for their own ends.

Peter Stevens, a British community policing adviser to the Western Cape police MEC, has confirmed that some forum meetings have been flooded by members of an undisclosed political party trying to oust the opposition party's members from their committee positions.

In Port Elizabeth, the South African National Civic Organisation is reportedly investigating similar allegations of criminals using the forums as a cover to commit serious crimes.

In Gauteng, Greater Soweto Community Police Forum chairman Weston Shabangu has warned that residents will increasingly take the law into their own hands "with disastrous consequences" if the CPFs do not start operating properly soon.

Although many of Soweto's 44 suburbs now have some sort of CPF, Shabangu is adamant that these - and other - CPFs will soon collapse if the Government does not offer real assistance.

Mob rule and a kangaroo justice system could soon destroy Soweto unless the Government provides funds to help residents fight crime, community police forum leaders have warned.

This has emerged as CPFs, formed to involve the community in the fight against crime, are unable to fulfil a meaningful role due to a lack of infrastructure and little or no support from the Government.

Leaders have also told of CPF members being targeted by criminals and living in fear for their lives because they have joined the battle to rid their streets of thugs.
A former produce market floor inspector says he was subjected to Mafia-like tactics and was told bluntly that paid him money would get him if he did not keep his mouth shut about theft and corruption at City Deep.

Harry van der Bergh of Rosettenville told Star Line he had paid dearly for his honesty in reporting the theft of produce valued at R250000 to his superiors at the market in 1992.

He painted a graphic picture of well-organised syndicates working from the market halls and robbing farmers of their produce. He also claimed certain produce salesmen lived the high life on flushed large bundles of cash made from the sale of stolen produce.

He explained that farmers were also being ripped off by agents who claimed they would not get payment for fruit or vegetables as they had arrived at the market rotten and had to be destroyed. But the agents would take the perfectly good produce, sell it, and pocket the money. Van der Bergh said fake notes would be made out to farmers that goods had not been sold, but destroyed, he added.

When I tried to do something to stop this I was hounded mercilessly by people with vested interests in the market,” said Van der Bergh.

Van der Bergh said he was unable to take the strain of constantly living in fear and being victimised at his workplace and eventually resigned in 1992.

“Because I was truthful I have lost my home and car and now live a hard to mouth existence. I cannot believe this has happened to me and although I have received a R4000 payout from the Johannesburg City Council after I went to lawyers this is a mere pittance for what I suffered.”

Van der Bergh produced for Star Line a note from market master, Don Spengler, dated April 15 1991 in which he wrote: “I am impressed with your positive attitude. Keep up the good work.”

But the senior market staff’s attitude changed in 1992, according to Van der Bergh, when he was promoted to the floor manager’s position by the municipality’s Human Resources section. He was responsible for checking agents’ and salesmen’s stocks and theft on the floor and said he did not hesitate to take action after produce could not be accounted for.

He said he became unpopular with his superior when a market employee was put on early retirement when he was found guilty of clocking in his girlfriend’s timesheet while he was away on a five-day jaunt to Sun City. The woman was fired. Van der Bergh had given evidence at the disciplinary hearing.

According to Van der Bergh, “She was being paid with taxpayers’ money for not reporting for duty and the cheating of the clock cards went on for weeks.”

Soon after this Van der Bergh said he was warned by senior market employees that they would “sort me out for giving evidence at the hearing.”

“Although I was appointed as a floor inspector I was determined to do my job as well as possible and to keep tabs on salesmen’s stock. I made a grave mistake by being absolutely truthful about the losses on the floor and eventually was hounded out of my job.”

Van der Bergh said the first incident involved a salesman for one of the large agents: “When I checked I found apples worth R60000 missing. The salesman said I need not worry as his senior knew about it. I did not accept this explanation and took the matter further. When I checked on another agent I found fruit valued at R10000 missing. I realised then that I had to keep a sharp eye on things and soon I did another stock check and found yet another agent’s salesman could not account for apples valued at R45000.

The salesmen said the goods were in the cold storage chambers but he was unable to show me where. I also reported him. I later found that these apples had been stolen by the salesman, re-packed and then sent to a vegetable seller in Pretoria. The cash for the sale had been split between three people, one of whom is a senior market employee who still works there.”

In continuing his checking Van der Bergh said he established another agent’s salesman had moved R60000 worth of fruit off the floor while yet another had misappropriated goods worth R13000.

Yet another salesman was stealing crates of farmers’ produce by ordering door inspectors to release the goods without the required removal permits.

This salesman was a big branch and was using much of this ill-gotten cash to play large amounts on the horses virtually every day. I believe the farmers should be protected from this type of theft and corruption. “The knives were really out for me when these people had to pay back the cash for the missing goods and I was victimised right out of my job.”

Three other market employees have confirmed that they have witnessed the theft and corruption, and were subjected to harassment and victimisation.

Acting Town Clerk for the Transitional Metropolitan Council, Stan Verrier, told Star Line that Van der Bergh...
Senior man in alleged market scam coverup

A senior market employee was involved in a coverup three years ago when fresh produce agent Chris van der Merwe did a midnight flat after failing to pay huge sums of cash over to farmers for the sale of produce.

Star Line has learnt this from a reliable source who claimed that “damage control” was implemented by a senior staffer still in the employment of the market (Star Line has his name) who told the farmers that the cold storage rooms had broken down and the items had rotted.

To further conceal the theft, Star Line was told, a health inspector working at the market was asked to sign documents to say the “rotten produce” had to be destroyed. These fraudulent destroyal notices were used to cheat the farmers, the source said.

Klipriver farmer Manuel Calaca said he had been aware of the wheeler dealings at the market for some time:

“This sort of corruption has a major ripple effect because when farmers are cheated out of payment for their produce they are unable to pay their labourers or for other essential items needed in a farming operation.

“The smaller produce farmers are the most vulnerable and simply cannot sustain these kinds of losses.

“Many farmers live in outlying areas and they have no way of knowing what happens to their produce once they have transported it to the market. This is why some of them are taken advantage of by some unscrupulous agents.”

However, one former market agent, Anton Grobler, said he worked as a salesman in the potato section of the fresh produce market for 15 years but was not aware that there were widescale wheeler dealings in this hall. He was unaware, however, of the theft allegations made against Van der Merwe who at the time lived in Alberton.

Grobler explained: “It is not easy rip off farmers in the potato section because the price of potatoes does not change much on a day to day basis. Besides, we were a very close-knit group of people working in that hall and generally knew what was going on.

“I cannot say the same about the fruit and vegetable sections as there are large fluctuations in prices which offer far greater opportunities for agents and salesmen to rake off some cash.”

Market master Daan Spengler has not responded to messages and a fax sent to him for reaction to these claims.
Off-duty policemen used to combat airport cargo crime

Melanie Sergeant

The rampant cargo theft at Johannesburg International Airport has become something of a money-spinner for off-duty policemen.

After years of theft of cargo at the airport, a company called Special Cargo Surveillance claims to have "brought down claims from R1m to about R1 000 per month".

Industries with small, high-value imports, such as the electronics industry, have been particularly hard hit by theft. Millions of rands worth of pricey chips and computer systems have been stolen on arrival at the airport.

Special Cargo Surveillance MD Warren Geddes, who says he has a military background, claimed the thefts had dropped to R1 000 a month "almost overnight".

He said the company, which was set up five months ago, comprises about 10 policemen who do surveillance while off-duty, and he plans to employ more.

"We knew there were top people at the airport who were instrumental in the fraud," and we employed half of Johannesburg International's police force in their spare time to stop the problem — and it's working well," he said.

He said that it was gazetted in the October Government Gazette that the policemen were allowed to own businesses or work to earn extra money in their spare time.

A government official said that, as in the old Police Act, policemen should get permission for any work done outside work hours — from a commander or from someone at a similar level.

An outraged Business Equipment Association executive director Les Wood said: "We believe police have a responsibility to minimise airport losses and to track down criminals involved.

"It is way beyond the bounds of credibility that police during their on-duty hours (and paid for by taxpayers) cannot minimise losses, yet during off-duty time, they claim they can do so for a profit.

"The customs department, police and airport authorities must resolve the cowboy situation at Johannesburg airport and not be involved in or form companies on the sly to make some extra money in their spare time," Wood said.

One company which is believed to have suffered substantial loss, but did not want its name used said: "We have had to take extraordinary measures to bring the cargo theft problem under control.

We are not prepared to identify the format which our actions are taking, but we have seen our insurance claims reduced dramatically over the past six months."

The spokesman said the theft was masterminded by "a ring comprising a few individuals, so it is unwise to discuss measures taken to stamp out the problem."

Asked about the cargo theft problem, an Airport Company spokesman said: "There are controls for access points into the cargo area, and we have started a permit system which is operational at the airport building and is being installed at the cargo area and which should be operational in a couple of months."

She said that cargo operators work on a "known-operator" principle so access is obtained only by people who know someone inside the cargo areas.

Cargo accepted by cargo agents and handling agents became their responsibility, she said.
Report on market trends is due this week

The market for health management...
Irate businessmen threaten mass exodus from Marlboro

BY AMMA COX

Marlboro businessmen are threatening to vacate their premises and rent them out to squatters because they feel the Sandton Administration is doing nothing to protect them against increasing squatting and crime in the area.

At a meeting to discuss security yesterday, all of the 50 factory owners present said they had suffered multiple hijackings, murders, robberies and burglaries.

One said he had been bungled 48 times in the past few years.

Said Mark Elders: “We are desperate. This is becoming a ghost town. Hundreds of factories have closed down over the past two years. The property values in this area are nil. You cannot give factory space away in this area.

“I had three staff members murdered here. I had four bakkies stolen. I have one left and I refuse to replace the others because they will only get stolen again.”

Nick Gonifas, who owns three factories and employs more than 100 people, said he was on the point of leaving Marlboro because of the crime.

The businessmen claimed that some factory owners who had left the area were letting their premises out to squatters.

“The Sandton Administration has done nothing to prevent this or stop it – they simply turn a blind eye. If this carries on we will all do the same.”
Crime slows economic growth

By Pamela Dube
Political Reporter

ECONOMIC GROWTH and crime are synonymous with Gauteng and if the provincial government fails to fight crime, the "economic boom" so much talked about will fail.

That was the thrust of Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale's opening speech of the Gauteng legislature on Friday.

Topping the provincial government's agenda was "controlling crime, which threatens not only the lives and security of the people of Gauteng, but also economic growth and stability," Sexwale said.

And to successfully fight crime, law enforcement officers should be equipped adequately. "It therefore becomes imperative not to merely regard crime as 'Number One' on our agenda, but to treat crime as such in budgetary terms."

On the economic front, Sexwale said the province did well last year, and that their mission for 1996 was to do even better. He said his trip with a group of business people to South East Asian countries attracted almost R2 billion investment to Gauteng, which consolidated growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of above 4 percent in the province last year.

The provincial government's monetary and fiscal policy has seen private sector investment grow by between nine and 16 percent during 1995, with a capital of almost R20 billion being brought into the province.

The pending launch of the Gauteng Economic Development Agency in March "will play a critical role in promoting Gauteng as the economic gateway to South and Southern Africa," Sexwale said.

Sexwale, however, recognises that the inflow of investors in the province last year has not necessarily addressed the question of job creation. "The growth we have seen thus far has not yet made a dent in the shocking unemployment figures. One million people are without work in Gauteng alone," he added.

He said since May 1993 only 52 000 additional jobs had been created nationally. The gain, however, was smaller than the loss of 420 000 jobs during the 1989 to 1993 recession. "This is a crisis of massive proportions that threatens to undermine our hard-won national gains."

Sexwale also stated that labour should participate in the shaping of the economy. "If we are to stabilise the economy, we cannot be faced with the threat of wild-cat strikes."
Authorities
"dilly dally" with report

Report alleges corruption at Jo'burg fresh produce market and is overdue

JOHANNESBURG authorities have for more than two weeks denied the media access to an attorney general's report which lawyers and politicians say should be available for public scrutiny.

"They are in breach of the Constitution's guarantees of government in the sunshine," lawyer Mr David Dixon said yesterday.

The report on alleged corruption at a city fresh produce market was first discussed by the city council on February 13 but not released to the media.

It remained secret yesterday when the council referred it to the Office for Serious Economic Offences. Repeated requests for a copy of the document have been denied.

"It is a public document as far as I am concerned and should be made available to the public," said Ian Mr Davidson, the Democratic Party's spokesman on local government and former chairman of the city's management committee.

"This is a matter of extreme public importance," he said, adding: "It is a document which indicates there have been malpractices if not fraud at the market."

A statement by the council on February 13 said the report should remain confidential while comment was obtained from people and bodies named in it.

Yesterday the council said numerous requests for copies had been considered by its executive committee.

"It was resolved that the report be released on request only to those individuals or organisations who are entitled to information in terms of Section 23 of the Constitution."

This decision had been taken in order not to prejudice an independent investigation of the market, chairman of the executive committee Mr Collin Matjila said in a statement.

Section 23 of the constitution reads: "Every person shall have the right of access to all information held by the state or any of its organs at any level of government in so far as such information is required for the exercise or protection of any of his or her rights."

Dixon said the council was interpreting this section in the most restrictive way.

"They are in breach of openness," he said. - Sapa.
Market report goes to OSEO

By June Bearzi

An Auditor-General's report into corruption at the Johannesburg fresh produce market has been handed to the Office for Serious Economic Offences.

There has been an outcry that the authorities have failed to show transparency by not releasing the report for public scrutiny.

Over the last two weeks the authorities have kept the report under wraps, refusing to allow Star Line -- which helped expose the corruption -- or other media access.

Lawyers and politicians have said it should be made available so that it can be monitored.

Advocate Jan Swanepoel, head of the Office for Serious Economic Offences, confirmed today that the report had been passed on to him and that talks would be held with the city council soon.

He refused to provide a copy of the report to Star Line: "We have a secrecy clause which prohibits us from releasing it."

The market report was first discussed by the city council on February 13 after which a statement was released saying it would remain confidential while comment was being obtained from bodies and people named in it.

"The authorities are in breach of the constitution's guarantees of government in the sunshine," communications lawyer David Dyson said.
Grim picture of crime in W Cape

MORE than 1,000 serious assaults and 164 murders were reported last year in the Cape Town police district, which excludes the Cape Flats, northern areas and the southern suburbs.

The district encompasses Atlantic, Cape Town, Camps Bay, Kensington, Maitland, Milnerton, Pinelands, Sea Point, Table View, Table Bay harbour and Woodstock.

The crime figures were supplied in parliament this week by Safety and Security Minister Sidney Mufamadi in response to a question in the national assembly.

In these areas police dealt with 164 murders and 167 cases of culpable homicide.

Reported rapes amounted to 290, nearly one attack each day.

Assaults with intent to do grievous bodily harm totalled 1,139, while there were 3,024 cases of common assault.

Police opened 1,849 robbery dockets and investigated 24,987 thefts.

The housebreaking total was 4,513, and there were 36 cases of vehicle hijackings.
Report damns Johannesburg market

The auditor-general has produced a damning report on the lack of controls and systems at the Johannesburg fresh produce market.

There was a public outcry when the report, dated February 9, was presented to the Johannesburg council but not made public. The council referred the report to the Office for Serious Economic Offences, and released it only yesterday.

Vegetable growers have alleged a R1-billion fraud at the market and a cover-up by the council.

The report portrays the market master, his staff and agents and producers in a very poor light.

And the auditor-general lists six pages of "irregularities and potential weak areas" in the market's systems.

The auditor-general found employees did not make independent checks into how much produce was being sold on to the market, but relied solely on figures from agents and producers.

Of particular concern was "the apparent reluctance" of the market master and his staff to accept responsibility on whether the actual quantities brought into the market were in agreement with the actual documentation supplied by the agent, the auditor-general said.

FROM PAGE 1

Market probe

May 2/3/96

A conflict of interest existed at the market because agents were responsible for capturing stock details in the market computer system, in which they had to pay a 5% commission on produce sales, the auditor-general found.

If producers and agents were in collusion, producers could not only avoid the 5% commission by selling produce outside the market system, but also avoid levies to the control boards, which averaged out at 2%.

The auditor-general said the market did little "to sanction" those agents who contravened the market by-laws with regard to the misappropriation of other agents' consignments. The conduct of the market did little or nothing to deter the agents' behaviour.

The report said other weaknesses in the market's systems included security weaknesses in the barcoding system, lack of security regarding access to the market's computer system, insufficient reconciliation of documentation, and inadequate supervision.

Market management had abdicated its responsibility relating to the checking of stock leaving the halls. And certain of the market employees appeared to be poorly trained and supervised and did not have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

The report also said wholesalers were trading on the market floor in contravention of market by-laws, and agents were contravening by-laws by allowing wholesalers to remove produce without paying for it.

The council, in releasing the report, said the auditor-general's findings had not yet been substantiated and it was taking measures to investigate properly. It recognised its responsibility to ensure the market was administered efficiently.

"Until all investigations are completed, the correctness of any allegation or information in this report should not be presumed," the council said. The report was not released earlier so as not to prejudice an independent investigation, council executive committee chairman Collin Matjila said earlier this week. — Sapa.
Produce market hit by agency’s collapse

BY JAMES LAMONT 38 CT(BR) 413 96

Johannesburg — The crash of a Pretoria-based agricultural marketing agency last week has ignited speculation over the future of the Pretoria fresh produce market in the wake of stinging corruption indictments against its Johannesburg counterpart.

Jacaranda marketing agency, a trader on the Pretoria fresh produce market, went into liquidation on Thursday night after an investor decided to withdraw his money before an agreed redemption date, said Piet Bothma, a director of the company.

"An investor has decided to bring in an order against his money," which was due for repayment on 15 March, explained Bothma.

The investor’s initial investment was R95 000.

However, Botha said, after interest service over 14 months, the owed sum was about R80 000.

Though a source in the industry claimed that the agency was being wound up because R1.5 million had been stolen from it, Botha said there was no question of foul play.

The company, which sells farmers’ produce on commission, has had all its assets frozen and awaits a court hearing on March 19.

All farm produce in the agency’s care was handed to another agency.

Bothma explained that should the liquidation go ahead, he would lose everything.

He estimated the total loss of the agency, which had a turnover of R2 million a month, at R700 000.

The marketing agents’ council had issued the liquidation order on Thursday, said Charles Hamilton, the deputy general manager of Pretoria market.

He said an audit was under way to establish the stock under the agency’s control to make sure no one lost any money.

He confirmed that “problems between the partners” had caused one of the partners to request the withdrawal of his investment.

Recently, farmers have struck out at local produce markets, marketing boards and agents over high commissions and levies, and illegal cash sales. They have demanded the right to sell directly to wholesalers and consumers.

The Johannesburg metropolitan council has deferred the release of a report by the Gauteng auditor-general into allegations of fraud, corruption and mismanagement at the Johannesburg fresh produce market.

Hamilton, however, argued that the Pretoria market was clean by comparison.

He said: “We don’t have the hassles that Johannesburg has. We are looking very carefully at the operations of market agents.”

“The Pretoria market is being handled with a stern hand because of the problems with the Johannesburg market and we are so close to it,” Bothma said.
Agriculture welcomes produce market report

ORGANISED agriculture and market agents on Saturday welcomed the auditor-general’s report on alleged corruption and mismanagement at the Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market, and endorsed its recommendations.

The report listed six pages of irregularities and potential weaknesses in the market’s systems. It has been referred to the Office for Serious Economic Offences for investigation of possible criminal prosecutions. It also makes a number of recommendations, from improved security to new computer systems and monitoring of cashiers.

Transvaal Agricultural Union president Dries Bruwer commended the auditor-general for exposing irregularities at the market. He criticised Johannesburg city authorities for not protecting farmers.

“If a farmer has to pay for services, it is fair to expect protection against corruption,” Bruwer said.

Farmers could not afford to appoint staff at markets to look after their interests. They depended on the ability and honesty of market masters and agents, he said.

Institute of Market Agents of SA (Imasa) Johannesburg branch chairman Mike Louifie said agents were an integral part of the free market system and implementation of the report’s recommendations would ensure a better-managed and more efficient market. “Imasa believes the recommendations made by the auditor-general are sound and in the interests of all parties involved in, or served by, the market system,” he said.—Saps.
Market fraud 'continuing unabated'

BY JOHN BRAGG

Fraud amounting to about R1-million a day is continuing unabated at the Johannesburg fresh produce market while the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council is investigating an auditor-general's report that exposes serious flaws in the market, fraud investigator Bartholomew Henderson claimed at the weekend.

In support of his claims of unabated fraud at the market The Star was shown yet more illicit cash sales slips in Henderson's possession which were made out by market agents on Saturday morning. This system is used by agents and wholesalers on the market floor to circumvent the computerised financial system.

"What more evidence do they need before they take urgent steps to prevent further losses?" he provided them with evidence of fraud at the market in April last year and the TMC also had details of fraud provided by a former employee almost two years ago.

The R1-million estimate of the fraud committed daily ties in with the April report handed to the TMC in which Henderson said agents were skimming off about R400-million a year.

Evidence suggests that the TMC, which receives 3.5% commission on all legitimately recorded sales on the market floor, could be losing up to R20-million a year.
Council accused of fraud coverup at produce market

Investigator says auditor-general's report only showed tip of iceberg regarding wheeler-dealing and profiteering

BY JUNE BEARD
Star Line

The Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council has been accused of covering up the vast extent of fraud and corruption at the Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market. This new twist to the market scandal comes after last week’s report by the auditor-general confirming the existence of widespread irregularities in cash sales. He also slammed market master Dean Spengler and his staff for not performing their duties adequately.

Market critics, including fraud investigator Bartholomew Henderson and Independent Vegetable Growers’ Association chairman Johnny Goncalves, say the report has scratched only the tip of the iceberg regarding wheeler-dealing and profiteering at the market.

Henderson said yesterday the failure of the council’s internal audit department to pass on several documents that severely compromised the auditor-general’s ability to carry out a proper investigation.

The only market agent fingered in the report is W.L. Osche. Yet a report compiled by Henderson almost a year ago showed that many market agents were also involved in illicit cash deals. This information was apparently not passed on to the auditor-general. Henderson is adamant that much of his evidence vanished after it was left with the council’s internal audit department, which is responsible for monitoring the market’s finances.

According to Henderson, other documents brought to council officials’ attention would have shown how agents manipulated the market’s computerised financial system to cover stock shortfalls. These occurred because of the huge volume of under-the-table cash transactions.

As a result of this manipulation by agents, farmers and the council had been losing millions of rands.

He explained: “The council was first made aware of corruption and theft 22 months ago when a former market inspector spoke out. In April last year I brought the matter to the attention of the council, but officials neglected to act until Star Line focused on the market. Now several more millions have been lost by the continued activities of crooked agents, and the council has had to pay more than R70 000 to auditors Ernst & Young for information that it received from me free of charge several months ago.”

Goncalves said yesterday: “The farmers will not rest until all the corruption at the market has been uncovered. The auditor-general’s report focused only on one aspect of the fraud, illegal cash sales. Farmers want to know which agents have skimmed off funds, how they did it and how much was stolen.”

As recently as Saturday Star Line received more evidence that illicit cash sales are still taking place. In a response, the council said further allegations would be probed properly.
Farmers claim agents ‘destroyed’ produce before selling it again

By John Beards

In the ongoing Johannesburg fresh produce market scandal, several angry farmers claim they were dealt severe financial blows because they were being systematically ripped off by crooked market agents.

In yet another development, a man who has given Star Line information about theft and corruption at the market has had sold the tomatoes to a Durban agent and had pocketed the cash.

Groot Marico farmers Hennie and Gail Smith described a similar experience and said they initially got absolutely no support from the market’s management when they complained that agents were consistently claiming that their good quality produce “had been destroyed”.

““In the beginning I thought it was strange that my one-day-old cabbages were being destroyed. I told the market management that none of my produce should be destroyed until I had examined it or given them permission.”

“Despite this, the agent continued to tell me he had destroyed consignments of long-life tomatoes as well as fantastic quality boerepompons which can be stored for at least one year.”

“I demanded an explanation or proof that the goods had been destroyed but nothing was forthcoming.”

She says market ma-

Severe financial losses

ter Daan Spengler only last week agreed to pay her out for some of the missing produce.

“Spengler knew all about our problems but only took action because of the pressure from Star Line’s exposes.”

Six weeks ago former market security officer, Henry van der Berg, related to Star Line how certain agents were stealing huge amounts of produce and pocketing the cash.

When he told the market’s management Van der Berg said he was forced out of his job by victimisation and terror tactics.

threats of violence

gone into hiding as he says he has been targeted by “tough guys” threatening him with violence if he continues to talk to the press.

A source with inside information about the market has explained how certain agents run their theft rackets by telling unsuspecting farmers that their goods have been “destroyed”.

According to the source: “I have watched these agents taking crates of top class produce and disguising it by piling rotten fruit and vegetables on top. They call in an inspector who writes out a destroy note. Once the agents have their ‘proof’ that the goods have been destroyed they re-pack the produce and sell it as their own. This way they pocket a fortune, and the poor farmer gets nothing but a fraudulently obtained destroy note.”

A Vryburg farmer related how he was recently cheated out of 3 100 boxes of tomatoes by a large Johannesburg agent and only discovered the theft through a chance phone call.

The Johannesburg agent had told the shocked farmer that the entire tomato consignment had been destroyed as the produce was rotten.

The farmer later discovered that the agent
Council may allow suburbs to be fenced off for security

BY ANNA COX

A draft policy on secure neighbourhoods which includes the temporary fencing off of suburbs and allows access control points has been formulated and is to be considered by the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure as a matter of urgency.

The report was drafted by the Sandton administration's department of urban planning and development in consultation with officials from other departments in response to the many requests received from residents for security measures in their neighbourhoods.

Numerous requests were received following the closure of certain streets in Hurthingham Manor Extension 5.

EMS's acting chief executive officer Chris Schmidt said security measures would not include the walling off of suburbs. Incorrect press reports wrongly created the impression that the Sandton administration approved the erection of walls around the suburb, he said.

Temporary road closures were agreed to at the request of Hurthingham Manor to reduce "rat-running" (racing through the suburb to avoid main roads) and as a means of making the area less attractive to criminals. All the costs of the closures and the erection of the crash barriers were borne by the community, said Schmidt.

Reports have shown that this, combined with the hiring of a private security company which uses golf carts to patrol the area, has cut the crime rate by 45%.

"The council is aware of the public's frustration with the fact that no proposals can be considered without a policy decision, but it is vital that these measures not be implemented on an ad hoc basis."

"It should be planned with the SA Police Services in such a way as to assist the police to combat crime and operate effectively. Emergency services must also be involved with the planning of the measures to be taken to allow for prompt response to emergency situations," he said.

No one would be permitted to erect control points or closures without council approval and any installation of this nature will be removed, said Schmidt.
Suburbs apply for security measures

Theo Rawana

AT LEAST six suburbs in Johannesburg's Eastern Metropolitan sub-structure had applied for security measures, which included temporary fencing of their areas, allowing access control, the sub-structure said yesterday.

Spokesman Dalene van Wyk said a number of suburbs had made security requests after the closure of certain streets in Hurtingham Manor Extension 5. Van Wyk refused to name the suburbs, but a local newspaper said Petervale voted for road closures after a series of armed attacks.

The sub-structure was considering a draft policy on secure neighbourhoods, based on a report drawn up by the Sandton administration's urban planning and development department.

Substructure acting CEO Chris Schmidt said the security measures would not include the walling-off of suburbs.

The report would be considered by, among others, the urban development, local technical services and public safety committees before policy recommendations were made to the sub-structure's executive committee.

Meanwhile a security company reported a 45% drop in crime at Hurtingham and Glenadrienne, thanks to its golf cart patrols.

Pramadec Security CE Barry Blyth said yesterday crime had been cut by 45% by local security patrols as Hurtingham and Glenadrienne turned to private policing. "Crime has been virtually halved in the suburbs since the patrols began."

On the prospect of the concept being replicated in other suburbs, Van Wyk said: "That is why we are looking at policy on security."

Blyth said: "A strong security presence is an effective deterrent to criminals. In effect we are taking over the beat from the police, and we have proved our Cute Carts are a highly effective way to do it. They allow our security officers to drive at a speed that allows them to pay attention to what is happening around them."

The Cute Carts had been patrolling the two suburbs in 12-hour shifts for the past eight weeks. The carts, which were also being used for market research, had proved the theory that if any method decreased the crime rate, it should be used.
Province calls

By Themba Molefe
Political Correspondent

Mpumalanga’s fight against crime has begun in earnest with a major summit involving government, business, police and the public being planned for next week.

Newly appointed Mpumalanga anti-crime task group coordinator Maxwell Nemadzivhanani said full details of the summit would be released on Monday, when the province’s crime awareness week begins.

‘People policing’

Nemadzivhanani said the campaign would include the distribution of pamphlets at schools, the erection of roadblocks and the introduction of “people policing” – in which residents will be encouraged to look out for and report crimes.

The public must put its gloves on and fight the scourge of crime. Investor confidence is at its lowest ebb in Mpumalanga because of escalating crime which should now come to a halt,” said Nemadzivhanani.

Anti-crime measures to be implemented after the intended summit will also be subject to the intense scrutiny of various police commissioners and Mpumalanga MEC for safety and security Mr Steve Mabona.

Premier Mathews Phosa is also being consulted and briefed, Nemadzivhanani said.

He told Sowetan: “Mpumalanga is a transit area for criminals. It is the drug trafficking, gun smuggling and poachers’ route. These crimes will also be combated in the new strategy.”

He noted that car hijacking, armed robbery and rape remain among the top 10 crime categories in the province.

New Mpumalanga anti-crime boss outlines campaign

Referring to the extent and spread of crime in the province he said: “New crime fighting strategies must formulate policies to accommodate all areas.”

Nemadzivhanani, who is a former general secretary and still a member of the Pan Africanist Congress, is an anti-crime and intelligence expert whose skills were honed during his years in exile in Africa and abroad.

Cooperation

He said that since his appointment last month he had received outstanding cooperation from the police commissioners and generals in Mpumalanga.

He hoped that crime-fighting in Mpumalanga would eventually impact on national anti-crime policy.
Alarming increase in Gauteng crime figures

BY DEREK RODNEY
Crime Reporter

Violent crime in Gauteng is still on the increase despite major police efforts to reverse the spiral of murder and mayhem.

Crime experts yesterday released alarming statistics for 1995 and made an urgent plea for all major role-players to consider more stringent action - especially in the granting of bail - to bring down the crime wave.

Comparative statistics show 27 392 more cases of violent crime last year than in 1994.

The National Crime Information Management Centre, Gauteng, revealed that 666 283 cases were reported in 1995 and 638 891 the previous year.

Police classify violent crimes as murder, robbery, rape, hijacking, assault, taxi violence, hostel violence, and attacks on people in or around their homes.

Figures for 1995 show massive increases in truck hijacking (125.4%), hostel violence (31.8%), taxi violence (21.2%), assault (20.2%), rape (16.5%) and passenger vehicle hijacking (10.3%).

While there was a drop of 2.3% in Gauteng's murder rate, the province still recorded one-third of the country's murders.

Other crimes on the decrease last year were robbery with aggravating circumstances (7%) and the murder of police (23.2%).

“Minor” crimes, such as shoplifting and theft, decreased from 69 209 cases in 1994 to 48 708.

Safety and security MEC Jesse Duarte, accompanied by provincial police commissioner Sharna Maharaj, has toured Gauteng police stations to see what they are doing to improve efficiency.

During a visit to Duduzo, near Heidelberg, yesterday, Duarte said police were hampered by the sheer size of the province, the lack of logistical support on the ground and the uneven distribution of police officers in disadvantageous areas.

But Duarte stressed: “We must concentrate on what we've got and what to do with it, rather than throwing money at inflating the SAPS's size.”

27 392 more cases ... massive leap in reports of murders, robberies, rapes and hijackings in Gauteng from 1994 to 1995.
Crime takes toll on Cantena's psyche
Ambassador may quit after second robbery

By Aime Thom

Lebanese ambassador Charbel Stephan is threatening to quit the country after being assaulted by five armed robbers in his Lower Houghton, Johannesburg home - the second time in 10 days that he has been robbed.

"It is not safe and I am contemplating asking my government to leave," said Stephan whose nephew Mansour Stephan was escorting a guest to the gate at 11pm last night when the gang struck.

"Mansour was busy locking the gate when the men who had been hiding in the bushes appeared and held a handgun to his head," said Stephan. "They tied his hands with wire.

"They threatened him and ordered him to take them to the ambassador. I was in the bathroom when they burst through the door."

Stephan and his nephew were assaulted by four of the men and kicked in the face. The other robber filled a bag with household items including a cellphone and mobile phone.

"They kept on asking for money and I told them I didn't keep money in the house," said Stephan.

They handcuffed Stephan and hit him again when the safe was found to be empty.

"I have a firearm, but had no opportunity to use it," said Stephan who managed to activate the panic alarm. "They fled when the alarm went off."

Norwood police arrived minutes later and Stephan was taken to a local hospital and treated before returning home. Police have posted two guards in the grounds.

"Two days ago robbers broke a window and stole R50 000 worth of items," said Stephan. "I immediately sent a note to foreign affairs begging for protection, but there was no reaction."

"In my country, which is small, we have a special unit for protecting embassies. It is a shame for South Africa not to do the same," Stephan added.

He said other embassies, including those of Jordan and Kuwait, had been attacked in Pretoria.

Stephan has been ambassador to South Africa for four years. He asked his nephew to join him as he is single and "I didn't want to be here alone."
Diplomats protest row

Burying upset, but understaffed police can't cope

PROTESTS - Hands off police protection

The hopeful 7.

Ak 22/5/1986
Top-level talks about attacks on envoys

PRETORIA. Police protection at more than 100 diplomatic missions is expected to be discussed at a high-level meeting today.

The meeting between Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi and all the foreign ambassadors will be at the Union Buildings this afternoon.

Ambassador I-Cheng Loh of Taiwan, the doyen of the diplomatic corps in South Africa, said Mr Mufamadi would brief them on the government's National Crime Prevention Strategy.

The NCPS was launched by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki yesterday.

Mr Loh said he expected some ambassadors to raise the issue of police protection at embassies with Mr Mufamadi.

"There is concern in certain quarters about this matter," said Mr Loh.

He said they would ask Mr Mufamadi to consider the possibility of linking security alarms at embassies to police stations in their areas.

The alarms were already linked to security companies contracted by the embassies and linking them to police stations would not need additional police, he said.

Today's meeting follows an attack on Sunday on Lebanon's interim ambassador, Charbel Stephan, who was handcuffed and roughly up by thugs at his residence in Houghton, Johannesburg. The intruders stole about R10 000 in cash and goods.

This followed an incident on May 10 when burglars broke into the Lebanese embassy and stole R50 000 of goods.

Other embassies have also been broken into.

National Police Commissioner George Fivaz said yesterday it was vital that effective joint strategies be found to counter the impact of crime on foreign diplomats.

He said it could not be regarded as the sole responsibility of the police to ensure the safety of foreign diplomats, even if sufficient police personnel were available to provide permanent protection.

"Police had agreed to help beef up security at foreign diplomats' homes, but the thin blue line was already stretched it might have to employ a private security company to protect its own head offices," Commissioner Fivaz said.
Top-level talks on attacks on envoys

The Argus Correspondent

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“There is concern in certain quarters about this matter,” said Mr Loh.

He said in most countries security at embassies was provided by special police guards.

“We realise it is not possible to do that in South Africa because there are not enough policemen,”

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Police had agreed to help beef up security at foreign diplomats’ homes, but the thin blue line was already so stretched it might have to employ a private security company to protect its own head office, Commissioner Fivaz said.

The protection of foreign diplomats “was vital to secure investor and economic confidence in South Africa”.

He said it was a top priority that “all relevant role-players” become involved, including “the diplomatic community, the police and even the Business Against Crime initiative”.

Commissioner Fivaz said crime against foreign diplomats had been magnified by the “unprecedented increase” of diplomatic representation in the country.
Diplomats, police to talk about increased security

The Argus Correspondent

PRETORIA - A top level meeting is to be held between police and the diplomatic corps to discuss ways of improving security and preventing further attacks on diplomats.

This was announced yesterday at a briefing chaired by Safety and Security Minister Sidney Mufamadi and attended by more than 100 members of the diplomatic corps.

The meeting followed an attack on a member of the Lebanese diplomatic mission at one of the mission's residences in Johannesburg last Sunday night.

Deputy Safety and Security Minister Joe Matthews told the gathering the attack could have been a blessing in disguise.

"We can now do something about providing a better level of protection and security to members of the diplomatic corps before the problem becomes too deadly," said Mr Matthews.

Mufamadi said police would do everything possible with limited resources to provide a higher level of protection for diplomats - especially at embassies, high commissions, consulates and residences.

He said increased patrolling, again within the limits of resources, would be launched in areas with a high concentration of diplomatic missions or residences.

"But there is not much we can do to stop a diplomat from being mugged on Commissioner Street in Johannesburg," he said.

Mr I-Cheng Loh, Republic of China ambassador and doyen of the diplomatic corps in South Africa, said the corps was willing to help and would make available experience and information from their own countries that could help the police.

No date was set for the meeting but Mr Mufamadi said he wanted it to be held as soon as possible.

This was agreed to by the large diplomatic corps contingent.
Diplomats demand
govt action on crime

Attacks worry envoys who feel authorities should
at least provide some patrols to help protect them

Diplomats yesterday asked
the Government to fulfil
its duty to protect inter-
national representatives, their
homes and offices.

The call came after Safety and
Security Minister Sydney Mu-
framadi had briefed diplomats on
the National Crime Prevention
Strategy approved by the Cabinet
on Wednesday – days after an
attack on Lebanese ambassador
Charbel Stephan at his residence
in Johannesburg.

The dean of the diplomatic
corps, Chinese ambassador I-ching
Loh, pointed out to Mufamadi
that South Africa had a special
duty under international conven-
tions to protect diplomatic homes
and offices.

"Could the Government of
South Africa have taken certain
means to implement this law and
fulfil its duty?" he asked.

I-ching said dozens of crimes
had been committed against
diplomats in the past six months.

Mufamadi said the Govern-
ment and diplomats had a joint
responsibility for their protection,
and appealed for co-operation on
crime prevention.

One diplomat said interna-
tional representatives had begun
to lose confidence in government
dealings with crime, noting that
many incidents against diplomats
went unreported.

Another diplomat appealed
for urgent preventive and deter-
rent measures to protect inter-
national representatives.

"We would like to see now
and then a patrol ... it should not
be too difficult," he said.

Mufamadi said immediate
steps had been taken to patrol
areas with a concentration of
diplomatic missions and resi-
dences. - Sapa.
Clothing, textile industry hit by strike

More than 3,000 workers in the clothing and textile industry in parts of the Eastern Cape are on strike in a protest against "starvation wages", a statement from the Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union said yesterday. A union official said some workers were being paid as little as R48 a week. He named nine companies affected by the strike and said most were Taiwanese owned. The union is demanding a R30-a-week increase. – Sapa.

Special patrol for embassies

A special police patrol has been set up to protect embassies following three burglaries in the past six months. Minister of Safety and Security Sydney Mufamadi said there had been a burglary at the Swiss embassy in Claremont, Cape Town, during which valuables including a string of pearls and two pairs of earrings were stolen. In break-ins at the Lebanese embassy in Norwood, Johannesburg, burglars netted goods and cash totalling more than R200,000. – Own Correspondent.
Innovative plan to free CBD of rampant crime

By KURT SWART

Saturation policing around Johannesburg's crime-plagued CBD will ensure the area becomes a flourishing haven of peace and security. An intensively patrolled "safety lung" is to be established, where citizens and tourists can interact in an attractive and safe environment, says Gauteng Safety and Security MEC Jesse Duarte.

The "vision document" envisaging a crime-free CBD was announced at a press conference by Duarte and provincial Police Commissioner Sharna Maharaj.

"The safety lung policy initiative is an integral component of the ministry's broad vision to reduce the level of crime in the CBD to improve economic growth and development," said Duarte.

The concept, seen as an integral part of CBD redevelopment, will extend from Marshall Street behind the Carlton Centre to Park Station in the north, and from Sauer Street in the west to Von Westphal Street in the east.

It would entail dividing the city into blocks and creating "sectoral policing", installing closed-circuit television monitoring, increasing police visibility with motorcycle and foot patrols, intensifying tourist policing, and designating areas for hawkers.

"This would lead to the reduction of crimes such as mugging, car theft and armed violence, and would enhance social and economic life," said Duarte.

Duarte announced that all Gauteng legislature buildings, hospitals and schools would be proclaimed gun-free zones. The cost of gun safes was being investigated and the policy would be implemented as soon as possible, she said.

"The essence of a gun-free vision is to restrict the carrying of firearms and so reduce the potential of violent crime. In the past six months Gauteng has seen a dramatic increase in serious crime. This includes housebreaking, and the use of firearms in housebreaking has increased so much that it has become almost the norm."

Economically motivated crimes such as burglary had also increased. "Gauteng is overflowing with 18- to 25-year-olds who cannot find jobs. These people are the main perpetrators and are often recruited by gangs and syndicates."

We have formed a technical implications committee, which is not just another committee. It is different. This is an implementing committee, monitoring how each department puts the plan into action, and the successes and weaknesses.

"Who are we arresting? Mainly young black males between 16 and 35. I think this is an alarming statistic. The issue is economic development."

Crime statistics for 1995 were announced, and showed an increase from 1994's 698,891 incidents in Gauteng to 666,283.

Among "serious crimes" there was a 2.3% decrease to 5,519 in murders; but there were alarming increases in burglary (11,356 to 15,988 - 40.5%), rape (10,672 to 12,448 - 16.5%) and car hijackings (7,828 to 8,748 - 10%).

Part of the ministry's programme was the safety lung concept, which, said deputy director for policy Sylvester Rakgoadi, would form part of the transformation of the city.

The CBD had undergone enormous change and in the past four years had been characterised by a sharp decline, with businesses moving to the northern suburbs.

"A major change is that the largest groups of consumers now come from black communities in the southern, western and eastern sectors of the metropolitan area, rather than from the northern sector which supports the Sandton and Randburg CBDs," said Rakgoadi.

Quality of life had declined and the overall increase in crime had created a threatening perception of the city.

TO PAGE 2
Plan to slash CBD crime

We need to change this perception to attract investment. The CBD remains the economic heartland of the region, particularly in terms of shopping, entertainment and cultural facilities for most of the population.

Rahgozdi said the plan involved creating more pedestrian space for people to interact, including public markets, and creating a pedestrian plaza by closing some roads to public transport.

"The most affected will be the minibus taxi industry. Routes for taxis would be confined to the periphery of the city. Discussion with the taxi industry will ensue and a public participation programme would be embarked upon to solicit views of passengers and the general public. This will serve to popularise the safety city concept."

The safety city concept would involve a wide range of "relevant stakeholder groups". This would also entail an inclusive and transparent process involving relevant government departments and civil society.

"The Johannesburg Stock Exchange wanted to move from the city, but our plan, which will be implemented in stages, has kept them here." Police tourist offices had already been erected and tourists could use policemen as their guides. Sectoral policing will be introduced next month, along with motorcycle and foot patrols.

Duarte thanked the business sector for responding to government initiatives. OK Bazaar Group had committed itself to installing the monitoring cameras in the CBD. SA Breweries had donated motorcycles for sectoral policing. BMW had obtained 100 high-powered vehicles for the highway patrol and Liberty Life would sponsor entrepreneurial centres for youths.
Tourists abducted: SA crime in world focus

JOHANNESBURG — The international focus on South African crime intensified again after the dramatic hijacking and subsequent disappearance of three tourists, believed to be British.

The men had hired an airport shuttle microbus to take them from Johannesburg International Airport to their Sandton hotel late on Thursday night. Police have been unable to establish any trace of the men — or their identities — since they were hijacked by five armed men a short while later in the northern suburb of Marlboro.

The driver was thrown from the vehicle during the incident. He recalled yesterday how the men had appeared “terrified” as they were driven away.

He reported the incident to the police, sparking an all-night search centred on Alexandra township. Police reinforcements were brought out from as far as the Vaal Triangle and Pretoria to assist. A search helicopter was also used.

Yesterday morning about 11am police found the empty silver-grey metallic microbus hidden off the road between shacks in Alexandra after an anonymous tip-off. Residents in the surrounding shacks said they had no idea when or how the bus had got there.

Despite of the manhunt that swept through the township until late yesterday, police had last night yet to establish the whereabouts or identities of the three men. It is understood they were still searching airline records for any information that could

To page 4, see picture

P.T.O.
Tourists abducted: SA crime in world focus

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To page 4, see picture
Police praised for action against gang

POLICE PRaised FOR
Laundrum Residents to March on Drugs

By ACCOUN REEVES
Police strive to combat crime

By Mokgadi Pela

A SENIOR Katlehong police officer has reiterated his commitment to ending crime in the East Rand township and thereby improving the quality of life of residents.

“We intend dealing a mortal blow to crime through our proactive policing unit using the Broken Window strategy,” Senior Superintendent Phillip Mokosana told Sowetan in an interview yesterday.

According to criminologists, the theory says the repair of a single broken window in a building will deter further abuse of the building.

If left unrepaired, however, virtually every window in the structure will eventually be smashed.

“While the unattained truth is that crime in Katlehong and elsewhere is assuming unprecedented levels and has to be addressed immediately.

“From now on we are prepared to handle all types of crime with the same seriousness. Tolerating public disorder creates a street environment that intimidates law-abiding people and opens the way for more serious crimes.”

Strategies police will use in Katlehong include:

- Getting illegal arms off the streets.
- Breaking the cycle of domestic violence.
- Reducing thefts and hijackings of vehicles.
- Cracking down on petty offenders.
- Driving the drug dealers out of the township.
- Curbing the youth violence and crime in schools and on the streets.
- Rooting out corruption within the South African Police Services and;
- Increasing levels of safety and security through improved quality of life.

If people committing petty crimes are left unpunished, this will create an atmosphere of tolerance for disorder and soon rapists, burglars and drug dealers will flourish.

Early repair of broken windows saves the whole building
Teens 'responsible for many hijackings'

Deborah Fine

TEENAGERS, some as young as 15, carried out a large percentage of car hijackings in Gauteng, suspended Brixton murder and robbery unit head Supt Charles Landman told the Rand Supreme Court yesterday.

He was testifying at the trial of Zuko Ntsa, 18, and a 17-year-old boy charged with fatally shooting Johannesburg doctor Stephen Pon during a hijacking at the Johannesburg Hospital last year.

Gauteng special anti-hijacking unit head Sen Supt David van Vuuren said it was possible that crime syndicates were recruiting youths to carry out hijackings because juvenile offenders were less likely to be imprisoned or receive stiff jail sentences, on account of their youth.
Caution: Anti-Crime Group at odds with Peaded

We cannot afford to overlook or overlook the
risks an supporter of Peaded, Peaded.

We will examine all legal means of solving
the matter to the full extent of our
powers.

The week begins in earnest.

In the next few days, we will receive
reports of several incidents involving the
community and its supporters.

We must act quickly to ensure a peaceful
resolution.

Peaded is not a supporter of Peaded.

We are dedicated to resolving the issues
fairly and justly.

In the meantime, we encourage all
citizens to remain calm and peaceful.

We will continue to monitor the situation
and keep you informed.

Thank you for your support.

Peaded

On: 24/12/2017
Caught in the Middle: When attractors are being made to improve the lot of millions who live in poverty.}

By Dick Koch

It's a Catch-22 when development is

anthem to the criminal underground
Crime: Duarte calls a s

Death of soccer star Doctor Khumalo's father in hijacking 'the last straw' after series of murders

BY GOSA NIKHLOVU
AND MIKE MAPA

T
he murder during a car hijacking of a former high-profile soccer star, who was the father of international player Doctor Khumalo, has been followed by Gauteng Safety and Security MEC Jesse Duarte calling an urgent meeting with top police officers to discuss the rising crime wave.

Duarte said last night, hours after the killing of Blaauw “Pro” Khumalo (50), that crime in the province had reached crisis proportions and it demanded decisive steps. Representatives of the army, intelligence services and the provincial justice department are expected to attend today’s summit meeting.

The decision follows the murders of several high-profile people in the province, including Khumalo and top German businessman Erich Elmer. There was an assassination attempt yesterday on leading horse trainer David Ferraris and, last week, an attack on the home of Constitutional Court president Mr Justice Chaskalson.

And nationwide this week five policemen have been killed - the latest being two detectives-sergeants in Sehlangwe who were attacked at the Pretoria car theft unit (see report on Page 5).

This morning, police were confirmed of finding arrests in connection with the murders of detective-sergeants Richard Khosa and Michael Balyot, who were gunned down on Tuesday afternoon outside a house in Sehlangwe, north of Pretoria, in what is believed to be a taxi-war related killing.

Khumalo, a former Kaizer Chiefs and Monisha Swallows stalwart, died at Baragwanath Hospital after he was shot from behind when four unknown men approached him in Orlando East, Soweto, late on Tuesday.

The men fled the scene in his VW Jetta. A woman was arrested later in Hillbrow when she was found driving a vehicle fitting the description of Khumalo’s car. She is expected to appear in court soon.

Hundreds of family members and friends gathered at Khumalo’s home in Soweto near Germiston last night to comfort his widow, Mabel.

Amid the grief, the family are awaiting the arrival of Doctor Khumalo from the United States today.

As the only son, custom demands that he be involved in making decisions, including the funeral details.

Khumalo’s only daughter, Fikile, said she was not certain what time her younger brother would arrive.

Lifelong friend and co-player Benny “Goodman” Maseko struggled with tears as he recalled memories of their playing together.

The two met as juniors in the fourth team and eventually worked their way into the pride of Monisha Swallows.

“I am still dizzy and confused. I know he is dead but I just can’t believe it yet,” Maseko said.

Gauteng MEC for Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture Peter Shosaana, along with hundreds of other people, sent his condolences, at the same time condemning the crime situation.

Soccer personalities were in shock. Chiefs’ managing director Kaizer Motaung described Khumalo as “a perfect gentleman who would not hurt a fly”.

In Cape Town, police have launched a new initiative to have suspects convicted on gang-related crime in a minimum of five years.

Western Cape CP Leon Wessels said the part of a broader plan aimed at breaking the hold of gangsters and criminal elements.

He said the police are working with the justice department to depart...
Duarte calls a summit

Family portrait... Eliakim "Pro" Khumalo with his son, Bafana Bafana midfielder Doctor Khumalo. Eliakim Khumalo was shot dead by car hijackers in Orlando East, Soweto. The photograph was taken from the family album.

Malo's father in hijacking 'the last straw' after series of murders

Lifelong friend and co-player Benny "Goodman" Maseko struggled with tears as he recalled memories of their playing together. The two met as juniors in the fourth team and eventually worked their way into the pride of Mokola Swallows.

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In Cape Town police have launched a new initiative to have suspects convicted on any drug or gang-related crime locked up for a minimum of five years.

Western Cape Commissioner Leon Wessels said the move was part of a broader police strategy aimed at breaking the stranglehold gangsters and drug dealers had on the community.

He said the police would hold talks with the justice and corrections services departments to ensure that suspects convicted on any drug or gang-related charge faced a minimum sentence of five years in prison.

Wessels also announced that a team of 19 crack detectives from police headquarters in Pretoria, led by Director Wilm Minnaar, had arrived in Cape Town to support local police in their fight against druglords, gangsters and corruption in the police force.
Bilz on hot spots

Angolan war veterans lead offensive against criminals

By Frances Due
You're not tough enough. Pagan chief tells Jóburg
Pagad slams Gauteng’s ‘soft tactics’ in drug war

CLINTON ASARY
Ovan Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. – Cape Town-based People against Gangsterism and Drugs (Pagad) chief co-ordinator Farouk Jaffer has hit out at the tactics used by organisers of today's proposed anti-drug march in the Johannesburg suburb of Bosmont, calling them ineffective.

He also lashed out at the poor support a meeting to discuss the march received from the community. He said he went to the meeting because he had read a story about rape in the area.

"That is why I actually went to the meeting, after reading the story I wanted to see how the community would react. If I were a parent living in the area and had read that shocking story, then I would definitely make a point of going to the meeting, or finding out if any meeting was being planned," he said.

Jaffer was referring to a report in the Star newspaper. It said that one in three girls attending high school in the neighbouring areas of Westbury and Coronationville were likely to be raped by school mates or gangs.

"But the support the community gave the meeting was a disgrace, and judging by that, the march could be a total failure."

In Cape Town, we never get less than 2 000 people at meetings of this nature," he said.

The planned march takes place in the West Rand suburb today, with the main focus to highlight the drug problem in the area.

"I am very disappointed, this type of action will achieve nothing, you must take the direct route and confront the problem head on, that is what we did in Cape Town."

"The only way to get results is to take the police to the drug lord's house and hand over a memorandum. Give him 24 hours to stop business, and then take appropriate action," Jaffer said.

Around 80 people turned up at the meeting that was held in a school hall in Bosmont on Tuesday night and Jaffer's appearance caught everyone by surprise.

His attendance also seemed to leave some of the organisers in a difficult position, as they had tried to play down Jaffer's approach to the matter, and did not want today's march to be associated with Pagad.

"You have to be militant, people in this area are sure to be left behind," Jaffer said.

"But there seems to be no strategy for today's march."
Crime threatens small businesses in Soweto

BY BONGE KELECHI

The crime rate in Soweto is threatening the jobs of residents employed by small businesses, some of which have been forced to close shop.

A businesswoman, who wanted to be identified only as Zani, said that after her bread business was robbed more than four times, twice at gunpoint, she decided to abandon it.

"I feared for the lives of my employees and decided this was not worth it," she said, adding that all the robberies had occurred in one month, crippling her financially.

She said criminals were making it difficult for Sowetans to open businesses, create new jobs and develop themselves.

Despite attempts by police to curb crime in the area, a feeling of helplessness has gripped the small-business sector.

One businessman said that although some attacks were reported, most business owners were disappointed by the quick release of the assailants.

Thugs have also hindered the success of a brick-making project started by Twilight Youth Centre for Soweto's unemployed youth after four armed youngsters shot at the project co-ordinator during an attempted robbery.

Lucas Mogwerane said he was attacked outside the brickyard by four youngsters who pointed guns at him and demanded his car keys and money. Mogwerane was shot in the chest during a fight with the robbers, but is recovering.

"I am very disappointed because this means we can no longer be free in our own brickyard and township. This could also mean an end to the jobs created for these youngsters."

Police confirmed the attack and added that all cases reported by small businesses were being investigated.
Serious crime has nosedived, say police

Operation Urban Strike a huge success, say upbeat officers

BY ANSO THOM AND LARA SMITH

Serious crime in Johannesburg and Soweto is reported to have dropped dramatically since the launch of Operation Urban Strike a month ago and police say it will drop even lower.

They have claimed that notorious gang hotspot Westbury, Johannesburg, experienced its first crime-free week last week as a result of police action.

More than 2000 people have been arrested during the anti-crime drive so far, but police emphasise that the success of the operation follows increased police visibility, which acts as a strong deterrent to criminals.

Some 765 roadblocks have been set up in and around Johannesburg since the beginning of last month and more than 290,000 cars, 87,437 people and 1,027 premises have been searched.

This has resulted in the recovery of four stolen trucks, 57 stolen vehicles, 44 handguns and various other stolen items, including hi-fi, television sets, video machines, jewellery and cellular telephones, said police spokesman Superintendent Alta Stapelberg.

Quantities of dagga, cocaine and Mandrax were confiscated and police also seized counterfeit money, false identity documents and false passports.

Among those arrested were six people for murder, 12 for attempted murder, four for rape and attempted rape, 35 for theft, 25 for housebreaking and theft from homes and businesses, two for kidnapping and one for hijacking.

About 1000 extra policemen from surrounding provinces were deployed in the Johannesburg and Soweto police areas at the beginning of September, when the operation was launched.

Briefing Gauteng Police Commissioner Shamina Maharaj this week, local station commissioners reported declines in priority crimes of between 50 and 60%.

“We meet every Wednesday with all the station commissioners, as well as commanders of specialised units. They supply us with feedback as well as their plans for the coming week,” Maharaj said at a meeting in Braamfontein on Wednesday.

“Increased police visibility has been the single most effective deterrent, as well as the choppers,” Maharaj said, adding his office was monitoring other areas surrounding Johannesburg and Soweto.

“Other police commissioners, especially in the Free State, North West Province and Northern Province, have seen an increase in serious crimes such as hijackings,” said Maharaj.

He reiterated that the operation would not end until crime had been brought under control.

“We need to change people’s perceptions. We will never get rid of crime, but we are making a difference. The levels of crime are coming down. When and if the 1000 extra police go away, our members at station level should be able to control the situation,” Maharaj said.

Johannesburg commissioner Frans Malherbe pointed out that the annual police plan was in the process of being implemented.

“This is a long-term solution with police aids such as closed circuit television and watch towers being installed. These will be working effectively once the extra men are withdrawn.”
Alarmed Fivaz wants solutions to street crime in city centre

Police Commissioner George Fivaz has reacted with alarm to reports in The Saturday Star that street crime is still rampant in central Johannesburg and has given Gauteng police five days to come up with solutions.

Reports of daily muggings and hijackings at the intersection of Bree and Sauer streets were "utterly unacceptable", particularly because they happened only a few blocks from John Vorster Square, one of SA's largest police stations, Fivaz said yesterday.

"This state of affairs indicates a serious dysfunction in both grassroots crime intelligence and community policing in the Johannesburg city centre."

The Saturday Star published pictures of muggings and thefts from vehicles during a stake-out of the Sauer-Bree street intersection. Fivaz said the revelations of daylight robbery by criminals were all the more alarming because they seemed to undermine the effectiveness of the police's Sword and Shield anti-crime plan.

"The Sword and Shield police plan is based on reclaiming the streets from criminals, especially by identifying crime hotspots. Failure to do this in South Africa's financial and economic heartland can only reflect negatively on the SAPS and discredit South Africa internationally," he said.

"I have therefore already directed Gauteng provincial commissioner Sharma Maharaj to personally remedy this matter... and furnish me with proposed remedial steps within five days."

Johannesburg Commissioner Frans Malherbe claimed crime has dramatically decreased in Johannesburg and Soweto since an extra 1 000 policemen were deployed there for Operation Urban Strike. He said he was unaware of the problem of gangs targeting motorists in the city centre.
Shopkeepers 'crying wolf' overload a stressed force

By STUART KELLY

Police operating in the Smal Street district in central Johannesburg are buckling under the sheer weight of panic alarm calls from shop-owners using the Business Watch armed response system.

The police sergeant whose job it is to sit in front of the computer screen monitoring calls has to watch the printer churn out between 20 and 30 panic alarms every day - 98% of which, he says, are false.

"Nonetheless, the deal we have with Business Watch means that we have this duty to get to each one - fast. Somewhere under five minutes," said Captain Anton Jonker, officer in charge of the Smal Street rapid reaction unit.

This means investing an awful amount of time, expense and police equipment to maintain a security business venture many shop-owners in the area now believe they could just as well do without.

"They came and installed a fancy system with a panic button and everything," said Brij Desai, owner of President Man's Shop in President Street. "They also said the police would be regularly patrolling the area and signing my register booklet every day. Where are they now? All the companies seem just as bad," he added.

Once keen on the system, police are struggling to keep up. Already the renowned "scrambler unit", which once openly prowled the city streets, has been rendered obsolete. Only three of the original 12 motorcycles donated by CBD businessmen are in working order. The rest lie rusting in the backyards of the policemen who once rode them.

Spare parts are expensive and Busi-
At least 13 murders a day in Gauteng, statistics show

One thousand women raped every month in region while N Province is safest place to live in terms of murder

STAFF REPORTERS
Cape Town

Crime figures released in Parliament yesterday confirm Gauteng's status as the crime and murder centre of South Africa.

Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi said Gauteng experienced 2,624 murders in the first six months of the year, a toll topped only by KwaZulu Natal where crime and political violence claimed 3,265 lives in the same period.

The figures show that the monthly murder toll in Gauteng only once dropped below 400 when 379 murders were committed in April. The worst month was March with 515 murders.

The safest province in terms of murder is the Northern Province which suffered 132 murders in the six-month period while the Western Cape had 1,554 and the Eastern Cape had 1,735. Nationally, there were 11,698 murders from January to June.

Gauteng leads the pack in rape statistics with 6,183 rapes in the first six months. An average of 1,000 women are raped in the province each month.

The province also accounts for nearly a third of all burglaries.

Ten of the 11 men who appeared at Wednesday's mass identity parade at the Brixton police station were identified by some of the 210 hijacking victims.

Superintendent Marius Johnstone of the Brixton Vehicle Theft Unit said three of the men appeared in the Randburg Magistrates' Court yesterday to face charges of armed robbery.

He said the three men appeared in relation to a hijacking in Sandton last month.

The case of a policeman who was pointed out as a hijacker by a victim at the parade was passed on to police at Fairland, where the alleged hijacking took place.

Johnstone denied allegations by human rights lawyer Jan Munnik that examinations showed that electric shock had been administered on suspects.

Although no shock equipment was discovered at Brixton during a raid on Wednesday morning, Munnik said yesterday there was "prima facie evidence" of torture.

Johnstone said police were willing to have further independent medical examinations to show "we have nothing to hide".
Mass effort to put crime on the run

COMMUNITY

A critical tool in the fight against crime is the community policing strategy. It is essential that residents and businesses work together to prevent crime in their neighborhoods. Community members can help by reporting suspicious activity, attending community meetings, and volunteering for neighborhood watch programs. In addition, local businesses can play a role by installing surveillance cameras and implementing stricter security measures.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development initiatives have been successful in attracting new businesses to the area. Several new companies have opened in recent years, creating jobs and increasing the local economy. The community is also working to improve public transportation options, making it easier for residents to get to work and other destinations.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment is a top priority for the community. Efforts are being made to improve air and water quality, as well as to protect local wildlife. The community is also pushing for more green spaces and parks, providing residents with opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

HEALTH

The community is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles. Fitness centers and park areas are being developed, and programs are being offered to encourage physical activity. The community is also working to improve access to healthy food options, with more local farmers markets and grocery stores offering fresh produce.
New York’s successful formula of tackling petty crime first begins to take effect in downtown Jo’burg

BY CRAIG URQUHART

Uniformed policemen are to be posted in Johannesburg’s crime hotspots. And it is understood the postings will be “long-term” — until problems have been rooted out.

This is a key proposal of the plan presented to Commissioner George Fick by regional police chiefs yesterday.

It follows strong criticism of policing in the city centre after the Saturday Star last weekend published a series of pictures of criminals smashing windows and stealing from cars in traffic. The photographs and reports highlighted the crime-infested Bree and Buitenkant streets intersection.

Other proposals for a new-style policing of the city include a set of controls aimed at the activities of hawkers and misfits and MEC for Safety and Security Joao Duarte yesterday confirmed that police were already following the New York City police department’s highly-successful “broken windows” plan, which focuses on rooting out petty criminal activity as well as more serious crimes.

In addition to 16 arrests for serious offences in the city this week, there were also 20 for minor offences such as jaywalking and drinking in public.

Duarte said another measure that is already being initiated was the installation of closed-circuit television cameras at high crime areas and the more congested parts of the city.

Her department is looking at moving informal traders off the pavements and into “market areas”. There are also plans under way to spend routes where misfits and taxis can drive in the city.

She also plans increasing the number of policemen on foot patrolling in the city centre. “We have to win this city back — we plan to restate respect for the law.”

Within hours of the newspaper’s report on the break-in, motorists and pedestrians had to endure, policemen swarmed into the area and quickly regained what had become one of the city’s favourite hanging grounds for criminals. However, there are indications the criminals simply moved elsewhere.

Just two blocks away, at the corner of Bree and West streets, eyewitnesses said that saw criminals smashing windows of parked vehicles and caravans in broad daylight.

A local business owner, who has witnessed numerous vehicle break-ins and assaults on pedestrians and motorists in recent months, said he had contacted the criminals who operate in the area.

“We were told, ‘you have your business and we have ours — don’t get involved’,” he said.

On Thursday afternoon there was also an attempted hijacking near the corner of Bree and Beethoven streets, but the criminals fled when they were unable to gain control of the vehicle.

David Plessis, manager of a security firm, wrote to Fick last week to complain about crime, including muggings he had seen over the past month. Three policemen were dispatched to the area almost immediately and one man was arrested.

TO PAGE 2

SMASH AND GRAB: Armand Kazimovski looks on white Ishunti Scotia repairs his window after it had been smashed by criminals who broke his sunglasses in the city centre yesterday.

PHOTOGRAPH: RIAN HORN

Anti-crime campaign

FROM PAGE 1

He appealed to members of the public to report all criminal activities, no matter how small.

However, he said the police were nowhere near in readiness to react to this violence in the city centre.

The only way for us to resolve this violence is to remove the police from this area, he said.

Two days later, he received calls from readers in the area.

They told him they felt much safer.

“I’ve taken my family to the Mall of Africa because they felt safer,” said a young man.

Another said, "We were burgled recently on Monday. But I don’t feel it’s as bad now."

In the city centre, however, the violence continues.

A man was killed in the Sandton area, while another was stabbed in the city centre.

In another part of the city, two men were killed in a shooting.

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Report sets off alarm bells over polluting in the CBD

Business Watch, too, seen to be falling - and overhaul is recommended.

News/9

October 19, 1996
An American security specialist says international syndicates are the Aids virus of organised crime – expert

Johnnesburg: a prime target
Cops strike back in city crime war

By CRAIG URQUHART

Three weeks after the Saturday Star exposed how criminals operated freely at intersections in the city centre, police say they are beginning to win the battle at Johannesberg's crime hotspots.

However, the fight is far from over and there are still reports of attacks on motorists and pedestrians at the notorious Bree and Sauer intersection.

In the week following the report, law and order finally returned to the area which had seen hundreds of incidents of petty and violent crime this year.

Police reinforcements - uniformed and undercover - were sent into the area and shopkeepers, hawkers and pedestrians breathed a sigh of relief.

Over the past two weeks, however, there have been indications that criminals are trying to regain control of one of their favourite hunting grounds.

On Tuesday afternoon an unidentified motorist chased two men who had climbed on his vehicle at the Bree-Sauer intersection. He was unable to apprehend the men, who failed to steal anything.

Not fast enough

On Wednesday afternoon, Joannes Krus, a member of the ANC's Gauteng parliamentary caucus, was waiting for the robot to change on Sauer Street when her passenger window was shattered.

"I know this intersection notorious, so I purposely stopped in the middle lane. I didn't see a thing - he came from nowhere and my only reaction was to accelerate away," she said.

However, Krus was not fast enough to prevent her assailant from removing her handbag, which contained R90 and her "life story". Her birth certificate, identity document, house keys and cheque book were probably tossed into the nearest bin.

"This is ridiculous. Does Johannesburg have to be vacated by 5.30pm every day because everyone is so intimidated?" she asked.

When the Saturday Star accompanied members of the robbery reaction unit on Thursday, there were undercover policemen operating in the area who were responsible for a spectacular arrest following the killing of a taxi driver at the Bree Street taxi rank.

After hearing gunfire, the policemen apprehended two suspects at the corner of Jeppe and West streets. A stolen police firearms with the serial number filed away was also recovered.

Police say that while crime figures are way down in the city and they have identified and tackled other hotspots since the Saturday Star's initial report, a shortage of personnel is preventing them from stamping out crime altogether.

"We are in a situation of crisis. We need more officers and more equipment," said area commissioner Frans Malherbe. He said the moratorium on the recruitment of new members into the service - effective since 1994 - had seen the number of policemen working in the city drop 24% below the recommended quota.

"We're not happy, but we realise that there is a lack of funds from the government at the moment."

However, Malherbe said he was confident that the moratorium would be reversed and he would be able to forge ahead with plans to outfit criminal activity in the city.

Cameras

These include the installation of hi-tech closed-circuit television cameras in the city, including the Bree-Sauer intersection - the erection of observation points, lookout towers and platforms in high-density areas, and the transfer of senior policemen to actively combat crime.

The robbery reaction unit has closely monitored the Bree-Sauer intersection. In recent weeks and claims there are uniformed and undercover policemen patrolling the area.

The unit, which consists of 40 undercover policemen, has arrested 72 suspects in the city over the past three weeks for crimes including murder, attempted murder, theft of motor vehicles and possession of unlicensed firearms.

Inspector Gary Davies, second in command of the unit, said one of the problems of tackling the so-called smash and grab crimes, where motorists are targeted in their cars, is that many of the culprits are minors. When they are arrested, they claim they are working for adults and they invariably end up back on the streets.

Davies said it was imperative that motorists keep their doors locked and windows closed when driving in town to deter all the "cellphone and necklace" thieves.

Meanwhile, despite their recent successes, many policemen say morale remains low in the SAPS, mainly because the service is short-staffed.

As a trained and experienced policeman, Constable Ruben Dhillamli is stuck under a mountain of paperwork. In an office at John Vorster Square, he wants to fight crime, but he says they can't afford to let me go," Dhillamli said.

He added there were many other qualified policemen at the station who were fed down by mundane paperwork and prevented from actively combating crime.

"The answer is to get civilians off the streets to do this work for us and let the policemen do their job properly," he said.

One officer, who requested anonymity, said there was a small minority of "criminal" policemen in the service who were frustrating their efforts to combat crime and ruining the reputation for the entire SAPS.

"We know who they are. We know where and how they operate, but we just haven't been able to catch them," he said.

LOOKING FOR GUNS: Members of the robbery reaction unit searched a Hillbrow apartment on Thursday after receiving a report that unlicensed firearms were being sold. Accompanied by uniformed members of the SAPS, they thoroughly searched the flat, and an outside courtyard, but came away empty-handed.

PHOTOGRAPH: NAISHON ZAUKU
Youth held after exposé on crime in city centre

Police this week arrested a youth photographed in the Saturday Star’s recent exposé of criminal activity at the corner of Bree and Sauer streets.

The man is being held in custody and will appear in court on Monday.

And in another development on Thursday, police stationed in the area in response to the Saturday Star’s exposé arrested a man minutes after shots were fired at the Bree Street taxi rank.

Undercover members of the robbery reaction unit heard gunshots at the taxi rank and, after calling in reinforcements, chased a group of men who had just been involved in the killing of taxi driver Elliot Malhi.

Within five minutes, 14 police vehicles were at the scene and a police helicopter was circling overhead.

While the entire area was cordoned off, the robbery reaction unit members caught up with the suspected hitman a block away at the corner of Jeppe and West streets.

The man was arrested along with the driver of a getaway car and they will both appear in court on Monday.

Three weeks ago the Saturday Star exposed how criminals operated freely at intersections in the CBD.

In the week following the report, some semblance of law and order returned to the area after police flooded the area. Since then, regular patrols by uniformed police have resulted in a substantial drop in criminal activity.

SAPS spokesman Brigadier Frans Malherbe reported last night that three arrests had been made this week.

Police say they are starting to win the war against crime.

Over the past two weeks, however, there have been indications that criminals were trying to regain control of one of their favourite hunting grounds in the CBD.

SEE PAGE 8
Pretoria feeling pinch as crime declines in Johannesburg

BY DEREK RODREV
Crime Reporter

Crime in Johannesburg is declining, due largely to the influx of policemen from other provinces for Operation Urban Strike – but Egoli residents' good fortune has turned out to be far from good for their provincial neighbours north of the Jukskei River.

The latest police statistics show Pretoria is increasingly feeling the pinch of crime as syndicates move north.

Comparative statistics for Pretoria show that serious crime increased by more than 10% from September to October, which has resulted in an announcement that specialised operations will be in place over the festive season.

The increase in serious crime statistics is in sharp contrast with statistics for other Gauteng regions, which show an average decline in crime of 11% over the past few months.

In Pretoria, however, crimes such as burglaries (residential and business) and vehicle theft have shown an alarming increase over the past two months.

The police tracing unit for the area, supported by a newly established burglary assistance team, have arrested more than 70 suspects in the past two weeks.

Pretoria area commissioner Corrie Naude said: "We did take a knock in September and October, but even with the slight increase in crime, Pretoria is still safer than Johannesburg." He added there had been a significant overall decline between January and October in priority crimes such as murder, rape, hijacking and burglaries.
DP plan for crime busting hailed as 'constructive' by Government

BY MUNDLU MAKHANYA

The Democratic Party's recently released crime prevention strategy has received a thumbs up from the Safety and Security Department, which said the document would get "proper attention" from the Government.

In a statement yesterday, Safety and Security Secretary Azhar Cachalia said the "Winning the War Against Crime" document represented a constructive "departure from the reactive and unhelpful way that the crime debate has been approached thus far".

It would be referred to the National Crime Prevention Strategy Team in the Safety and Security Minister's office for consideration.

The DP released the document at the weekend as an alternative to the Government's own policies. It argues for localised anti-crime measures, the setting up of an anti-crime fund, the confiscation and sale of criminals' properties and improvement in the "effective punishment of offenders".

Cachalia said the Government "particularly welcomed" the DP's suggestion that cities and towns become the focus of crime prevention initiatives. He said this was in line with current government thinking.

He said however that the DP's proposal that Crime Prevention Councils replace Community Policing Forums would be problematic as this would make the police accountable to locally elected structures instead of the national and provincial authorities.

He said the DP's emphasis on effective punishment, victim support and the need for performance measurement would enhance government initiatives.
COPS CAN'T DO IT ALL

The latest crime statistics from Gauteng amply illustrate the effectiveness — and limitations — of putting more police on the streets.

The deployments of an extra 1,000 police officers and nearly 800 soldiers in Johannesburg and Soweto at the beginning of September brought an immediate reduction in vehicle hijackings, armed robberies, attacks in and around homes and various forms of theft.

But the operation, dubbed Urban Strike, did not prevent a simultaneous rise in murders, rapes and serious assaults. Indeed, the increased visibility of the police may have contributed to the extraordinary rise in rape reporting as victims are then encouraged to report their ordeals to the police.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

One may conclude from this that more visible and vigorous policing is effective in cutting some, but not all, crimes.

Crimes that rely on stealth or which take place behind doors or in homes, such as rape, murder and child abuse, are not preventable by simply increasing police visibility, says Gauteng police spokesman Azwimndini Nengovhela.

Nonetheless, he says, the impressive reductions in more public forms of crime such as hijackings and armed robberies indicate that raising active police deployments is indispensable to the campaign. “Maybe this will send a message to the powers that be that the moratorium on police recruitment must be lifted.”

The 140,000-strong police service loses about 5,000 officers each year through retirement and resignation. Since 1994 no new recruits have been brought in, starving the lower ranks. There are now fewer constables than sergeants.

The government has already agreed in principle to lift the two-year-old moratorium. Safety & Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi has asked police management to speed up its human resources plan that was undertaken with the amalgamation of the 11 homeland and other police forces into one.

But even with resumption of recruitment, it will take at least two years for the new police officers to become effective.

Meanwhile, crime-weary Johannesburg residents have lost patience with government’s dithering over plans to put more “bobbies” on the beat.

The city’s 22 police forums launched a petition campaign last week to put public pressure on police authorities to drop the police hiring freeze. They want more active police and more civilians to handle administrative duties.

According to the police’s own estimates, the city’s police stations are nearly 57% understaffed, requiring a further 2,000 officers to operate effectively.

Stations like Rosebank and Sandton are running 80%-65% below allocated staff levels. Rosebank is nearer 90% understaffed as only 35 of its 58 staff are actual police officers.

The shortages could be wiped out overnight if police management took steps to free the estimated 2,500 trained officers who are deskbound. All it would take to put these officers on the beat, says Johannesburg community police area board chairman Gerald Heine, is for the authorities to lift the moratorium on hiring civilians for police clerical work.

There may be as many as 500 ex-police officers in the Johannesburg area who would rejoin the force if the moratorium on hiring active police officers were also lifted, says Heine.

Campaign manager Neil Jacobsohn intends to orchestrate a letter and media publicity drive. Draft letters of support for the campaign will be sent to businesses and private citizens throughout Gauteng with the request that they be signed and forwarded to Mufamadi.

Ironically, it is the relative success of Operation Urban Strike that scheduled to end on December 20, which galvanised the forum’s campaign.

Government cites budgetary constraints as the reason for poor police staffing and says it cannot afford to raise staff levels permanently. Despite National Police Commissioner George Fivaz’s denials, the police budget seems destined for more severe cuts next year.

“If you count the cost of lost investment and job opportunities due to crime, then the money spent on policing is not a cost but an investment,” Jacobsohn says.
Mandela regrets PW's TRC stance

By ELIS MNYANDU

Durban - President Nelson Mandela said yesterday he regretted the "uncompromising stance" of former president PW Botha.

Mandela also urged Botha to go before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to explain crimes committed during his term of office.

"It is regrettable he has made a statement of that nature," Mandela said.

"His duty is to go to the TRC and give his own version of what happened," said Mandela. The president went on to say that, as things stood, the evidence seemed to point to former president Botha having knowledge "about some of the gross violations which we are complaining about".

Botha said, after two hours of talks with Truth Commission chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu on Thursday, that he had nothing to apologise for or seek amnesty for.

"I am not guilty of any deed for which I should apologise or ask for amnesty. I therefore have no intention of doing this," the 90-year-old ex-president said in a statement after talks with Tutu, who set out to seek Botha's cooperation in uncovering the past.

Mandela said Botha was an old man, no longer well, who might expect to be honoured as a former statesman.

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Red tape stymies fight against crime

By CRAIG URGUHART

The Johannesburg CBD's safety lung - a core community policing project to stamp out crime in the city - is in danger of collapsing as red tape prevents its full implementation and morale among policemen on the streets shows signs of reaching new lows.

The concept, which should have been up and running this month, has now been delayed until February and all the current role-players agree that without its full implementation, it simply cannot work.

Still, police claim they have gained the upper hand in their fight against crime, and official figures show that crime is, indeed, down in the city centre. Whether these statistics indicate a long-term downward trend or an expected reaction to Operation Urban Strike remains to be seen, but problems in the police force remain deep-rooted.

"We are gradually implementing the safety lung but it is very difficult to assess its successes so far because of the role Urban Strike has played," said Gauteng safety and security deputy director for policy Sylvester Gbgozdi.

He said Urban Strike, which has seen an extra 1,000 policemen deployed in Gauteng, would gradually be phased out over the next few months and the Safety and Security Department was currently working on contingency plans to replace the extra personnel.

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Safety lung

Gbgozdi said his department was aware that there were flaws in the policing system currently in place in the CBD.

When the Saturday Star interviewed dozens of policemen working within the jurisdiction of John Vorster Square this week, they said a shortage of equipment and policemen on the beat were preventing the safety lung from working effectively.

One senior policeman, who declined to be named, said there was "serious communication problems between management at the top and policemen on the street. I'm sure we have a shortage of equipment and manpower on the beat".

He said there was a problem with the communication between the top and the policemen, who were "not sure what is going on".

Other policemen said a fundamental flaw with policing in the CBD was that when police concentrated on high crime areas, criminals simply moved elsewhere.

This week, the manager of a supermarket on the corner of High and West streets was robbed of R20 000 by two men armed with AK-47s. Police responded within four hours after he called the police emergency number and pressed a panic button linked to John Vorster Square.

Despite incidents like this, some of the specialised units at John Vorster are chalking up remarkable successes. Over the past 48 hours the narcotics bureau has arrested 11 people and confiscated 4kg of cocaine valued at R3 million, 600 ecstasy tablets valued at R35 000 and 60kg of dagga worth about R80 000.
Pacad march to Lenasia police station

BY GOSA MUCHOVELA
Nov 25 11 96

About 150 members and supporters of the People Against Crime and Drugs (Pacad) marched to the Lenasia police station yesterday to present a second memorandum demanding that police step up their fight against crime.

They gave police until December 20 to reply.

Pacad is demanding that police be more visible, respond more quickly to calls, investigate cases faster and deal promptly with corrupt policemen.

Outside the Lenasia police station, Soraya Ibrahim, the mother of murdered 5-year-old Yaseen, broke down in tears as she related how criminals broke into her house and strangled the boy.

Members of the crowd demanded that police explain why the woman suspected of the killing had been released.

Yunus Hattia described how his son Ibrahim (29) was shot dead outside their home two years ago.

"Four hijackers waylaid me near our garage entrance. As I stepped out of the car they demanded the car keys. But just after I handed over the keys the car alarm went off at full blast. As my son walked out to see what was happening, he was shot five times through the head. The hijackers made off with the car," Hattia told the crowd.

He said the hijackers were later arrested and granted bail of R1 000 each. They skipped bail, however, and have not been seen since.

An O H Hall promised to provide the memo as demanded by the organisation.
Produce council issues warning on corruption

Louise Cook

THE Agricultural Produce Agents' Council, a statutory body regulating market agents, warned at the weekend that it would "aggressively pursue" market agents who were guilty of corruption or misconduct.

The warning followed months of investigation by the SA Police Service's Office for Serious Economic Offences (OSEO) into alleged corruption at the Johannesburg fresh produce market.

Audit firm Ernst & Young, appointed by the OSEO to help, completed a report in December. This has not been released and the firm was subsequently asked to investigate new aspects of the allegations.

The council said the public should report to it any irregularities at fresh produce markets. "The council ensures that agents comply with codes of conduct and regulations of trade. In the case of fresh produce, the council ensures that agents abide by the rules governing trust account administration."

The furor started two years ago when an investigator suggested about R400m had been lost due to mismanagement and ineffective systems. Some farmers support the allegations, saying profit has not been passed on to them and documentation fails to meet requirements.
Legal network rallies resources to help fight crime

Stephen Lauffer  30/5/97

CRIME-fighting efforts by the attorneys-general of Natal and the Witwatersrand are receiving support from lawyers in Durban and Johannesburg via a legal network organised by Business Against Crime.

Network chairman Wendy Lucas-Bull said yesterday prosecutors would receive assistance with research, preparation of cases and argument. If successful, the projects could be repeated in other jurisdictions.

The Durban project was already in full swing and initial meetings with Witwatersrand attorney-general Andre de Vries had taken place last week.

Business Against Crime board member David Gordon said major Johannesburg law firms were keen to participate and had offered help with research and management techniques. Bigger firms had “enormous resources” and were keen to help prosecutors at the discretion of the attorney-general.

Initial discussion had indicated that help could be given in the form of access to libraries, the Internet and legal training courses run by the major firms for their own staff.

The ability of well-resourced accounting firms to make a contribution was also being discussed. Many of them had particular forensic skills and could be of assistance in combating white collar crime.
Bad apples face action

The Office for Serious Economic Offences said yesterday that an investigation into alleged fraud at the Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market was being conducted by the Office of the Public Protector.

Director Jan Swanepoel said the results of the OSEO's investigation had been handed to the Office of the Public Protector to decide on prosecutions.

He was speaking on the opening day of the market, which had been closed due to alleged fraud.

Market agents have been accused of illegally "skimming" cash sales, and other irregularities.

At the meeting, Ernst & Young's Mike Savage said that the illegal use of cash sales slips had been stopped.

Market director Tony Thompson said that the market would be closed for two weeks as part of their investigations.

Swanepoel said that, since prosecutions may be instituted, he was not in a position to disclose the contents of the Ernst & Young report."The nature of the evidence." -- Sapa
Now Pagad takes its message to Gauteng

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg – Cape Town group People against Gangsterism and Drugs has plans to expand and will be hosting several meetings in Gauteng this weekend.

Pagad national organiser Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim said the Gauteng tour would include a mass meeting in the former Indian and Coloured townships of Lenasia and Eldorado Park, south of Johannesburg.

The culmination of the Pagad programme will be a march through Hillbrow, arguably one of the areas worst-hit by crime in the province.

Mr Ebrahim said the Gauteng visit was part of the run-up to Pagad’s national conference later in the month.

The three-day conference will begin on National Human Rights day, March 21, and will focus on issues including the drafting of a constitution for the organisation.
Jo’burg gets 100 more crime fighters as traffic officers pulled from desks jobs

By JACQUI REEVES

The war against crime in Johannesburg’s central business district has been intensified with the addition of a further 100 “peace officers” to the city’s streets.

Traffic officers who have been working as administrators or control room operators have been put back on the beat and will take up their positions from Monday.

Hillow Maeko, the strategic executive for metropolitan public safety and emergency services at the Johannesburg council, told the Saturday Star that the council could not wait for national legislation to save the city.

“The legislation for metropolitan policing is not yet ready but we felt we could not just stand by and watch crime in the city continue to escalate,” he said.

Maeko added that visible policing was the key to fighting crime in the city.

“It was a waste to have qualified crime fighters sitting in offices. This plan will get them back out on the streets, where they can be seen and make a real difference.”

Civilians will be employed to fill the positions vacated by the peace officers.

The bulk of the new officers will be deployed on foot, and they will be in direct radio contact with all other peace and police officers in the area.

Peace officers will be able to call for back-up assistance during a crime in progress or problem situation – and will immediately be joined by the closest officer in the area.

Although the peace officers will still be expected to perform their traffic duties, their new task will also be to prevent crime, and they will be empowered to make arrests.

All case investigations and paperwork will be taken over by members of the South African Police Service once the arrest has been made. The new team will take the number of city crime fighters to 200.

The peace officers will be introduced to the public on Monday at a parade that will end at the Noord Street taxi rank.

Gauteng MEC for Safety and Security Jessie Duarte will address the crowd along with the mayor of Greater Johannesburg, Isaac Mogebe.
Northern Council now have to fork out thousands to repair damage caused by its administrative building.

Council tears down part of suburb’s safety fence

(38) 12A 11/3/99

By Linna Cox
Council tears down part of suburb’s safety fence

Northern Council will now have to fork out thousands to repair damage caused by its administrative building.

(NATASHA PRICIO)

As many as 100 workers were injured on the job.

The council's decision to build the new facility on the site of the former council's headquarters has been met with widespread criticism.

The council has been criticized for its handling of the incident, which saw at least three workers injured.

The incident has raised concerns about the safety of workers on site.

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It's Operation Counter-attack for Jo'burg

Visible police in dayglo vests over their uniforms will lead the way in the CBD blitz against crime

By JACQUI REEVES

Renewed investor interest in Johannesburg's central business district appears to be loosening crime's stranglehold over the area.

News that multimillion-rand projects are being undertaken in what have been considered crime hotspots has given local investors, the police and the community the kickstart required to draw people back into the city.

A police strategy to make city officers more identifiable and visible will be up and running next week – and will hopefully enhance this improved spirit.

As from Monday, all city officers will be wearing dayglo vests over their blue and grey uniforms.

Each day, more than 150 police officers patrol the streets of the city, yet very few are seen by either the community or the criminals.

"I could hide 1 000 police officers in the city every day by just putting them on our streets. Among the throngs of people and narrow sidewalks they are virtually impossible to distinguish," says the recently appointed head of John Vorster Square police station, Director Dawie Botha.

Botha believes more-visible policing will go a long way in changing public perceptions that CBD crime is not being fought.

Hillow Maeko, the metropolitan council's strategic executive for public safety and emergency services, is capitalising on this changing mindset to improve community involvement in crime-fighting.

Within weeks, Johannesburg's street cleaners and hawkers will be assisting the police in the targeting of flashpoints with vital intelligence.

"Who better to ask than the people who spend all day on the streets? We are currently working with these two groups to plan how they can best assist the police. The key to making this co-operation a success is to ensure anonymity and confidentiality for any person who reports crime," he said.

Watchtowers in key crime points are also due to be installed in high-crime areas, helping the SAPS to police a greater area with fewer officers.

Some projects have, however, become tangled in reams of red tape and have yet to see the light of day.

The city's safety lung, which was supposed to have been operational by November 1996, has not yet been delivered, along with the planned sectoral policing project.

Delayed projects are, however, not the only setbacks easing the work of the criminal. Some of the help is coming from the authorities themselves.

Botha said weedling out corrupt officers was a major priority in his department.

"It is all very well sitting in planning meetings working out how to break open a syndicate, but the corrupt officers are sitting right there with us."

"By the time we get to the syndicate, they have been tipped off and there is no one for us to arrest," he said.

Police officers are not the only authorities working with the criminals.

Titus Malaza, executive officer for metropolitan traffic services, said bribery within the traffic department was rife.

"We are fighting corruption within our own ranks and are sniffing out officers who are abusing their positions."

Malaza said officers target areas where traffic offenses regularly occur, stop the offending drivers and threaten them with fines.

"They then suggest to the drivers that there could be an easier way to sort out the problem. They ask for cash, and let the individuals go."

Malaza said that in some instances, officers were so bold they asked the drivers if they were carrying ATM cards – and accompanied the drivers to draw cash.

TO PAGE 2
City Deep syndicates cracked

400-strong multinational gangs have stolen goods worth millions from containers

By Derek Rodney

Police and private-sector investigators have uncovered a web of organised crime syndicates, collectively numbering more than 400 active members, operating in Johannesburg's City Deep container depot.

Month-long investigations by a group of policemen and company risk managers, funded by the container industry, have uncovered in-depth involvement of Portuguese, Chinese and Indian syndicates with strong international links.

The syndicates, with the collusion of at least one specialist police unit, pillaged goods from containers last year on a scale that is estimated to have cost the industry more than R70 million.

By the time the R1-million private-sector investigation was launched in May last year, up to three containers were being stolen or pillaged a day. Repeat attempts to improve security failed.

Industry representatives reported hundreds of complaints to the Kaserne Truck Theft Unit, which had been instructed to deal with the problem. But they were frustrated because cases were thrown out of court or else dockets disappeared.

With fresh resources and manpower made available by companies, the investigation team soon identified new syndicates. One of its findings was the gross inefficiency and misconduct by members of the Kaserne unit which led to the transfer of six members, including the commander, to other units in November.

A criminal investigation is pending against the policemen.

Information gleaned from the more than 3,000 employees who operated as the eyes and ears of the operation revealed that flashy-dressed handlers, driving expensive cars, were dealing with their runners in plain sight with little fear of police intervention.

The syndicates are extremely efficient in stripping cargo once a truck pulls into a warehouse.

"We have observed instances where a 6-metre container, which took more than three hours to load with a forklift truck, was stripped of its cargo in 17 minutes," said another team member, CX Container Services manager Bux Coetzee.

"These guys have warehouses and storage areas nestled in among legitimate business in broad daylight and nobody suspects anything," he said.

The introduction of a new commander at the renamed Jo'hanhannesburg Transito Theft Unit in November, aided by industry investigators, has already led to the arrest of 15 suspects.

Anatomy of how the 'puppet masters' do their business

Crime Reporter

Syndicates targeting City Deep operate along definite operational lines. They have multimillionaire bosses who, through a war of attrition over the past 15 years, have established themselves as the depot's crime puppet-masters.

The most visible members of the syndicate are the "runners". They do the dirty work and are despised South Africans with no permanent employment. They generally steal for meagre payment, sometimes as little as R50.

Syndicates sometimes use specialised squads for hijackings. They may also act as bodyguards for those who control the network of runners. The handlers are usually identified by their flashy clothes and expensive cars, and are the syndicates' eyes and ears for information.

The Chinese, Indian, Portuguese and South African handlers are trusted aids who report to a manager whose job it is to secure police protection, secure "insiders" such as customs officials, organise shipments of stolen goods, and deal with black-market buyers and sellers.

It is rare that these managers are caught during routine investigations.

The managers are trusted lieutenants to their crime bosses and in many instances are family members. Most crime lords have already diversified their criminal activities into legitimate business interests and are now "respected" businessmen.

Although there are rival syndicates in the industry, investigators have revealed that a large number of co-operation currently exists between syndicates as to which cargoes are allocated to any particular syndicate.

"Sometimes one syndicate will hit a container, ship it to a 'safe' warehouse and use the distribution channels of another syndicate to get the goods on the street or sold to legitimate businesses at called discount prices," said one container theft investigator.

Team says the next big task is plugging gaps in procedure

The City Deep investigation revealed key problem areas that highlighted the container industry's ignorance and apathy towards the crime problem.

A detailed report compiled by industry representatives focuses on improving procedural processes as well calling on more involvement from legitimate businesses and then rolling the sleeves and getting to the bottom of it, no matter what it takes," Batchelor said. - Crime Reporter.
Banks warn of stricter steps to curb robberies

By Stuart Kelly
And Patrick Phosa

Banks yesterday warned of stricter public security measures to curb daylight robberies as police announced they were holding 18 suspected robbers.

However, police spokesman Azwinndini Nengovhela said none of the gangs the 18 belong to could be linked to Saturday's bloody gunfight in Randburg which left three people dead during yet another robbery.

Gauteng Police Commissioner Sharna Maharaj said the arrests, all made prior to Saturday's bloodbath, were the result of hard work by a special investigation team of 10 detectives. Drawn from the murder and robbery units of Brixton, East Rand, Vaal, Rand and Pretoria, the team was set up by Gauteng detectives' head Louis van der Westhuizen on March 13 to combat the surge in bank robberies in the province.

Maharaj said 17 of the 18 suspects had been charged with robbing banks or were in the process of being formally charged.

Four gangs have been identified as being responsible for the robberies of 43 banks in the Johannesburg area in the past three months, making off with an estimated R5-million.

Area Commissioner Frans Malherbe said there was no specific plan of action to deal with bank robberies. He said police were relying on detective work and tips-offs from the public to crack down on bank robbers.

Last year bank robberies were declared a national priority crime and police and the Council of South African Banks (Cosab) joined forces to combat the scourge.

With the public and banking staff living in perpetual fear, Cosab said armed robberies had become their number one concern.

"The public who make use of banking facilities and banking staff are desperately afraid. This scourge is affecting us all," a spokesman said.

"We should look into the removal of firearms from anyone entering a bank and a further tightening of security measures." Identities of South Africa's 14 most wanted bank robbers were released by police in May last year, among them Lebo Tsiotetsi (26), branded most wanted bank still at large.

Tsiotetsi's four accomplices were arrested and indicted for their involvement in the armed theft of R17 000 from a bank in Risivale on the West Rand.
Bank staff bear brunt of brutal attacks

By PETA KROST

Behind the bulletproof glass of a suburban bank, an attractive 20-
something bank teller cried uncontrollably on to the shoulders
of a colleague. Yesterday was
the second time in three weeks
she had been held at gunpoint by
bank robbers at Nedbank’s
Heathway Centre branch in
Blackheath.

She was just one of the dis-
traught bank workers who, even
hours after the robbery, were
still reeling from the incident.
The fact that of the three rob-
ers, one was killed in a
shootout with the police and
another was arrested, was
little consolation because today she
has to return to her job at the
bank.

Yesterday’s heist was the
48th attack on a Gauteng bank
since January.

The heads of financial insti-
tutions and front-row banking
staff are fearful because they
know that nothing, not even the
most expensive security precau-
tions, can stop these robbers.

“Our defences are irrelevant
and all our security precau-
tions are being negated
because these criminals come
in looking first
for lives to put
under threat,
not money, and
that way they get whatever they
want,” says Council of South
African Banks (Cosab) chief
executive Bob Tucker.

All South African banks have
special trauma counselling
departments to deal with staff
who have fallen victim to rob-
ers. But Tucker explains that
no matter how good these
departments are, “nothing can
stop the damage done by the
vicious threat to one’s life and
the ultimate damage it has on
the fabric of our society”.

As the banks spend more and
more money on security mea-
sures, robbers use new tactics to
circumvent these precautions.

In latest robbery trends,
gangs get through the security
doors and metal detectors undetected because their lethal
weapon is petrol instead of guns,
according to a bank security
official. This method was first
come to light this week after rob-
ers doused seven Melville Stan-
dard Bank workers with petrol
and threatened to set them on
fire, before escaping with a large
amount of cash. “This is unfor-
tunately becoming a common
occurrence,” said the source.

While some tellers may feel
secure behind bulletproof glass,
robbers take that security from
them by bringing handgrenades
along which, if detonated, would
destroy the glass.

“It is absolutely useless to
boast up security further,” said a
senior management official. “We
are literally spending millions
on unproductive staff because if
someone points a gun in the
direction of a client or staff
member, we are going to do
exactly as they say – we cannot
afford to lose lives.

“We are at our wits’ end.
What do you do when people
come in with five or six AK-47s?”
the official said, speaking on
condition of anonymity.

Despite the wave of robberies
shaking the industry, banks
remain tight-lipped on the
amounts of money that are
stolen and, as far as possible,
the methods used by the gangets.

“Why let the robbers know how
much you have and where to
find it – would you publish how
many pieces of jewellery you
have?” Tucker
asked.

Nevertheless, the money
lost in bank robberies
so far this year
amounts to
millions of rands. The losses are
all carried by the banks them-
selves.

“We cannot afford to insure
money, the premiums would kill
us,” said a senior banking
source. “The amount stolen is
negligible compared to the
money spent on securing the
money and dealing with the
trauma related to these crimes,”
Tucker
said.

A major concern for banks is
that the criminal justice system
is failing them, and that no mat-
ter how far they go with securing
themselves, unless justice is
done, they have no chance of
bringing down bank robberies.

However, Tucker said he had
spoken to Finance Minister
Trevor Manuel this week and he
also planned to meet Safety
and Security Minister Sydney Mufa-
mudzi about the latest wave of
robberies.

“We are offering to assist
(the Government) in formulating
strategies and pooling informa-
tion and carrying out the new
strategies,” Tucker said.
R20-m stolen in Gauteng bank robberies over past four months

BY JACQUI REEVES

More than two-thirds of the cash that has been stolen nationally in bank robberies during the past four months has been stolen in Gauteng - a whopping R20.3-million out of the total of R30.4-million.

And bank customers countrywide will be digging deep into their pockets to pay for the often bloody robberies, in the form of soaring bank charges, as financial institutions battle to recover their costs.

The ever-increasing number of robberies has left banks unable to insure against loses, with the shareholders, depositors and borrowers carrying the can.

Information released yesterday by the Council of South African Banks (Cosab) showed that 10 years ago, large banks were insured for an estimated loss of R1.3-million a year. Since the beginning of last year, they have lost R135.7-million in bank robberies.

In the first four months of this year, 164 bank robberies have been staged countrywide. Gauteng holds the dubious title as the bank robbery centre with 100 attacks since the beginning of this year, while KwaZulu Natal trails a distant second with 27.

Yesterday Cosab broke its long and strict silence on the robberies, when its chief executive Bob Tucker told a media briefing that the public had a right to know Cosab and the police did, however, remain tight lipped about the details of the attacks.

Tucker said figures detailing the amounts stolen at individual banks, the modus operandi of the gangs and the names of victims would not be released. "We don't want to publicise how to commit a bank robbery and we certainly don't want gangs to know how much is potentially available at the banks," Tucker said.

Internationally, South Africa's escalating bank robbery figures are becoming notorious. During 1996 Britain lost barely the equivalent of R1-million in branch robberies - in contrast with the more than R100-million South Africa lost in the same year.

Concerns from overseas bankers have been raised, and we debated whether we should have this conference and release the aggregate figures, but because of the rumours and false perceptions flying around, we thought it necessary," Tucker said.

Banking halls are, however, not the only cash-points being targeted. Last year, banks lost R3.8-million in "after-hours" burglaries, while R7.3-million was ripped out of ATMs with explosives and crowbars. With the cost of repairing and replacing the damaged units, that figure rose to R15.7-million.

A private security firm, SBD, which handles cash in transit for South Africa's largest banks, spent R165-million last year securing the movement of cash to branches, government pension paypoints and other venues. Despite this investment, the company still suffered a R41.8-million loss.

Bank heists

Tucker said South Africa's dependence on cash was creating the opportunity for robberies to occur on a huge scale.

"All of us should try to move towards the use of electronic banking services instead of cash. That method is cheaper, easier and much safer," he said.

Tucker recently met Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi to discuss the crisis and will meet Justice Minister Dullah Omar next week.

"We are not happy with bail conditions and wish to discuss the entire judicial process. Even if the robbers are incarcerated, there are too many examples of escapes and early releases," Tucker said.

Cosab said it was considering all the processes involved in the maintenance of law and order, and not just solutions to the bank robberies.
one of the many small shops owned by syndicate targets
Tokyo admits crime failure

By Pamela Dube

GAUTENG premier Mr Tokyo Sexwale has admitted the provincial government's failure in combating crime.

Addressing Sowetan staff yesterday, Sexwale said a lack of adequate policing powers by the provincial government hampered crime prevention. "I'm powerless. I have no authority over the police and cannot command them to do anything," he said.

Sexwale was a special guest of the Media Workers Association of South Africa.

For the first time Sexwale publicly agreed with the Inkhata Freedom Party's position that provincial governments needed more policing powers. However, there was hope.

The recent decision by Safety and Security Minister Mr Sydney Mufamadi to give provincial ministers more policing powers was welcome, Sexwale said. "But I hope this is not just ceremonial."

On the upsurge of crime in Gauteng, Sexwale said there seemed to be well-organized syndicates in every form of crime. "At one stage it was car hijacking, then rape and now they have moved into bank robberies."

In the past three months Johannesburg and the surrounding areas have had to deal with over a 100 bank robberies. Sexwale observed that bank robbers were well-trained and precise criminals who seemed intent on crippling the country's life-line - the financial sector.

Among those arrested in these deeds were people not only from the military wings of the liberation movements, but also police and soldiers who left their jobs or volunteered for packages from the former SAP and South African Defence Force.

Sexwale suggested that community structures that used to operate in the 1980s should be revived to fight crime, adding that his cabinet was already discussing the move.

Sexwale and housing MEC Dan Mofokeng yesterday officially launched the Windmill Park Housing Project on the East Rand where at least 200 homes out of 680 were under completion.

Gauteng housing spokesman Mr Jubie Matlou said 490 stands had already been handed over to builders in the area to build top structures.

He said R10 million was given to builders and contractors who could not access bridging finance from financial institutions.
WE TAKE THE WRAPS OFF CRIME SPIKE

Over 14,000 A-CATEGORY OFFENSES COMMITTED IN JOHNSON'S BEAT IN APRIL ALONE WHILE AUTHORITIES DELAY RELEASE OF GUN FIGURES

1997

Total Crime Statistics for April 1997

Best

Hilliwow - 172
Boswell - 70

Worst

Sandia - 78
CBI - 117
Hilliwow - 194
Boyston - 74

For armed theft

For fraud

For drug

For murder
Johannesburg CBD to get closed-circuit TV

BY LES-ANN ALFREDS
City Desk

Closed-circuit television cameras are to be installed in Johannesburg by the end of this year to help fight crime in the central business district.

The cameras are expected to be operational by January 1, according to Central Johannesburg Partnership executive director Neil Frazer.

He said consultants were being appointed to undertake further research into the project, known as the CCTV project.

The consultants - who were expected to be appointed by the end of the month - would research the project for a further three months before it was put out to tender.

Frazer said the project, which has been in the pipeline for years, was a joint operation between the Greater Johannesburg council and the private sector. A team had visited England to study the impact of the cameras and it had been given the go-ahead earlier this year.

The cameras would go a long way towards implementing the concept of "visible policing" - the most effective tool against crime, he said.

Frazer also said he was certain residents would see a ma-

for change in Johannesburg's CBD by the end of the year in reaction to Anglo American Property Services' (Ampros) announcement that it had put its CBD buildings up for sale.

Ampros said the buildings in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria and Durban, valued at R300-million, would be sold because of losses in the past two financial years. Included in the buildings are 11 Diagonal Street in Johannesburg.

The announcement made on Wednesday created panic in some quarters and has led to speculation that Johannesburg's attempts at revitalising the city had been dealt a blow.

However, Liberty Life Properties director Eric Bernstein said he could not understand what all the fuss was about. He said Liberty Life had no intention of selling off property as there were no buyers and that they were not losing as much money as Anglo had done.

Sanlam Properties assets general manager FanieLategan said his company was not "disinvesting or investing". He said Sanlam's vacancy rate was less than 10% and most of their CBD buildings were in Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria which did not have as many problems as Johannesburg.
Police, army to protect banks

Johannesburg: Bank bosses in the CBD have announced that the ministry of defense and army will be in place to protect banks, following concerns about the security of bank deposits. The decision comes as some banks have reported an increase in incidents involving armed robberies. The banks have called on the government to take immediate action to ensure the safety of their customers. The announcement was made during a press conference held at the ministry of defense.
Police, troops to guard inner-city banks

Minister promises aid so hundreds of people will not be affected by weekend closure of financial institutions

BY RODNEY VICTOR AND TEOF MOTHIBI

The police and defence force have put in place measures to curb the spate of Saturday bank robberies in the Johannesburg CBD, police said yesterday.

This follows Minister of Safety and Security Sydney Mufamadi's announcement on Friday that police and army personnel would protect inner-city banks that have been hit by Saturday-morning robberies.

Asked when the programme would be implemented and what shape it would take, National Crime Prevention and Reaction Services spokesman Captain Martin Aylward told The Star last night: "We have certain things in place already, but prefer not to make them public as it would also alert the robbers of what we are up to."

Nine Nedbank branches no longer operate in the CBD on Saturdays because robbers have been taking advantage of congestion to escape after hold-ups.

Mufamadi told a media briefing in Pretoria on Friday that the Government could not allow criminals to force banks in CBDs to close on Saturdays.

"Many people can only go to banks on a Saturday, and I am ... able to announce that the Minister of Defence and I have agreed that police and army personnel will protect affected branches," he said. Operational tactics would be worked out shortly with the Council of SA Banks (Cosab), he said.

Cosab chairman Bob Tucker has welcomed the minister's announcement. "The statement is consistent with what the SAPS has promised to do in their efforts to deal with the crime situation," he said yesterday. Tucker said the police efforts were receiving a good response and more bank robbery attempts were being thwarted and suspects arrested.

"There is no doubt there is a drop in the robberies. Hopefully, we are on the right track," he said.

Mufamadi said on Friday that a quick-response unit using police and military helicopters had been established.

Sapa reports there were at least two bank robberies in Johannesburg on Saturday.

Security guards delivering cash to the First National Bank in High Street, Brixton, were overpowered by two men at about 9am. The robbers shot one guard in the back and escaped with a bag of money.

They then fled with two other men in a white BMW.

Police from the Johannesburg Robbery Reaction Unit traced the vehicle to Auckland Park and arrested two suspects.

The stolen money was not recovered, but police confiscated two pistols with the serial numbers filed off.

The second robbery was at the Trust Bank on the corner of Bree and 33rd Street in Johannesburg at 9.45am. Four armed men entered the bank and held up customers and employees, while two others waited outside.

Police arrived and arrested the two outside. They recovered a bag containing money and confiscated two Toyota Corollas and two firearms.
Spy cameras to go up in Jo'burg

CBD gets closed-circuit TV in battle against crime
Pagad breakaway group threatens violence in Rosebank

BY RODNEY VICTOR

Police will be on standby at popular Rosebank nightspots this weekend following the threat of violence by a radical group which has broken away from People Against Gangsterism and Drugs.

Michael Saad, leader of the new group, phoned The Star yesterday to say the group planned to take action against clubs where drugs were sold.

The group had warned the clubs concerned to get rid of bouncers selling drugs, but they had not done so, he said.
Rows of shoes
Compiled by the provincial organised crime unit between January and April, the audited report showed 48 syndicates were involved in crimes relating to drug, 28 to vehicles, 10 to gold and diamonds, and 10 to credit cards.

By Peter Leon, DP provincial safety and security spokesperson and Gauteng leader, said yesterday it was time government brought the National Intelligence Agency, police and military intelligence together under the direction of Mbeki to combat the surge of crime. Leon said if the report was correct, the situation was extremely alarming and the question that needed to be asked was what was government and the police doing to rectify the situation.

"My impression is the police have been fairly ineffective in infiltrating the syndicates. It is time that the deputy president stopped talking about the situation and used his enormous power to deal with it," Leon said steps taken to deal with the "plague" of hijacking in Gauteng had been inadequate. Commenting on the low fines and lenient sentences for convicted syndicate leaders and members,Leon said each case should be understood according to its own merits.

"There is a lot of generalisations containing sentences and no useful comment can be made based on statistics," a spokesman said.

The SA Law Commission spokesman, Willie van Vuuren said the organisation's working committee had approved publication of an issue paper on mandatory minimum and maximum sentences.

"We would like to invite suggestions from the public, and all interested parties on whether mandatory sentences should be provided for in legislation."
Criminal is seen on the same cover the next day because public is enraged.

Apathy blamed on corruption

By Derek Hoerner
Jo’burg ‘winning war on hijacks’

By Gill Coford
Crime Reporter

Hijacking in Johannesburg is on the decrease, according to the latest audited police statistics, but hijackers are becoming more violent.

Superintendent Kevin Twiname of the anti-hijacking unit said 935 motorists were hijacked in the Johannesburg area from May to July this year, compared with 1,355 hijackings for the same period last year. This was more than a 10% drop - or 39 fewer cases.

“Although the figures include trucks, cars, and although statistics can be easily misinterpreted, it appears to be an overall decrease in Johannesburg,” Twiname said.

People more aware and are taking precautions

A major concern, however, is the use of excessive violence. According to Twiname, firearms are used in almost all reported cases and one in five victims are injured or murdered.

Twiname also said that while Johannesburg’s hijacking rate was down, hijackings in Soweto were on the increase.

Mark Shaw a researcher at the Institute for Security Studies confirmed this trend today, saying that an as yet unreleased victim survey showed that most hijacking victims were black and did not come from Johannesburg’s northern suburbs, where it is generally perceived to be more dangerous.

The Johannesburg anti-hijacking unit, a sub-component of the Brixton murder and robbery unit, is a 22-member specialist team which focuses solely on cases where victims are injured or murdered, shots are fired or where arrests are made soon after an attack.

“We have found that most hijackings happen on Thursdays and Fridays between 4pm and 6am or early in the mornings,” Twiname said.

“This, he said, indicated a trend in which hijackers were moving away from business areas where visible policing was a priority into residential areas where victims were more vulnerable to attacks outside or near their homes.

Another new hijacking tactic is the robbery of new cars directly from dealers.

“The guys set up appointments for what turn out to be test drive scams in which they steal the car from the salesman. This may be because new cars are often not fitted with tracking devices,” Twiname said.

Michael Brausus, sales manager for Lindsay Saker Rivonia, said he was aware of two sales people hijacked on test drives - both in the northern suburbs.

“It is likely they are targeted because new cars are generally fitted with tracking devices only on request from the buyer,” Brausus said.

“But hijacking definitely seems to be decreasing. People are not scared to buy minibuses any more.

“People seem to be more aware of the crime and are taking sensible precautions,” Brausus said.
The report focuses on the importance of a strong education system in shaping the future of a country. It highlights the need for better infrastructure and improved facilities in educational institutions to ensure that students receive a quality education. The report also underscores the importance of community involvement in the development of educational programs, emphasizing the role of parents and the community in supporting education. The final section discusses the challenges faced by educators and suggests strategies to overcome them, urging policymakers to prioritize educational investments to create a brighter future for the nation.
Hopes grow for end to CBD crime as "super-cops" are called to battle

By CRAIG URQUHART

An elite proactive police unit is being set up to "wipe out" crime in the city centre, with more men, a faster reaction time and a broader mandate than any other unit.

The new special task team will be bolstered by "heavyweights" within the SAPS to establish an effective, highly specialised unit to combat serious crime in Johannesburg.

Although numerous other plans have been tried and tested - frequently without success - both the safety and security ministry and the police believe they have turned the corner in their fight against crime. "The crime levels have stabilised and I think we are on the verge of seeing an overall drop in Johannesburg."

"I'm sure this unit and many of the other initiatives we are working on will have an impact," said Director David Botha, station commander of Johannesburg Central police station.

When she revealed the plan to the Saturday Star yesterday, Gauteng Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte promised:

- Enough policemen - uniformed and undercover - patrolling the streets, with police vehicles stationed throughout the city ready for any emergencies.
- "Police will be able to get to the scene of any crime within the city limits within two minutes, and will be able to cordon off large sections of the city if criminals have escaped."
- The existing SAPS robbery reaction unit, established in 1986 as an elite undercover unit to combat escalating crime in the city centre, will be incorporated into the new unit.

Duarte said the task force would differ vastly from existing specialist units because responsibility for it would be centralised under the SAPS' area commander for Johannesburg.

It would also have a brief to prevent and combat every sort of crime, from petty offences to hijacking, bank robbery and rape.
Johannesburg's 'safety lung' project still does not have life of its own

BY JACQUI REEVES

New deadlines were announced this week for Johannesburg's closed-circuit television (CCTV) project. The project forms part of the city's much-vaunted 'safety lung' campaign—a project that was meant to have been breathing on its own more than four months ago.

The new deadlines claim the CCTV system will be operating in the city's central business district by March 1, 1998.

When challenged in the provincial legislature on the altered deadlines, MEC for Safety and Security Jessie Duarte lashed out at her challenger, the Democratic Party's Peter Leon.

A war of words ensued, with Leon referring to Duarte as the MEC for "paranoia and insecurity" and claiming she was sounding "shrill and hysterical". Duarte returned the blow when she accused Leon of becoming a "petty little individual".

While the other members appeared to be wholeheartedly enjoying the debate, heckling and laughing at will, the seriousness of the issue appeared to become lost among all the mirth.

Addressing the standing committee on safety and security hours before the sitting of the legislature, Sylvester Rakgoadi, the department's deputy director of policy planning, detailed the status quo of the safety-lung projects.

Rakgoadi said the "stakeholder committee" that had been established to oversee the CCTV project had decided to opt for a high-quality system that could be expanded to Johannesburg's entire inner city. He said the focus of the project would initially be on the quality of the system, followed by the cost factor and then the time it would take to implement the project.

Challenging the MEC on this prioritisation, Leon called for an end to "moving time-frames" where deadlines were never kept.

Duarte then accused Leon of ignoring any successes that have been achieved in the CBD, saying she would not allow him to demoralise "good police officials". She also laid the blame for the delay in the CCTV project on the funder, Business Against Crime, which initially promised an amount of R1-million to the project but eventually offered only R100 000.

Two months ago the Saturday Star published a litany of unfinished projects that have marred the safety-lung project. While some progress has been made on certain projects, Rakgoadi was forthright in pinning down the issue of deadlines.

He finally agreed that the new CCTV deadlines were "realistic", and were flexible only to the point that delivery may occur before the deadline, but not thereafter.

He said a project manager had been appointed to guide the process, which began with a feasibility study on August 1.

On the issue of sectoral policing, Rakgoadi said the project was operating in 12 sectors in the city, and that resources such as radios and luminous vests had been requested from the police service's logistics department, which would improve the success rate of the sectors.

Newly revised deadlines for the CCTV project in Johannesburg's CBD are:

- Project commenced—August 1, 1997;
- Finalisation of project requirements—September 30, 1997;
- Finalisation of tender documentation—October 30, 1997;
- Issue of tender documents—November 1, 1997;
- Completion of tender review and contract award—January 1, 1998;
- Finalisation of shop drawings/equipment selection and start site—February 1, 1998;

BLASTED: Jessie Duarte was slated for shifting deadlines.
Residents block off part of Mayfair

Series of attacks leads to illegal erection of railings – a move not welcomed by everyone

By Bunti West
City Reporter

Residents of a Johannesburg suburb have taken the law into their own hands by closing off part of their street without council permission.

A block of upmarket townhouses and 16 palatial homes in Bird Street, Mayfair, have been separated from the rest of the suburb by strong railings and a controlled entry point manned by guards.

The unauthorised closure by the group of homeowners about two weeks ago has led to complaints from minibus taxi drivers, who say their route to and from the industrial area in Church Street has been lengthened, and a spaza shop owner, Jean Dlamini, who claims he has lost all his passing trade.

"Many of my customers waited from the station up Bird Street, but now detour along 10th Avenue. My little shop is directly opposite the closed side of Bird Street, and all my passing trade is gone," Dlamini said.

Taxi drivers, who used to use Bird Street as a short cut to factories in Church Street because the traffic was less heavy, claim they now have to negotiate a series of traffic lights, which slows down their progress.

But residents inside the enclosed suburb – called Crown North Retention – say the barrier has made them feel safer after several armed attacks on residents over the past three months.

"The railings are a good idea, but it is inconvenient for both residents and visitors. For the sake of everyone's safety we must put up with the inconvenience," said Mohammed Anver Varlawa, a spokesman for the townhouse residents.

Mohammed Salim Hadjie, speaking on behalf of the homeowners, said the idea of erecting a barrier had followed several visits to enclosed suburbs in eastern Johannesburg.

"We wrote to the council several times asking for permission to erect a barrier and did not receive a single reply, so two weeks ago we went ahead with the project," Hadjie said.

Until a proper guardhouse has been built, cars and pedestrians entering the road are not stopped, but this situation will change when the shelter is completed.

The Northern council, under whose jurisdiction Mayfair falls, was not available for comment.
Kill rate drops in Gauteng

By Ido Lekota Political Reporter

CONTRARY to common belief, the Western Cape — and not Gauteng — is the most dangerous province, recent crime statistics released by National Police Commissioner George Fivaz reveal.

Figures presented by Fivaz to the portfolio committee on safety and security indicated the Western Cape had the highest murders-to-population ratio — 37.8 murders to 100,000 people in the first six months this year.

Gauteng comes second with 34.1 murders to 100,000, followed by the Northern Cape with 33.5 then 30.7 for KwaZulu-Natal.

The report showed 476 murders were reported in the first six months, an all-time high within the province, 19.8% percent increase from the 1252 reported in the same period in 1994.

Gauteng, on the other hand, has shown an 18.8% percent decrease from 3115 in 1994 to 2530 this year in the same period.

At 2811 KwaZulu-Natal still has the highest number of reported murders but this must be seen in proportion to the province's large population. The province also had the highest decrease in the number of murders from 4314 in 1994 to 2811 this year — a 34.8% percent decrease.
Alexandria and Moroka are Gauteng's crime hotspots
792 held in anti-crime sweep

A total of 792 people were arrested during a sweep of the Easter long weekend. The majority of those arrested were involved in drug dealing or possession. Several were held in the police lockup and others were released. Three people were charged for the illegal possession of firearms. A stolen vehicle was recovered along with a stolen firearm. A total of $580,000 in cash and drugs were seized.
Street survey-wise up on crime stats

Victim study confirms some trends, but also provides some surprises

The Big Story/13
Intimidation ... a member of Pagad is ready to stand his ground. An attack by the Fast Guns gang on Monday night was the first by gangsters on Pagad in Gauteng, and drew threats of retribution if these acts continue. The car in the background was not one of those damaged in the attack.

Pagad warns gangsters after attack

Smashing of windows of cars draws threat of a Jo'burg war, with warning that ‘If they continue with this type of thing we are prepared to go all the way’

By Mike Razaana
City Reporter

The Gauteng arm of People Against Gangsterism and Drugs yesterday threatened a full-blown war on local gangsters and drug dealers following Monday night’s attack on a member’s house in Boimont, western Johannesburg.

Four alleged members of a gang called the Fast Guns were arrested in Westbury and Boimont after they attacked Pagad member Isaac Williams’ house in Boimont.

The attackers smashed the windows of Williams’ two luxury German cars parked in his yard at about 8.30pm.

Williams (50) said two men knocked on the gardener’s back door, mistaking it for his. His wife later went out and the men went into the house to tell Williams that “the attacks will stop on condition you stop your activities with Pagad”.

Pagad has since moved.

Four suspects due to appear in court tomorrow.

Williams’ family told a “safe house”.

Gauteng Pagad leader Ayob Mungoale said the attack was the first between gangsters and Pagad in Gauteng.

Similar clashes in the Western Cape have claimed several lives over the past few weeks. Mungoale said “the same situation could well happen in Gauteng if the gangsters continued their unprovoked attacks on us”.

He said Pagad had at least 5000 members in Gauteng, of whom 60% were non-Muslims.

“If they (gangsters) continue with this type of thing then we want to warn them that we are prepared to take this all the way. We can contain them”, Mungoale said.

He condemned the police on their swift reaction to the attack on Williams’ house.

“I think we were headed for a bloodbath had the police not been as co-operative as they were. “It shows that, together, we can overcome the scourge of drugs and gangsters in our communities,” Mungoale said.

Johannesburg police spokesman Inspector Mark Reynolds said local police launched a search for the two suspects, and two 21-year-old men were arrested near the scene of the attack.

Police are praised for their speedy reaction.

One of the men was found in possession of a 9mm pistol. Ownership details of the gun are still being checked,” Reynolds said.

Members of the Johannesburg flying squad and dog unit joined the investigations, and a third man, aged 26, was arrested at a block of flats in Westbury, western Johannesburg, early yesterday.

A fourth man was arrested at a house in Mayor Avenue, Westbury.

Reynolds said the four suspects were being held at the Sophiatown police station. They were expected to appear in court tomorrow, when they would face charges of intimidation and malicious damage to property.

Mungoale and a group of heavily armed fellow Pagad members yesterday pointed out a house where police arrested the men and claimed the attack on Williams’ house had been carried out from there.
Statistics show that the rot starts in Gauteng’s copshops

BY PETRA KROST

More than 1,000 members of the 32,000-strong Gauteng police force have been charged for committing crimes—an average of eight policemen per station.

These horrifying statistics, released this week, emanate from research done between January 1996 and May 1997 for the Gauteng ministry of safety and security.

The most serious offences committed by policemen include murder, rape, corruption, armed robbery and fraud.

The most popular reasons cited for the suspensions were policemen being connected to unspecified serious crimes, with murder and corruption taking a joint second place on this list. In Soweto, the most common reason for suspension was also given as unspecified crimes, followed by murder; while on the West Rand, rape is the second most common offence.

In Pretoria, murder, corruption and other unspecified crimes were equally common but in Johannesburg, corruption tops the list, with armed robbery following close behind.

Since January 1996 in Johannesburg there have been 176 policemen—a total of 10 per station—charged with crimes, while 79 members were suspended. In the whole of Gauteng, 299 policemen have been suspended during this period.

There are 2,771 departmental charges facing Gauteng police, which include petty offences like lateness, absenteeism without consent, insubordination, failure to respect a lawful command by a senior officer, and misuse of police vehicle or state property.

Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte said it was “heartening to know the police were being open about this” and that “it takes a special individual to come into the police and remain untainted”.

She said one had to take into account that “from their own admission to these problems, the police are clearly serious about self-cleansing”.

The research also showed that the numbers of resignations and staff shortages were exceptionally high.
Cape officials track down 238 cases of social welfare fraud

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — A total of 238 cases of social welfare fraud amounting to R1.9m in overpayments was identified in a few Western Cape welfare offices by a special task team appointed by provincial health and social welfare MEC Ebrahim Rasool.

Cases where beneficiaries had received irregular payments had been reported to the police. In addition, investigations or action had been instituted against 28 administration officials suspected of fraud. Four officials from old age facilities and one from the Post Office had also been identified as being involved in irregular activities.

This was just the tip of the iceberg, the task team, commissioned in April last year and led by Ernst & Young’s Timothy Steele, found. Corruption and fraud within the welfare system was widespread.

In its report, released yesterday, the task team suggested that as much as R20m a year could be saved if findings related to the Worcester and Beaufort West offices, the focus of its study, were extended to the rest of the province.

The task team said that basic changes had to be made to systems to put a stop to the irregularities, which were mainly due to a lack of control and demotivated staff. Social security applications should be captured onto the computer system at the point of interview to remove opportunities for fraud and cut down on bureaucratic methods.

A standard costing system should be developed for subsidised institutions such as old age and children’s homes and homes for the disabled, and all individuals in these institutions should be means tested.

Once the social security and subsidy systems had been upgraded, the finance and provisioning systems could be reviewed. Implementing these systemic changes could save as much as R80m a year, the report noted.

"To date, forensic investigations have led to savings to the department in excess of R80m and if the recommendations on systems and data clean-up are followed, savings of approximately this quantum could be achieved annually over the next five years."

In addition to the fraud uncovered by the task team, Rasool also discovered last year that officials had been involved in the irregular award of a R150m contract to Niseco to pay pensions. Thirty staff members are facing fraud charges in this regard and Rasool indicated his intention to take legal action against Niseco to reclaim R150m of welfare money allegedly lost.
Concern that situation will worsen if high profile of police and council officials is not maintained.

Crime still worries Hilldow traders
Jo’burg Pagad unit held after drugs clash

Proof that pressure is on us, not dealers, claims movement

BY GILL GIFFORD
AND CECILIA RUSSELL

A
ter a week of tension, culminating in a shoot-
out between the vigilante group People Against
Gangsterism and Drugs (Pagad) and alleged drug dealers
in Lenasia, Johannesburg, this
week, police have clamped
down on the group and arrested
eight people.
All are due to appear in the
Protea Magistrate’s Court to-
day after an identity parade.
Pagad leader Ayob Mung-
alee said the arrests are proof
that the police are putting pres-
sure on Pagad to stop their ac-
tivities.
He said that on Wednesday
night members of the group
went to visit an alleged Lenasia
drug dealer to “ask him to stop
dealing in the drugs and to
come to mosque with our mem-
bers on Friday”. They were
threatened by a man holding a
gun.
Mungalee claims that Pagad
members disarmed the man,
but when police arrived on the
scene, the man’s gun was re-
turned to him, and he opened
fire on them. Pagad returned
fire but withdrew when other
alleged drug dealers in the area
arrived.
According to Mungalee, of
the eight people arrested only
four were Pagad members. The
commander of the group, only
identified as Yusuf, was among
those arrested.
The others were Isak Wil-
liams, Anwar Samodien and
Khaliil Ibrahim. The other four
were arrested while visiting
the home of a Pagad member.
“They are to appear in an
identity parade today. Those
who are not recognised will be
released and those pointed out
will be taken to court for a bail
hearing,” Mungalee said.
“We are not denying that
our members were involved in
the incident, but they were act-
ing in retaliation. They have
been held in custody for almost
48 hours, and police are threat-
ening to hold them for seven
more days on the grounds of
time needed for further investi-
gation,” said Mungalee.
But Pagad members, claim-
ing police intimidation, main-
tain they will continue their
stand against drug dealers and
gangsters and a bus load of
supporters would be offloaded
at the Protea Magistrate’s
Court in Soweto.
“The police have told us
they will oppose bail and ask
for our people to be kept in cus-
tody for another week. If we
protest at the court. But their
threats will not stop us. We just
feel that if police spent as much
time and effort fighting crime
as they did fighting Pagad, we
would have less crime to worry
about,” said Mungalee.
Captain Deon Hall of the
Lenasia police confirmed that
several arrests had been made
in connection with a shooting
on Wednesday night.
“An attack on an alleged
drug dealer’s house did take
place, and a man was shot and
is in hospital. We cannot say
much as investigations are at a
sensitive stage and we don’t
want this thing to erupt into a
Cape Flats-type situation.”
Mungalee said the shootout
followed a week of action by Pag-
ad members in the Greyville;
Lenasia, area. He said the area
had about 24 drug dealers “who
were holding the community to
ransom by terrorising them”.

Star 31/10/97 (38)
Illegal barriers must go

Council warns residents that anti-crime barricades will be removed

By Anna Cox
Sandton Bureau

Johannesburg northern suburbs residents have closed off more than 200 roads during the past few months in bids to cut crime. But at least half the closures are illegal, and local councils have served removal notices on many residents.

Greater Johannesburg's Eastern council says barricades—usually booms manned by armed guards—are illegal if they are erected before council approval has been given. The Northern council says all 20 of the blockades in its area are illegal.

However, residents tired of waiting for permission to close their suburbs to criminals have gone ahead, at their own expense, and are employing full-time security guards at the entrances to their suburbs.

The Eastern council claims this has led to traffic congestion on certain roads, concentration of pollution, difficulties with refuse removal and increased operating costs.

The council has a security neighbourhood policy which was approved in April 1996. It allows closures under certain conditions, but very few applications have been approved.

The Northern council is working on a similar policy.

The Eastern council is unhappy that communities are disregarding its policy and has served notices to residents to remove the illegal barricades.

But residents, concerned for their safety, have vowed to fight the council all the way.

Eastern council spokesman Keith Peacock said the council was aware of the security problems residents faced. It was one of the first councils to develop a policy sympathetic to residents who wanted roads closed temporarily, he said.

He added that the use of boom gates was not permitted at all in terms of current legislation, and the council did not have the power to change this.

"The council would prefer communities to comply voluntarily. However, if, after notification, roads remain closed, the structures will be removed by the council," Peacock said.

Rivonia resident Reinoud Boers, who recently closed off parts of the suburb with gates and booms, said no crime had been reported since the beginning of October, when three roads were closed off and one access point was opened.

"We had a bad spate of robberies, hijackings and break-ins, so we decided to go ahead and close off. We could not wait to go through the lengthy procedures required by the council," Boers said.

An SAPS spokesman said although road closures were welcome and did help to reduce crime, they needed to be backed up by neighbourhood and block watches to maintain them.
Residents act to keep roads closed

BY AMNA COX

Two high-powered committees have been formed to prevent the Eastern council from opening about 100 roads in Johannesburg's northern suburbs, where residents have illegally installed boom gates and electric fences to keep criminals at bay.

One committee will examine residents' constitutional rights and lobby for changes to the law that prohibits them from closing the roads off. The other will lobby the council for a reprieve until February.

Last week the council gave residents who put up barricades without permission 14 days to remove them, saying road closures were getting out of hand.

It said the barriers caused traffic congestion on other roads, created difficulties for refuse removal and cleansing operations, as well as emergency services, and restricted pedestrian movement. The council said it had received numerous complaints from the public.

Residents are adamant that the barriers have reduced crime, and say they will do all in their power to keep them.

They say they are tired of waiting for officials to give them permission to close off suburbs, and claim that applications made 18 months ago have still not been processed.

Kew resident Dawn Piper, who lives in a road which has been closed without permission, says it is not an elitist move by northern suburbs residents. More than 60% of people living in the road had been victims of crime.

"Many of us are struggling to pay for the additional security, but it is our only alternative. By keeping our own road under control, it gives police, who are understaffed, less of an area to cover," she said.

Atholl resident Terry Pransman said homeowners in his street had previously employed a 24-hour foot, bicycle and vehicle patrol, yet in four weeks there had been two hijackings.

"We decided to limit access by closing off roads, and since then, in about 18 months, there has only been one house break-in," he said. This council has approved the closure of the road.

Eastern council DP councilor Paul Dias, who was a member of the task team which developed the policy on road closures, said the council took more than 18 months to approve the policy and another four months to decide how and by whom applications would be considered.

"In the past two months there has been only one properly convened meeting to consider applications. This demonstrates the unwillingness of the ANC to take the residents' requests for temporary road closures seriously. Citizens have a constitutional right to a safe environment. In these abnormal circumstances, communities should be encouraged to ensure their own security where they are able," she said.

Council spokesman Keith Peacock said the council was bound by an executive committee decision, taken by all political parties, to remove the barriers, and that the council was still willing to discuss a solution with residents.
Robbery still top of crime list in Gauteng

By Jodi Leckie

(11/19/97)
Mufamadi fails on pledge to guard banks on Saturdays

Undertaking given after nine branches closed

BY GASARI AYAWARD

Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi has not kept a promise to have police and army personnel stationed outside Johannesburg CBD banks that were forced to close on Saturday mornings because of armed robberies.

Mufamadi made the promise in June when he presented South Africa's national crime statistics for the first three months of 1997.

The Nedbank group announced in May that it was closing nine of its city centre branches on Saturday mornings after a series of robberies made easy because of crowded Johannesburg streets.

A few days after Mufamadi's promise, National Crime Prevention and Response Service spokesman Superintendent Martin Ayaward told The Star: "We have certain things in place already, but prefer not to make them public as it would also alert the robbers of what we are up to."

Now Ayaward has admitted that police and army personnel had not yet been drafted in to guard banks in the six months since the promise was made.

"We had visible policing in Pretoria and Johannesburg with the flying squad and air force. We did not have men guarding banks on Saturdays - we don't have that kind of manpower and the banks have their own guards," he said.

At the media briefing in Pretoria on June 13, Mufamadi said he "could not allow criminals to force banks in CBDs to close on Saturdays".

"Many people can only go to banks on a Saturday, and I am ... able to announce that the Minister of Defence and I have agreed that police and army personnel will protect affected branches," he said.

Mufamadi's spokesman, Director Joseph Ngobeni, had no answers for The Star when asked why the promise had not been carried out.

Instead, he criticised The Star for "never doing good-news stories."

However, later he said there was a difference in meaning in "a promise and a commitment".

"What the minister said was not a promise. He merely showed concern and commitment to fighting crime. This was what he tried to show in his original statement," Ngobeni said.

Ngobeni added the procedure was that the minister came up with the policy, but it was up to the operational people (the police) to follow through with a plan of action.

Council of South African Banks (Cosab) chairman Bob Tucker confirmed that the organisation had met Mufamadi in June, but said he was not aware of any action taken by police to guard inner-city banks.

"They (the police) are being highly co-operative. I know that a task team is working very closely to prevent bank robberies, but I don't know enough detail to say if any police or army members were deployed at banks," he said.

It was frustrating that "a few big professional syndicates who will stop at nothing are on the loose", Tucker said.

"The presence of police at city bank branches will not make a difference now. It has gone way beyond that," he added.
Rundburg's Waterfront shopping and entertainment complex was once considered a haven for violence, drugs and excessive alcohol consumption.

RICHARD CLARKE reports on how a tough new manager and his team have restored a sense of relaxed enjoyment.

It is now more than three years since the Rundburg Waterfront opened to much fanfare, with patrons' cars overflowing onto Republic Road. It opened with the emphasis on one-stop shopping and entertainment.

There were dire predictions from some local residents regarding the possibilities of drunken behaviour and easy access to drugs.

Originally about half of the Waterfront was taken up by places where alcohol was sold, and this did indeed lead to unpleasant incidents. According to one bouncer who worked there in the early days, bouncers had to use a boat in order to get around fast enough to deal with trouble.

There was trouble with under-age drinking and easy access to drugs for teenagers.

But a great deal changed when Paul O'Sullivan was appointed managing director of the Waterfront just over a year ago.

In the early days, bouncers had to use a boat just to get around fast enough to deal with any trouble.

Firstly, he decided there would be zero tolerance of liquor and drugs abuse, whether in the open air or in the car park.

The adoption of zero tolerance stems originally from the New York police chief who succeeded in dramatically diminishing crime in that city and it has been mooted as an approach to policing in South Africa.

After an appearance on Carte Blanche in March, O'Sullivan has become known as "Major Dad". He has clearly had some success with his plans, as the satellite police station which was stationed at the Waterfront has since closed down.

As Superintendent J B Hayes of Linden police station says: "These officers were needed elsewhere and now form part of the crime prevention unit that polices a sector of which the Waterfront is only one part."

In conjunction with the Linden police's flying squad, officers make periodic visits to the Waterfront, and any officer on duty is welcome for free coffee at the 24-hour Wimpy restaurant.

O'Sullivan says: "The police cannot get to the Wimpy without making a trip around part of the Waterfront, and this makes the public aware of their presence."

In the process of his approach to managing the Waterfront, the number of pubs and restaurants has dropped from 50 to 30, while Piek N Play has had a turnover increase of 25% and is looking for an increase in floor space. This corresponds with an approach to make the Waterfront more family friendly with more shops and fewer pubs.

Although no clothing stores have closed, some restaurants and shops have gone under. O'Sullivan explains this with a simple formula: perceived value compared to cost. If the latter is more than the former, the customer is disappointed; if vice versa, the customer will be back.

There are some astounding pub successes at the Waterfront, among them The Docks, McGinley's, Morgan's Out and The Waterfront Arms, and this shows the inherent logic in the perceived-value formula.

The approach to law and order at the Waterfront is not all about force, although O'Sullivan does have what he terms guest relations officers - big guys who move in to subdue overeager and rough patrons.

There is also a Christian team, which includes teachers and professors. They are there specifically to interact with the youth until their parents arrive. This is that, depending on there are different levels of.

One thing this reporter number of families with young children enjoying the Waterfront.
on the
front
(38) 8MAR 19/12 1998

Morgan's Pool Bar now collects flip tops from beer cans in aid of wheelchairs for the disabled or for dogs for the Blind Association.

Far-reaching but positive changes, you might say, but some people question certain aspects of the plan.

Some tenants believe there is an autocratic attitude prevalent at the centre. Although they see a certain logic about it all, they would like to be more involved in the decision-making processes. On the flipside is that management questionnaires never receive more than a 20% response.

O'Sullivan is used to getting results, and he makes decisions and ensures they work. Two actions he took in line with the zero tolerance philosophy were banning all leaflets and begging.

A humorous side to the begging situation happened while I was on patrol with O'Sullivan and security guards in the car park, and they stopped to chase beggars who were haranguing people at the main entrance. Those who immediately condemn such heavy-handed behaviour should have witnessed how fast the supposed cripple ran away with his crutch!

But, jokes aside, it was an eye-opener to see the machinery that works behind the scenes to make sure patrons have a pleasant stay at the Waterfront.

Even the hefty guest relations officers are trained to use minimum force and not to allow any alterations to affect other

Guest relations officers are
the big guys who move
in to quell disturbances
caused by unruly patrons

restaurant or pub patrons.

Next time you’re at the Waterfront, remember the people who work long hours to ensure your stay is a happy and safe one, and notice how swiftly the security staff move in when matters get out of hand.

O’Sullivan is not yet finished with his programme as there are still premises lying empty, but he is confident this matter will be rectified in the next few months.

He adds that he would feel happy taking his wife to the Waterfront, and observes that would have been out of the question just 18 months ago.

At present there is little shelter when it rains, but there are plans to install steel and glass covers for the walkways. This would prevent patrons from being closed in like most other shopping malls and would still allow them to enjoy being next to the water.

The zero tolerance approach to running the Waterfront means that drug dealers have moved elsewhere. The Cresta shopping centre and Sandton City are possibilities for a similar approach, but at the moment there is no co-ordinated plan in the northern suburbs, where many teenagers have the buying power that marks them as easy targets for dealers.

There is also a Christian group of volunteers, which includes nuns, dads, schoolteachers and professional counsellors. They are there specifically to give support if kids are caught drinking and/or smoking until their parents arrive. The critical thing is that, depending on the situation, there are different levels of response.

One thing this reporter noticed was the number of families with parents and children enjoying the Waterfront at 10 o'clock on a Friday night, which would never have happened a year ago.

A further change at the Waterfront is the addition of a multidenominational coffee shop on the same site where a bar used to serve alcohol to youngsters. Another bar caught doing the same thing is now being used as a venue for the Gauteng Sea Cadets, while M2 Stores trades from premises originally occupied by a pub.

Unrelated to other changes at the venue,
Crime - Groateng

1998 - 1999
Corrupt cops are sabotaging public's fight against crime

By PETA KROST

Crime Stop's operations are being hampered by police inefficiency and corruption. Information from the public about crimes across Gauteng goes to waste because policemen are either too lazy, undertrained or overworked to follow it up.

In some cases, corrupt cops use the information passed on to them in good faith by Crime Stop to commit crime — for instance by "re-stealing" stolen cars that informers have informed Crime Stop about.

"Sometimes absolutely nothing is done with the positive information that is passed on to the relevant police units," said Crime Stop commander Jaco Louw.

The toll-free informer service has been lauded in the past by police management as a good tool for solving crime. The public and policemen can give information anonymously to help police investigations.

To Page 2

Corrupt cops harm crime fight

He told of a specialised unit within his unit which regularly received information from Crime Stop in the past. Because of the corruption, however, no arrests were made.

"About a year ago, the unit itself was investigated and the corrupt policemen removed," he said.

"It is always best when you know you can trust a particular policeman implicitly and can bring the informer and policeman together to work on the information."

He said it was often difficult to know who to believe: the policeman or the informers.

There are cases when policemen might recover the stolen vehicle and sell it," Louw said. "The informant who saw the policemen take the car then phones Crime Stop for his reward, only to be told that the information did not pan out. Who do you believe? It is possible that through investigations of their own, another unit recovered the car before the others got there."

Afraid

Once an informer gave information about hidden boxes of stolen groceries, Louw recalled. The police then told Crime Stop how they confiscated six boxes of groceries. The informer was taken aside as he explained that the police had in fact taken 13 full boxes. In that case the informer came forward and made a statement. But often the informers do not want to come forward because they are afraid, Louw said.

A Crime Stop employee explained that she was sometimes fleeced off when she made follow-up phone calls to units to which she had passed on information. She had been told "not to listen to informers", that "informers cannot tell us what to do", that "we are too busy" or that "we'll come back to you about it."

Sometimes she is told that her informer must come in and make a statement, which informers often consider too dangerous. "Part of the reason people contact Crime Stop with valuable information is because they can remain in the safety of anonymity," she explained.

The hierarchical snobbery that exists in police ranks has also proved to be an obstacle. When a low-ranking policeman checks on what a senior detective has done about a tipoff, the latter may be dismissive of the younger officer.

"I would generally take up this issue, as I have done recently, even if it means going to the area commissioner to complain," Louw said. "This (attitude) cannot be allowed to get in the way of effective policing."

Sometimes information passed on from Crime Stop is lost. Crime Stop has put in place various security checks to be able to keep track of the information. One man, considered an extremely reliable source by Crime Stop, explained that, often, information he had provided was never investigated.

Confiscate

"Sometimes when I give information about a break-in, exactly where the stolen goods and the thieves can be found — the police might go there and confiscate the goods and not even attempt to arrest the suspects," he told the Saturday Star.

Following another tipoff to Crime Stop, the policemen confiscated stolen goods in a flat.

"They left a note for the suspect to report to them at the nearby police station," he said. Obviously the suspect did nothing of the sort.

Police spokesperson Inspector Mark Reynolds said Crime Stop was "one of our assets and one of the systems that works best in the police service. If there are problems, I am sure something can be done to rectify this situation."

Between June and December last year, 1 105 cases were solved because of calls to Crime Stop.
Stolen Telkom cables hits business

BY BUNTY WEST

An estimated R10-million in Telkom cables has been stolen by organised syndicates since June last year, causing major disruptions to the East Rand's telephone service.

Irute subscribers have been without service for up to six weeks at a time, and several are fed up with lost business.

Norman Stuart of Young, Stuart and Associates in Germiston has reported to diverting all calls to his cell phone after complaints to Telkom fell on deaf ears.

"Last year, from September 26 to October 19, and then from November 26 to date, the two main lines and our dedicated Internet line have been out of order. We are trying to provide a professional service in Africa which in turn will benefit South Africa. Yet our goals are blocked through Telkom's third rate service and apparent lack of interest," Stuart said.

But the East Rand manager for telephone services, Dino Chetty, said the situation was not extraordinary.

"There have been 213 thefts of copper cable over the past 18 months in the area, and customers have had to suffer phone cuts for six weeks at a time. Sometimes the thefts are so bad that a complete infrastructure has had to be re-established, which takes time," he said.

Telkom is replacing manhole covers, a point of entry for the thieves, with electronic covers, and employs security guards to patrol severely hit areas.

Chetty promised to restore service to his customers as soon as possible.
SANCO

The chickens come home to roost

The State begins to probe as criminal charges mount

The Office for Serious Economic Offences (Oseo) has begun to look into allegations of fraud and corruption against the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco), an umbrella body for the township "civics" that sprang up in the mid-Eighties as alternatives to apartheid-sanctioned black local authorities.

These civic bodies were at the forefront of the Eighties' rent and bond boycotts and contributed to the ANC's campaign to render townships "ungovernable".

Sanco has since denounced the perpetration of these boycotts. But it has been implicated in acts of violence against the State, landlords, banks and their property, and individuals.

What was once an ANC ally has come to be regarded by the party as disruptive to its RDP projects and its Masakhane campaign for resumed rent and service payments.

The mounting complaints against Sanco may evolve into a full-blown criminal investigation by Oseo.

Johannesburg inner-city landlords have alleged that Sanco is still using disruptive tactics, trashering the rental market. This has made the owners vulnerable to give-away property bids by Sanco, they say.

"Any possible costs to the public and to local councils as a result of Sanco's actions are of concern," says Auditor-General Henri Kliever. "If proof exists, this needs to be investigated."

Oseo's involvement follows a report late last year on the financial status of Sanco's national office by auditors Price Waterhouse. The report states that "the draft financial statement at March 1997 indicated insolvency."

This is strongly denied by Sanco president Mlungisi Hlongwane.

Sanco founder and Sanco Investment Holdings (SIH) chairman Moses Mayekiso has been quick to draw a distinction between Sanco's "political arm" and its investment companies, SIH and Sanco Development Trust, as well as its community development vehicle, Illima. SIH has investments of about R30m in blue-chip companies. Hlongwane, who is also a non-

executive director of SIH, asked at an SIH board meeting last Friday how Sanco could be bankrupt "if it has a 74% share in SIH". Sanco's shareholding in SIH is held by Sanco Development Trust.

A Sanco spokesman supporting Hlongwane's denial of bankruptcy says Sanco made a loan (reportedly R3m) to SIH when it was formed. Whether that amount will redeem Sanco's debts remains to be seen. Meanwhile, Johannesburg sheriffs are frequent visitors to Sanco's offices, seeking to attach property to redeem its debts.

Owed substantial amounts of money in rent because of what they say are Sanco-led boycotts, many downtown Johannesburg landlords interviewed by the FM claim they are now unable to pay the council for services and have therefore been served summonses by the council.

Landlords attest to a systemic breakdown of landlord-tenant relations as a result of interference by Sanco. This tactic has resulted in what the landlords say is their near or actual bankruptcy, and is followed by offers from unofficial Sanco organisers to buy the buildings for "petty cash".

Hlongwane, in the company of Sanco city organisers, has allegedly told at least one property management company that Sanco plans to use government housing subsidies to buy the buildings. Hlongwane, however, completely denies this and any wrongdoing on the part of Sanco. He says he cannot answer for people who claim to be acting on the organisation's behalf, and believes aggrieved landlords tend automatically to associate intimidatory tactics with Sanco.

Landlords say they feel trapped between Sanco on one hand and on the other the city council and Gauteng government, on which current and former Sanco members serve.

Sanco's national housing chief, Sandi Migdallana, sits on the National Housing Board and is a ward councillor for Joubert Park, one of the main trouble spots.

In an apparent effort to ease the crisis, Gauteng Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng, a former Sanco secretary-general, says complaints of exploitation of landlords and tenants are now to be dealt with by the newly constituted Landlord Tenants Board.

Over the past two to three years Sanco inner-city branch workers have advised tenants to put their rental money into "club accounts" rather than pay the landlords, and have arranged to pay for council services only, though not all council bills have been met. Costly evictions for non-payment, which have been borne by landlords, have been followed by break-ins to buildings and these "tenants" being convicted and fined by the State, while Sanco distances itself from their plight.

Death threats have been made to the partners of one property management company and to several landlords, though these cannot be directly attributed to Sanco.

Gauteng Democratic Party housing spokesman Ian Davidson tells the FM he plans to call on the Attorney-General "to investigate the criminal liability of Sanco's leadership and the trustees of a certain Vukani Trust into which rental monies have been paid, and for which we have proof, as well as individual Sanco members who have collected monies from tenants which was due and payable to landlords".

He says Sanco's leadership has "ignored its political responsibility while the Attorney-General has ignored the criminal liability of Sanco's members".

Ailton Goldberg

FINANCIAL MAIL • JANUARY 30 • 1998
Some divers, so guards become ambassadors
Tourists urged to use protection services in city

By HOKA YANG

Police have urged tourists to make use of tourist protection facilities to avoid being mugged in Johannesburg's danger spots following three attacks on five tourists who were robbed of more than R45 000 in three days.

Alexander Z from the US was held up on Tuesday at the corner of Eloff and Pritchard streets by four men who took R300 and a Visa card. He was unharmed.

On Sunday, two German tourists, Andreas S and Klaus G, were confronted by two knife-wielding men on De Villiers Street. They were robbed of travellers cheques, passports, US dollars and German marks.

Two other German tourists were attacked at the corner of Von Brandis and Market streets last week. Their attackers grabbed cash and a R3 000 camera.

Police spokesman Captain Andy Pieke said yesterday the tourists might have fallen victim to muggers because they did not ask for protection from the tourist protection service.

Information on tourist protection is available at Johannesburg Central police station, Johannesburg international airport, the Central Johannesburg Partnership and the SA Tourist Bureau.
Council gives nod to car guards

SAPS supports initiative to provide security by informal organisations

By Justice Mohale

The Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (GJMC) has officially recognised the informal car guards project, saying it will form part of the city's crime prevention strategy and the creation of jobs for the unemployed.

Chairwoman of the GJMC's public safety and emergency services committee Mz Nkele Ntingane told Sowetan that the objective was to formalise and enhance the role of informal street parking attendants.

She added that the council's involvement in car guard programmes was to apply existing by-laws to ensure effective public service.

"Our involvement would instil a sense of security in them. This will also ensure coordination between the state law enforcement agencies and the guards," she said.

Ntingane said the spiralling crime wave in Johannesburg had prompted the council to support any project that would ensure the safety and security of the public. "That's why we decided to recognise and give these organisations permission to operate freely."

The council has raised R400 000 for the project. The money will be used for training, buying uniforms and communication equipment, a base station and rentals, she said.

She said this was the first of a range of crime prevention programmes in the process of finalising a strategy to combat crime in the Johannesburg metropolitan area.

Ntingane said the South African Police Service fully endorsed the initiative. The council appreciated the security provided by organisations in the city but would urge them to apply for permission so they could be allocated areas of operation.
Police take action to win back the streets

Sector plan, designed to tackle mugging, robbery and general crime, has been operating in Jo'burg for several months

BY GILL GIFFORD
Crime Reporter

Inner-city crime is being fought with a new system of sector policing that police hope will be the answer to SAPS chief executive Meyer Kahn's promise to "win the streets of Johannesburg back from crime" by mid-year.

Earlier this week Kahn said that if there had been no progress in fighting crime in Johannesburg hotspots, he would leave his office.

But Johannesburg police spokesman Superintendent Chris Wilken said strategies to fight crime in the inner city were already in operation.

"We have divided the city into three sectors, all of which have been divided into another 12 sections. And this has been done in conjunction with an upgrade in general policing and an increase in manpower," Wilken said.

Sector one, the priority area, encompasses the CBD and is divided into five blocks or patrol beats.

"The sector is controlled by a superintendent in charge and four captains who head the four rotating shifts, with each shift having 45 members on duty at a time. The men work 12 hours on and 12 hours off, following a four-days-on and four-days-off routine," explained Wilken.

The sector-one area has been allocated four mobile caravans which are used as contact points or crime-reporting stations, and are moved around the city daily.

Sectors two and three are both manned by a captain with 40 members. Area two includes Fordsburg, Mayfair and the western parts of the city, while sector three covers Soweto, Eloff Street Extension and the southern parts of Johannesburg.

The majority of the men work in uniform. And although it sounds impressive to say we have 180 men available, they are actually required to cover a massive area and their visibility is not as high as we would like," Wilken said.

The sector policing plan was designed to crack down on increasing reports of muggings, bank robberies and general crime in the city, and has been in operation for a few months.

"We are planning to develop a system to record the successes of the system, and report them daily or every second day," said Wilken.

But the sector policing model is solely responsible for crime prevention, and operates independently from other units.

When crime breaks out in the city, sector policemen have the backup of the flying squad, highway patrol, dog units, public order policing and the robbery reaction unit.

"But we know that as soon as there is a clampdown on crime in one area, the criminals simply move. So the men stay in close contact with police stations surrounding the city to make sure control is maintained," said Wilken.

On the spot... inner-city policemen on the scene of a CBD shooting. The detectives are part of the beefed-up reaction units backing the newly implemented sectoral policing strategy.
Car-guard scheme meets with apathy

BY LEE-ANN ALFRED
City Desk

Plans to regulate the burgeoning car watch industry have fallen flat despite the council's planned Car Guard Project.

The response to calls for applications have been so poor that the Greater Johannesburg metro council has been forced to extend the deadline.

It has also raised the possibility that existing schemes will continue to operate without being registered, creating friction with the council.

The council announced the plan to regulate the industry earlier this month to ensure that car guards were not exploited and that the public received good service.

The project was also seen as an important tool against crime in the inner city as it increased visible policing and discouraged petty crime.

Car guards are informal parking attendants — normally unemployed and homeless people who watch cars in exchange for donations. At the time of the announcement, February 24 was stipulated as the deadline for proposals. But Tuesday came and went with only two applications — from Helpmekaar and Pull Together, forcing the council to extend the deadline, project co-ordinator Richard Brown said.

The council had initially indicated that there was place for four to five schemes. Two private security companies had fetched proposal forms but had not submitted applications. "It's a bit strange. It was very well publicised. There was enormous press coverage," he said.

Brown said the later deadline would put pressure on the council, as they had to complete the project by the end of August in accordance with the provincial government fund granted to train and equip guards.

He said he would also approach existing operations personally to ask them to apply.

He could not say what would happen to operations which failed to apply for registration. "The only way it will affect existing schemes will be if we demarcate and allocate their areas to someone else," he said.
Gauteng department causes delay in installation of inner-city security cameras

BY THABISA SEPOTOKOELA
AND BUNTY WEST
City Desk

The call for tenders for the installation of 24 high-tech security cameras in Johannesburg's inner city has been delayed until the R1.5-million pledged by Gauteng's department of safety and security has been received.

Project committee chairman Neil Fraser said yesterday that while all the money needed for the project had been pledged, no money had been received from the safety and security department. The cost of the project is estimated at R4.5-million.

"Although funds have been approved in principle from the SAPS, local businesses and the department of safety and security until the money is actually in the bank, no tenders can be called for," Fraser said.

He said the delay in calling for the tenders was unlikely to postpone the installation of the cameras, which was scheduled for September. The cameras are expected to be operational in December.

Fraser's comment followed an announcement by Gauteng's safety and security department on Friday that the surveillance cameras will be installed in the inner city between Noord and Jeppe streets, and Klein and Harrison streets, where most muggings and robberies occur.

The safety and security department has pledged R1.5-million for the project, with an additional R120 000 for marketing and publicity.

The SAPS will contribute about R2-million, and a business plan has been completed and signed by all stakeholders.

Johannesburg Community Forum chairman Paul O'Sullivan said camera video recordings would be used as evidence to convict criminals, and that the privacy of citizens would be assured.
R5-m for CBD crime prevention project

The Gauteng safety and security department, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and Business Against Crime (BAC) will contribute about R5 million towards the installation of close circuit television (CCTV) in Johannesburg.

The CCTV, to be installed in the central business district, will go a long way in the prevention and detection of crime in the city which has become a hunting ground for criminals.

Department deputy director Mr Sylvester Rakgoadi said a stakeholders committee will oversee the project.

Rakgoadi said his department had committed R1,5 million and a further R120 000 will be used for marketing and publicity. BAC has contributed R100 000 for a feasibility study.

Rakgoadi said the SAPS would contribute R2 million as soon as the business plan for the project was approved.

"Once completed the project will also help to maintain public order while at the same time enhance a sense of security for members of the public."

"The first phase of CCTV is located between Klein, Harrison, Noord and Jeppe streets," said Rakgoadi. - Sowetan Reporter.
Tight security but heists up

JOHANNESBURG: Levels of violence expected only in war situations have been used in bloody cash-in-transit heists and, despite a R500-million investment in improved security over the past year, bank robberies have increased, the Council of SA Banks (Cosab) announced yesterday.

Its research, which contradicts police statistics showing a decline in armed robberies, also states that the justice system has exercised too little expertise in prosecuting robbers and fraud perpetrators.

"We are not saying that government statistics are wrong; they may well be correct. The difference comes in the way we define and categorize the crimes. And the reality is that bank robberies have increased," Cosab chairperson Mr Bob Tucker said.

He said that while more than R500m had been spent on combating bank robberies last year, there had been 465 robberies, in which R136m was stolen. This was up on 408 bank robberies in 1996 when R105m was snatched.

The police late last year reported a 29.4% decrease in robberies, a figure disputed by the banks.

Tucker said: "In May last year banks broke with tradition and released bank robbery statistics and the amount of money stolen. This succeeded in highlighting the problem and provoked action, and we believe the arrests that followed had a lot to do with the energy that was triggered by shocking facts."

Nearly 50 heist suspects were arrested in the past few months, and police say this shows they are winning the war against crime.

Brigadier Mossie Myburgh, a former SA Police Service Syndicate Fraud Unit commander and head of the police component of the Office for Serious Economic Offences, has been appointed to carry out a new strategy that will see Cosab introducing a high-tech assault on the methods used by robbery gangs and syndicates.

Myburgh, dubbed "Mr Crime Fighter" by Cosab, will take up his new position on March 16. He has been tasked with upgrading Cosab's data bank and analysing the information to draw projections of crime patterns, examining the methods of robbers, enhancing co-operation with the police, supplying the Justice Department with correct information to enable them to oppose bail more effectively and to set up a skilled prosecuting team.

His R10m crime strategy project is also aimed at educating employees on information security.

Tucker said media hype around attacks on cash-in-transit vans had created the impression that armoured vehicles were "big tin cans easily broken open with a crowbar."

"The (January) highway heist in Sandton was pulled off by men carrying AK-47 rifles loaded with armour-piercing bullets — the kind used by armies to attack a tank."
Crime: Greeks see minister

Members of the South African Greek community expressed dissatisfaction with the spate of killings of Greek businessmen when they met Minister of Safety and Security Sydney Mufamadi at the Hellenic Cyprus Brotherhood Club in Bedfordview this week.

More than 250 Greek retailers had lost their lives through violent crime in South Africa last year alone. People were tired of funerals, said Gary Ttappous vice-chairman of Hellenes for Human Rights, Equity and Justice.

The community was influential. People of Greek origin represented 0.2% of the population but generated 8% of the country's gross domestic product. They had created jobs for 500 000 South Africans, Ttappous said.

The crime wave was causing many job-creators to leave the country, he added. Twelve of his friends had emigrated in the past year.

Criminals no longer feared the law because their chances of being caught were slim. "Unless the Government prioritises the fight against crime, the future is grim," Ttappous said.

Mufamadi said the Government realised crime levels were intolerably high, but was optimistic the country was getting on top of the problem.

Asked about the reimposition of the death penalty, Mufamadi said the Government was responsive to the wishes of the people, but it also felt it had to lead.

"I am convinced that if we can make sure the police arrest criminals and that the courts sentence them appropriately, then not so many people will call for the death penalty," he said. - Staff Reporter
Bitter former MK cadres speak about their new 'careers' planning big cash-in-transit attacks

An embittered former Umkhonto weSizwe cadre has admitted to the Saturday Star that he helped to set up several of the cash-in-transit robberies in which R100-million was taken and a dozen people lost their lives.

The man, who gave his name only as Peter, said he worked as a "clout" for the gangs planning the heists. He said his former comrades in MK, together with other criminals, were part of a network of "cells" behind the heists.

He said several other former MK men have decided to go public to pressure the ANC into doing something about the plight of former fighters. They all still have their ANC membership cards from years gone by.

He said: "The MO (modus operandi) was to make friends with a low-ranking security guard in SEV (the security company transporting large amounts of cash for banks) or one of the other companies.

"After a while we'd get friendly and he would tell me, for a fee, who in the company dealt with schedules and timetables and who would be willing to deal with us.

"The gang would pay those contacts "thousands" for this information, he added.

Peter said there were several cells that held regular meetings in Pretoria and a number that met in Bedfordview. The meetings were used to plan robberies.

Vulnerable spots

Other ex-MK fighters who spoke to the Saturday Star claimed that some of the money taken in the heists was "being sent out of the country to start businesses".

Their remarks confirmed earlier reports by this newspaper quoting a police informer and security industry sources as saying money was being channelled to neighbouring states such as Botswana.

One ex-MK man claimed that the money "might even be used one day to start a party to challenge the ANC".

Peter, who is crippled by a bullet he took in combat in Angola, said the robberies were easy for the former guerrillas. "The MK cadres are very experienced. After the 1982 raids, they knew every vulnerable spot in and around Johannesburg - that's why they can, and do, plan the attacks with military precision.

"The police can't or won't catch them because some of the police are in on it too. "Think for yourself," he said. "The police and security guards are so poorly paid, what will stop them from making more money?"

He said some of the policemen involved were ex-MK members. "It's just a case of comrades dealing with comrades.

Peter's confession came in an interview at a cafe in Yeoville, but only after a number of telephone conversations over a period of days, and an eventual five-hour trip around Johannesburg suburbs during which photographer Theo Dolfmert and I met a dozen or so ex-MK fighters and former ANC cadres.

TO PAGE 2
Parents call on police to raid schools

Eldorado Park pupils form self-defence units and ask to be armed, while teachers do searches to counter gang violence

By Jacqui Reeves

Edubittered parents in Eldorado Park, west of Johannesburg, are set to call on the police to mount surprise raids on schools in a bid to halt growing gang activity and playground violence.

Violence and intimidation on playgrounds and in areas around schools has, say many parents and pupils, reached a critical point. Many believe police intervention might be the only “check” they say that will solve the problem. Just a month ago, a 14-year-old boy was shot by two of his classmates.

Pupils and parents in the area, who all spoke on condition of anonymity, told of gangs walking on to school grounds and snatching people in toilets, a girl gang known as the Malavelli Queens terrorising pupils at one school, and playground brawls between gangs.

Gauteng Education MEC Mary Mecalf said any police raid on a school would have to be done in close co-operation with the staff and only if there was sufficient concern to warrant the use of a controlled search.

Although school governing bodies have the right to call in police assistance, Bhekiki Khumalo, spokesman for Minister of Education Sibusiso Bengu, said parents needed to understand their role in discipline.

"Schools are there to reinforce the discipline that students should be getting at home," he said.

Charmaine Arendse, chairwoman of Willow Crescent Secondary School’s governing body and a member of the steering committee for high schools in the area, said she would be inviting principals from the area to join her this week at a meeting with the local police to discuss the problem.

A spokesman for the provincial commissioner’s office said police action may be the only way to help make their kids safe at school. So we need to get the principals behind us if we are going to ask the police to become involved," she said.

A spokesman for the provincial commissioner’s office said police would be willing to raid schools if the community made the request.

School managers, parents and children say pupils are scared of possible reprisals if they report an incident to school authorities or the police.

"The gangs will come back and make your life hell if you speak, so most kids just keep quiet," said a Grade 6 pupil.

Ahmed Sulliman, principal of Silver Oaks Secondary School, has taken a tough line. A wall has been constructed around the school to keep outsiders out, and the main gates are locked during the day to keep the pupils in. Sulliman said regular blitzes, in which teachers search pupils, have helped to tighten discipline.

Although other schools in the area also use teacher raids to check for weapons and drugs, some pupils feel the actions of the teachers are leaving them unarmed and defenceless.

Numerous pupils claim to have been targeted by the gangs on their way to or from school or on their way home.

Ebrahim Evans, the deputy principal at Willow Crescent Secondary School, said organised gangs outside schools were creating problems for pupils.

Sulliman said: "The students feel they have to group together for safety to protect themselves from the gangs outside of the school, and they want to be armed to do this."

He said the groups were not formed with the intention of being gangs but rather as a method of self-protection.

SAPA reports that a young man and two children, a six-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy, were killed when a running gun-battle erupted between the Dixies and the Junky Funkies gangs at Bonteheuvel on the Cape Flats late last night.

By Jacqui Reeves

Education Reporter
Alcohol linked to criminality

Socio-economic conditions top the list as the biggest contributor to crime in the Greater Johannesburg area, followed by alcohol and firearms, according to a recent survey.

"If there's no food, no roof over your head, then something has to be done and the easiest way to do it is by means of small crimes and they sometimes lead to big crimes," said one of the commissioners interviewed.

Janine Rauch, the head of the project, noted: "The references to alcohol were universally made in relation to violent crimes such as assault, rape and murder." — Sapa

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IN CONTENTS OF HOME:

Sir: Two Henry Moore watercolours, L. Pissaro oil, two Sir Giuseppe Coccoran (1680 to 1750) on copper, John Piper portrait, A Vickers, J van Dyk, David Roberts and many Gerard Bengo mixed media, Louis Kneha Maqhubele oil, Ngarane oils, Timus de Jongh, W H Coetzer, Adriaan Bosch, Errol Boyley plus many more.
picked up that it was false was the incorrect spelling of very simple words.

Under normal circumstances, licensing department cashiers have to sign for these blank forms, and at the end of the day they have to sign for the batch that remains and give an account for those that are missing. But because of staff vacancies in the top five managerial positions in the department, these cashiers are left largely unsupervised.

About 21 of the 107 cashiers at the Johannesburg licensing department are acting in managerial po-

Africans lagging behind on productivity

Africa represented 13% of the world's population, but produced only 1.7% of the world's total wealth, Pan-African Productivity Association president Jan Visser told a meeting of the Organisation of African Unity's labour and social affairs commission in Pretoria this week.

The OAU meeting was also presented with a World Economic Forum report on African competitiveness.

According to the report, South Africa came seventh, but compared with 46 other developed countries, it ranked only 44th.

— Sapa

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BRITISH AIRWAYS
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decided to come out fighting.
But, as Heather Hogan reports, there is at least one Johnson County citizen who has rolled up his sleeves and

CRIME
TV show ignites 'overdue debate'

'Pilger had his own agenda, and programme conformed to it'
Blacks, whites rally together on rural crime

WHITE farmers and a black "protection force" angered by rising rural crime and a spate of attacks on farms rallied in a small SA town yesterday, demanding tough government action.

The unlikely sight of white farmers and their black neighbours taking to the streets of Marble Hall, about 200 km northeast of Johannesburg, was aimed at pushing the government into recognising the fear they live under. "Farmers are being targeted. It's frightening," said the farmers' spokesman Brett Beyford. "There's no strong deterrent. It's got to the stage where criminals feel they can do anything." Whites are not the only victims. Black farmworkers and businesses in rural areas are also under attack and have formed a vigilante group. — Reuter.
1200 new multi-family homes a week.

The NHBRC reached 100

Approved sites first.

Brotherhood of Railways.

About 62 of these cases had

Depends on the facts.

1996: NHBRC was established.

The National Home Builders

Council kicks out corrupt builders.

By Joshua Roberts
The police were not able to protect the town from crime. A silent testimony to crime-infested Walkerville.
Crime puts community under siege
Walkerville residents hone shooting skills

BY PETA KROST

Walkerville's armed response company is teaching local plot owners how to shoot - because they claim the community is caught up in a war against crime.

The firearm training could prevent another tragedy such as happened at Zeeckfontein, on the East Rand, when Angelina Zwane was killed by a bullet fired by a local plot owner.

Most residents have more than one firearm per household - and, much like Zeeckfontein, the Walkerville area, south of Johannesburg, is plagued by crime.

Most houses in Walkerville visited by the Saturday Star this week had been attacked, some a number of times. The people's annoyance has a lot to do with two horrific incidents: the Eikenhof killing in 1983 when a woman, her 14-year-old son and a 15-year-old girl were murdered in a drive-by shooting by members of the Pan African Congress's armed wing Apikile, and the terrifying in 1986 of their community by members of the "December Gang", who gang-raped, murdered and tortured many residents.

Another aggravating factor is that the area is surrounded by squatter camp townships. Dotted around the worst-hit areas are skeletons of houses whose owners have abandoned 4- to 8-hectare properties they could not sell.

There is no Walkerville police station - the nearest one is at De Deur, which serves an area of about 350 sq km. Many people despair that the police are not able to protect them.

German-born resident Helmut Klein, whose home has been burgled three times in recent years, said: "I have made it clear to the cops that if someone sets foot on my property, I will blow them away!"

His grandchildren are not allowed to play alone in their expansive garden and his house is now fortified: "We used to sit outside in the evenings but it's too dangerous now. Instead we barricade ourselves inside at night."

Over the years, Clive and Moira Horton have been burgled more times than they can remember. From their home they can see a squatter camp.

"We have been cleaned out three times but we are the only ones in this particular neighbourhood who have not been attacked," said Clive Horton. "Some people in this area have just fled, no one knows where. There was a beautiful old double-storey thatched house which was literally flattened within two weeks of the owners leaving."

One of their neighbours managed to escape and run to the Hortons for safety when a group broke into his house.

While the Hortons were being interviewed yesterday afternoon, they were locking their valuables and objects of sentimental value in their hidden walk-in safe because they were going on holiday.

"We have no choice - if we don't do this we will come home to find it all gone," said Moira Horton. "It happens whenever we go away."

They had three attempted break-ins over Christmas and recall that one year they had 12 burglaries. No insurance company will insure them.

Moira is too afraid to be in the house on her own. The couple would sell their home, given the opportunity - but they say no one will buy it. Clive said it would cost R1.2 million to replace and he would not.
Jo-burg business gives real support to anti-crime fight

By Mike Mason

SAPOL Police Services chief executive Mzukisi Kahn's dream of making Johannesburg streets safe by mid-year received a boost yesterday when Business Against Crime (BAC) announced 11 of the 23 stations earmarked as pockets of excellence had received sponsorship.

BAC launched the Support Partnerships for Police Stations (SPPS), at a workshop in Johannesburg last week and announced the immediate induction of five support teams for five major police stations across the city.

According to BAC's Barbara Holtmann, the SPPS aims to support Kahn's vision of creating pockets of excellence through Programme Johannesburg, a police plan to improve the level of service in SAPS and thus bring down the crime rate.

Kahn has vowed to resign if the plan fails to make the streets of Johannesburg safe.

Delegates at the workshop yesterday discussed ways to carry the plan forward.

Kahn could not attend because he was in Cape Town to brief the parliamentary safety and security portfolio standing committee on Programme Johannesburg. The meeting was, however, postponed at the last minute.

Kahn addressed the workshop via video recording in which he emphasised the importance of winning the war against crime in Johannesburg.

Any business wanting to sponsor a police station can telephone Holtmann at 011 883 7877 (work) or 082 444 8824.
All is not quiet on Westbury’s front

Tangeni Amupadhi

Gangs have triumphed in Westbury — Johannesburg's equivalent of the Cape Flats ganglands — after promises of big business and politicians have come to naught.

In recent weeks four men have been slain in gun fights — an event familiar to this dirt-poor community which, for decades, has enjoyed the notoriety of having South Africa’s highest mandrax consumption rate.

Westbury's rows of drab grey council houses and flats have for decades been a no-go zone after dark. With the exception of the drug barons, their clients and the gangsters who do their dirty work, very few enter this township south-west of Johannesburg. For 40 years the Fast Guns, Varados, the Spaldings, Majimbos and FBI gangs have ruled supreme.

The rich pickings from the drug trade — they sell dagga, mandrax and, more recently, crack-cocaine or 'gelf' — have helped support the area's football teams and kept starvation from many doors. In turn the gangs have spawned several smaller offshoots, and younger members now control a lucrative trade in stolen cars and shops.

The community claims the police have turned a blind eye for decades because the drug money has kept their palms well greased. Two years ago, the station commander of the police station in neighbouring Soweto, under whose jurisdiction Westbury falls, was changed in an effort to fight crime. But even this seems to be just one more plan that has not worked.

"Quick-fix solutions won't work," says Glen Steyn, executive director of Conquest for Life, an organisation working with the youth to try to "change the mindset" of Westbury residents. Many young people regard gangsters and druglords who drive luxury cars and live in large houses as their idols.

Steyn says plans to fight gangsterism in the area have always been ad hoc: more police are brought in, and more promises are made by businesses, politicians and individuals. "They run here when the press is around and make promises as long as they can get mileage," he says.

In the run-up to the 1994 elections, Westbury was fiercely contested by the National Party and the African National Congress, both of which made grand promises of restoring peace and bringing prosperity.

Among those who stand accused of failing to deliver on their promises to the community are the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), the National Olympic Committee of South Africa (Nosa), the government and companies which run factories adjacent to Westbury.

But they all have explanations for the lack of delivery. JSE representative Suzette Plantema denies promises were ever made by the JSE to set up various projects, including a vocational training centre.

She admits, though, that the JSE said it would help the community find money for programmes to keep youths off the streets. This has not happened.

Chris Day of Nosa says the pledge it made two years ago to get involved through sport still stands, but it is waiting for the provincial Department of Safety and Security to get involved.

ANC representative Fadhil Moosa concurs several government programmes have "fizzled out because of lack of interest" from schools, but adds they will be restored.

Several companies in the area, including Nampak, Tastic Rice, Phillips and Anchor Yeast, say their business is negatively affected by gangsterism. Tastic Rice's depot manager, Larry Slabbert, says workers are afraid to make deliveries in Westbury. Other companies say their goods trucks are hijacked in the area, but none is making a concerted effort to deal with the problem.

Fuel Road, which divides Westbury from its more affluent neighbours, has become a hijacking hot spot where, in broad daylight, the Truckadore skollies hijack entire trucks or pull goods from them.

Despite the fact that it is surrounded by dense industrial areas, Westbury has an unemployment rate of more than 70% — among the highest in the country.

Steyn believes this is because coloured people are left out: "It's hard to find a job because of affirmative action. Companies say they want blacks only. Some of these people are selling drugs because they cannot find jobs."
Diplomats fear for their safety

JOHANNESBURG: Foreign diplomats have made an urgent appeal to the Department of Foreign Affairs to improve security after several recent attacks on diplomatic personnel.

In his latest letter to the department, dated May 14, Bulgarian ambassador Petko Draganov, a former dean of the diplomatic corps, wrote that foreign diplomats were increasingly concerned about their safety.

He appealed for more patrolling and “swift and decisive action” against perpetrators as a deterrent.

One diplomatic mission member said personnel feared that those in the diplomatic services were being targeted.

Diplomatic number plates distinguished staff from other citizens, making them vulnerable.

The latest victim was the Saudi Arabian charge d’affaires, Saud Zedan, who was robbed near Alexandra, north of Johannesburg, at the weekend.

Earlier this month, Nigerian diplomats were robbed of personal goods worth about R130 000 by people posing as policemen on the Soweto highway.

In March four Angolan government representatives were robbed of items worth R30 000 by men posing as policemen.

Last month the Mozambican minister of works, Roberto White, and his staff were attacked by three bogus policemen outside Johannesburg airport.

A burglar broke into the Waterkloof, Pretoria, residence of the United Arab Emirates ambassador, stole appliances and “petrol bombed” the house the same month.

Deputy head of the German embassy said: “Our statistics show that once or twice a month a member of our embassy falls victim to a mugging, a burglary or an armed attack.”

Foreign affairs spokesman Marco Boni said the government was extremely concerned about the security of foreign diplomats. Draganov’s letter to the department had been referred to the Safety and Security department.

“Criminal attacks on diplomats are part of the greater problem of crime in the country. We don’t believe that it is an orchestrated campaign against the diplomats,” Boni said.

South Africa’s crime problem was cause for “serious concern” and was hampering German business initiatives in this country, German ambassador Uwe Kaestner said yesterday.

He told the National Assembly’s foreign affairs portfolio committee business people from the SA Initiative of German Business were hampered by the crime problem. — Own Correspondent
Johannesburg - Traffic in parts of central Johannesburg was brought to a standstill when an anti-crime motorcade of about 120 vehicles moved through the city this morning.

The protest was sparked by the death of a shopowner's 20-month-old toddler in a robbery about two weeks ago.

Cars, carrying banners reading "Protect our children" and "Peace and security" formed part of the procession.

Toddler Danny Zhong was shot in the head during a robbery at the Mr Beijing shop in central Johannesburg on June 28. His father, Tom Zhong, was injured during the shooting.

In an interview this morning, an emotional Mr Zhong said: "This was a terrible heartbreak. Who knows who is going to be next - which baby is going to be next?"

"We came here in 1991 hoping for a better future. If I had known this was to happen I would have stayed away."

Organiser and Gauteng Chinese community leader Cecil Leong said those who had been affected by crime had been voiceless long enough.

SA Chinese Business Community spokesman Donald Wang said incidents like Danny's killing were destroying investments in the country.

"Crime is destroying everything," said Mr Wang. — Sapa
Cautions still has more incidents of crime than national average

Suicide highest by gender.
Jo'burg passes crime test

By FERNDA CASSIN

Author of 'The World's Most Dangerous Places', gives thumbs-up to other dreaded city

'SOUTH AFRICAN TIMES' 15

(36) 8/18/18
Major cleanup of licensing office

BY JACQUI REEVES

A six-week offensive against criminals at the Johannesburg licensing department has transformed the once-infamous hotbed of corruption and bribery into a virtually crime-free zone.

Forensic auditors, police investigators and National Crime Prevention Strategy staff were called on to help bring about the changes, which might be used as models for licensing departments across South Africa.

The crackdown followed extensive coverage by The Star of the shambles at the licensing office.

Less than two months ago, thousands of false roadworthy and registration certificates were being issued each week, insurance fraud in the form of registering "ghost trucks" had taken root, and packs of blank registration documents were being stolen by staff.

Officials were also taking bribes for a wide variety of activities and the relationship between union representatives and management had virtually broken down.

The Star yesterday arrived at the Loveday Street department for an unannounced visit and was immediately greeted by security personnel controlling access to the building.

All visitors are issued with a slip of paper giving them access to the specific floor that should be visited. No customer is permitted to wander between floors and the paper is needed to gain access to processing areas.

The processing floors, which were once crammed with tellers offering photographic services, registration documents and fake licences, are now totally clear. Queuing systems have been upgraded, reducing waiting periods from more than an hour to 10 minutes.

A single queue, controlled by a departmental official, means that the public can no longer gain access to tellers known to them in order to conduct corrupt dealings. Investigators are currently building cases against corrupt cashiers, who have taken their "work" outside the building and are collecting false documentation during their lunch hour.

The Star's campaign pays off

The man who tried to break the back of the syndicates, acting head of licensing Gerrie Gernke, and his team will visit the Durban and Cape Town licensing departments next week to see if their crime-busting strategies could be moulded to suit the needs of KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape.

Millionaire does the chores at old-age home
9 dismissed over Jo'burg licence scam

By Cecilia Russell

The Greater Johannesburg Metro Council has dismissed nine employees since a joint anti-corruption operation into licensing scams in the Johannesburg licensing department was launched six weeks ago.

The council and the Gauteng provincial task team intend to take the lessons learnt from this cleanup operation to other licensing departments in the province to prevent the spread of the rot.

The operation was the result of the committee's investigation into the scams and a series of articles written in The Star about the crime-ridden department.

The stringent measures instituted, which included ongoing investigations of the SA Police Service anti-corruption unit and the establishment of an internal anti-corruption unit, had meant that the situation in the department had normalised, MEC for Local Government Sicelo Shiceka said.

He said the council was considering laying charges against some of the dismissed employees. The police had also arrested one person in connection with the issuing of false learners' licences.

Driver's licence examiners were rotated regularly and the tests were checked at random to prevent further false learners' licences from being issued, Shiceka said.

Other steps are planned to consolidate the achievements, Shiceka said, including the employment of 57 staff members to fill vacancies.

The council would be spending R221 000 on 26 printers to enable it to reconcile face-value documents in a day, and closed-circuit TV will monitor examination rooms.
THE Johannesburg eastern local council is to begin removing illegal road closures and security hovens that have been set up by residents to block access to suburban public roads in reaction to an increase in crime in more affluent areas.

The council's media spokesman, Keith Peacock, confirmed last week that notices had been sent to residents informing them that unless they applied for council permission for the closures within 14 days, the structures would be taken down.

He said the eastern council was one of the few local authorities that had a policy of supporting communities who wanted to introduce security measures, including road closures.

In terms of the policy, residents were required to approach the council for permission to erect barricades and place community notices calling for objections. The council would then investigate any objections as well as the effect of the proposed closures on traffic flows, pedestrian access, emergency and related services.

While some residents had followed the proper procedure and obtained the necessary permission, others had simply sealed off roads without consulting the council or communities affected by the closure, or had applied for permission but had then erected the structures before authorization was granted.

Peacock said that it was illegal to close off public thoroughfares without government permission. He said a meeting would be held with residents next week to discuss the matter.

Steve Margo, the operations director for the police forum of the Sandton Precinct Community, said his organisation supported the removal of all illegal closures.

The precinct is a non-profit company set up to provide support for local police stations, and has been actively involved in assisting residents to set up legal road closures in line with council policy.

He said closures had proven effective and had cut crime by up to 90% in some neighbourhoods.
Resident's fence was not squashed while the workers ripped down the electric fence and raised Irelands to be able to clear the hedge. They were told the fences would be bulldozed after their removal. This would be illegal.
Removal of boom upsets Sandton residents

Deborah Fine

A GROUP of residents in Gallo Manor in Sandton has vowed to take on the Johannesburg eastern local council after municipal workers tore down a private security boom yesterday erected by the residents at their own cost as a neighbourhood security measure.

The dismantling of the boom in Honeysuckle Crescent marks the start of the council’s campaign to remove several booms erected throughout Sandton’s suburbs, without municipal permission, in response to rising crime.

The council said unauthorised booms disturbed traffic flows and jeop-

ised emergency access routes.

Honeysuckle Crescent Residents Association member Ron Bacheiner warned yesterday of “chaos” and said residents would embark on “a range of activities”, including picketing, as a protest against the council’s actions.

He said residents spent R90,000 to erect the boom, streetlights and a wall in their neighbourhood in response to a number of housebreakings and car thefts. Each household paid an additional R200 per month to hire a security guard to man the boom.

He denied the boom was unauthorised, saying residents had lodged an application for permission months ago.
Study reveals that violent crime affects mostly blacks

Jonny Steinberg

MOST victims of violent crime in the Pretoria metropolitan area are black, but Pretoria remains among the safest cities in SA for all its inhabitants — a report released last week has revealed.

The report — published by the Institute for Democracy in SA (Idasa) — showed that 57% of recorded murders and rapes in Pretoria last year were reported to police stations in the areas of Soshangwe, Rietgat, Mamelodi and Atteridgeville — a suggestion that violent crime was concentrated in the city's black townships.

The report also found that while violent crime made up 21% of recorded crime in white suburbia, half of all crimes committed in the townships were violent. "If there is any policy implication here it is surely that anti-violence measures should concentrate resources in the townships," said the report's author, Antony Abbeker.

The report found that Pretoria was one of the least violent metropolitan areas in SA. Compared to Johannesburg — just 60km away — Pretoria is relatively free of the high-profile crimes of hijacking and bank robberies. Johannesburg and Soweto recorded a combined total of more than 3,700 car hijackings and nearly 1,350 truck hijackings last year. Pretoria had about 420 recorded car hijackings and 100 recorded truck hijackings. Similarly, while 95 bank robberies occurred in Soweto, only 27 were recorded in Pretoria.

While violent crime was concentrated in Pretoria's townships, the report found that property crime was concentrated in white suburbia. Nearly 50% of all vehicle crime was recorded in Sunnyside, Pretoria Central and Brooklyn.

However, those property crimes which were reported in the townships were much more likely to be violent than property crimes in the suburbs. Nearly 47% of all violent robberies were recorded at Mamelodi, Rietgat, Pretoria Central and Soshangwe.

ED 13/9/98
There are some criminal-infested buildings where police and the department officials are afraid to enter.

No-go zones in CBD.

BY PHOTOBEL MOONBE

Hillbrow
Installation of anti-crime cameras in city put on hold

Funds desperately needed to proceed with R4,5-million surveillance project

BY THEMBA SEPOTOKELE

The much-vaunted plan to install 24-hour surveillance cameras in Johannesburg to curb crime has been put on hold due to lack of funds.

It is unclear when the R4,5-million CCTV project will begin after the R1,5-million donated by Standard Bank to the Business Against Crime (BAC) was used for the Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJS) which incorporates the departments of police services, justice, welfare and correctional services in the fight against crime. Standard Bank had pledged R2-million.

The ICJS seeks to streamline the justice department to be more effective. The cameras were scheduled to be installed between Noord and Jeppe streets, and Klein and Harrison streets - Johannesburg's crime hot spots - by last month.

Initially, Gauteng's safety and security department had pledged R1,5-million, with an additional R120,000 for marketing and publicity of the project.

Provincial acting head of safety and security, Susan Pienaar, said her department was willing to transfer the R1,5-million it had pledged until additional funding was available.

She said the SAPS had raised R1,5-million, while MEC Paul Mashatile was pursuing other funding options.

In a letter from projects committee chairperson Neil Fraser to Mark Hill of the Johannesburg City Watch, an association incorporated under Section 21 responsible for the project, Fraser said the SAPS had informed them that no funds would be forthcoming from budgets and they had to apply for RDP funds.

"This is a blow as we were led to believe that the first phase of the Johannesburg CCTV was a priority. Until they make the funding available it is not possible to unlock the money which have been approved by the provincial government."

Fraser said the business sector funding had also become problematic.

"It was advised by the previous BAC managing director, Eric Tochnell, that the R1,5-million business contributed would be made available by BAC from funding specifically provided by Standard Bank for the CCTV project.

"This commitment was withdrawn by BAC after Tochnell left, and they have basically funded the costs of the consultants' fees and some sundry payments of about R150,000," Fraser's letter reads.

BAC national MD Willie Scholtz said BAC Gauteng was responsible for the CCTV project.

Scholtz said BAC national gave BAC provincial R146,000 towards the feasibility study of the project. He said the project had been handed to BAC Gauteng, while the national body channelled its energies to the vehicle crime project, border control, commercial crime and to support the office of the national public prosecutors."
Real power is economic

Industrial park in state of collapse

By Shadrack Mashalaba

Once a thriving park with business "bursting at the seams", the Emdeni, Soweto, industrial park belonging to Business Partners, formerly the Small Business Development Corporation Limited, has become a "ghost building".

The premises were built in 1982 and completed about three years later. It was one of Business Partners' numerous businesses throughout the country to enable small entrepreneurs to enter business.

However, the effects of vandalism, intimidation and crime, and in some instances the perception that Soweto has a high rate of crime have taken their toll on these premises.

In the case of Emdeni, only five tenants are operating in the now dilapidated building which initially housed 21 entrepreneurs.

Business Partners said the Emdeni business park was one of many of their premises that had become victims of arson and vandalism.

The premises, according to general manager of properties Nazeem Martin, were twice destroyed by fire - with six units destroyed in 1989 and other two in 1996.

None of the eight units were rebuilt, he said.

"Since its inception, the park was primarily occupied by tenants who were involved in motor vehicle and other related businesses. Over the years there have been allegations that many of the motor vehicle and related businesses were "chop shops" dealing in stolen motor vehicle parts," Martin said.

When Business Partners, through legal and related actions, persuaded all tenants who were allegedly engaging in illegal "chop shops" to vacate their units, almost half of the units were vacated, he said.

Many of the remaining tenants were also not operating economically viable businesses.

"They were also forced to close their businesses with the result that there are now only five tenants operating from the park," Martin said.

Businesses reluctant

In the case of the vacated units, said Martin, the result had been constant vandalism.

Despite "low rentals, seldom covering operating costs", businesses were still reluctant to operate at the premises.

Some of the reasons for this reluctance, he said, included the perception that the area had a high crime rate and that the Emdeni premises are next to an informal settlement.

"Business Partners has therefore had limited success in attracting tenants to the Emdeni park."

But some of the remaining tenants dispute Martin's allegations.

"There has never been any unity of purpose on how to take care of our park," he said. He said a series of meetings with tenants to build a strong committee to look at problems also proved fruitless.

Although he agreed that there were many "shady" businesses that operated from the premises, high rentals and accumulation of arrears were among the reasons that led to business people leaving the area.
Private army puts thugs on the run

Own team of guards yields brilliant results

By PEIJA KROST

The "luxury" of watching your kids playing outside without fear - that's one bonus for Kensington residents who have banded together and grabbed the crime monster by the throat.

But one of the best dividends to come out of their scheme is that two insurance companies have launched pilot projects in the area which will include reductions in premiums of up to 25% - between R50 and R250.

The Kensington Community Project, which has already led to an astounding 50% drop in crime in certain areas, could be a blueprint on how other crime-plagued Johannesburg suburbs can deal with the problem.

Pilot project confirmed that "crime in the Kensington area has dropped "unsurprisingly" when street committees were organized and full-time guards hired to patrol each street.

This is how the system works:

Two years ago, the community banded together to form street committees. Each member of a street committee contributed to the cost of a full-time guard patrolling their street. Now, between 2 000 and 3 000 homes are protected by about 90 security guards, otherwise known as bobbies on the beat.

Each street has its own bank account and employs its own guard. Where there are more contributors, there are more guards. The security guards carry panic buttons and have armed response backup.

Before the system was installed, Claydon Powels, now 17, was attacked and his bicycle was stolen.

"It was not safe for children - even teenagers - to be out alone," says his mother, Gill Powels.

"Now, with our fully-armed the best system, I feel secure enough to let Clayden ride his bike on the street again," says his mother, Gill Powels.

"I'm even happy for him to walk from the bus stop, a fair distance away. A neighbor's 16-year-old child even walks home from school.

Powels says she now sleeps peacefully, which was something she certainly did not do during the height of Kensington's crime wave, which included hijackings, murder, robbery and rape.

Furious

Advertising executive Peter Hugo was hijacked and robbed on his property two years ago, which motivated him to help set up the system.

"I was furious and armed at all people in uniform. I used to stand on the verandah every night, watching. Every night I watched cars with darkened windows cruising the area, sometimes with no number plates. There was always someone obdious character at the bus stop. That letter box and cruising stopped after we installed the guards."

Hugo says eight crimes took place at his home in the 10 years before guards were posted. "Since then, the only crime in our street was the stealing of a car battery."

Hugo's insurance company has reduced his premiums by 10% due to the reduced risk.

"So my contribution to the guards is mostly covered by the money I save on insurance."

Before the new system, neighbors were largely strangers. Now, most people know each other and there are regular street parties.

Lawyer Lara Reinders-Bentley says it is wonderful to be able to leave her car in the street and carry the groceries without looking over her shoulder. "We are all involved with the guards, and they come and chat to us. We have had the same man here for as long as I can remember," she says.

But there is a dark cloud hanging over the Kensington residents' enterprise - the Security Officers' Board (SOB), which regulates private security in South Africa, is intent on closing down the company hired by the committees because they are allegedly underpaying their guards.

The community is furious because they say they can't afford to pay the guards more money - and, they claim, the guards are happy to work for them.

Kensington residents explain, is not a wealthy area and they refuse to go back to the days when murders, hijackings and rapes were frequent occurrences in this leafy suburb.

Many residents especially feel victim to crime, while others moved out of the area.

So while residents are proud, and people feel safe, the battle between the security company, the residents' central committee and the SOB rages.

RECLAIMING THE STREETS: Two youngsters are escorted home by a security guard paid for by residents in Kensington. The toll in crime incidents has been "astronomical."

[Photograph: CHERY ABDULLAH]
Two injured in New Year outrage

JACKIE CAMERON AND JOHAN SCHRONEN

A powerful car bomb exploded at the V&A Waterfront last night, damaging three cars and injuring at least two people.

The roof of the car, which contained the bomb, was flung metres into the air and jagged pieces of metal, glass and other pieces of shrapnel rained down between people running for cover. Flames shot into the air after the blast.

Miraculously only two people were slightly injured and another was treated for shock.

"I cannot believe nobody was killed," said eyewitness Rodney Jardine of Athlone. Others described scenes of panic and terror in the aftermath of the Waterfront blast within weeks.

Witnesses described a thunderous bang, the sound of glass shattering and screams as people fled. A strong smell of cordite hung in the air after the blast.

The explosion happened shortly after 7pm last night in the parking lot about five metres away from the entrance to the Victoria Wharf. A white Toyota Corolla was blown apart by the blast, which damaged several other cars. One was shifted metres across the parking lot.

Police cordoned off the area and said the bombed car was parked directly under surveillance cameras monitored on a 24-hour basis.

Video footage of the suspected bomber parking the car could help police close the net on suspects.

Serious violent crimes unit investigators rushed to the Waterfront last night and were negotiating with officials there to obtain images from the video tapes in a bid to identify the culprits.

Late last night, an eerie silence hung over the area, broken only by crackling radios as explosives sniffing dogs were led from car to car.

A second car was identified as containing a possible bomb, and police were gathering information about the area.

At the time of going to press last night, the area had still not been declared safe - not even for police officers and emergency personnel who were on standby.

AFTER THE BLAST: the remains of the car that contained the bomb. Witnessed described a thunderous bang, the sound of glass shattering and screams as people fled.

Alan Styles, bodyguard to top Gauteng businesswoman, was injured in the explosion. Styles, 25, from Northcliff, Johannesburg, and his wife, Lynn, were on a working holiday in Cape Town to protect a Johannesburg businesswoman.

Warren Williams, an employee of one of the shops in the centre, was treated for shock.

Waterfront spokeswoman Maureen Thompson described the explosion as a "despicable act".

"We are just glad no one was seriously injured in the blast. Clearly we will be looking again at further improving security measures at the Waterfront. This may cause some discomfort, but people's safety is of prime importance."

The blast comes only four months after the devastating pipe bomb at Planét Hollywood Restaurant, which killed two and injured 26.

No one has claimed responsibility for last night's blast.

Police believe the bomb was in a car in a Waterfront parking area.

One eye-witness told investigators she saw a man get out of a car near the scene, seconds before the bomb went off and then "hurry away".

The shattered pieces of the bombed car were spread hundreds of metres away from the blast. The bonnet was about 800m from the cordoned-off area and the car's lights lay metres away.

Cape Town fire-fighters arrived at the V&A within minutes of the explosion and evacuated the area.

Western Cape Premier Gerald Morant, who visited the scene of the blast, said it was "totally unacceptable" to start the New Year with urban terrorism attacks.

He said there had been more than 700 bomb attacks in the province and ...
nt car bomb

(38) AKG 2/1/97

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...shattered pieces of the car were spread hundreds of metres away from the explosion; the bonnet was found about 300m from the cordoned-off area and the lights lay metres away.

Town fire-fighters arrived V&A within minutes of the blast and evacuated the area.

Eastern Cape Premier Gerald Brand, who visited the scene of the blast, said it was "totally unacceptable to start the New Year with terrorism attacks.

...said there had been more than 10 bomb attacks in the province and no arrests.

...He said the province should be given policing powers and the budget that went with that to allow the province to look after the safety of the people.

Brahim Rasool, African National Congress leader of the Western Cape, said many would speculate on the motive for this "cowardly act".

"Already it is being suggested that it's the work of those responsible for the ongoing campaign of terror in our province."

Eyewitness accounts – page 2
FARMERS’ REMEDY: Prepared to help stop homesteaded killings

Following the growing number of attacks and murders which are taking place on isolated farms across the country, the security forces and the South African Agricultural Union have issued a document outlining specific security measures.
More police to hunt Westbury gangs 'running amok,' vows police chief

Criminologist Tony Giordano (21)

By Shelby Ross

Aug 18, 1999

NGC TIMES
Westbury

Where blood and mothers’ tears never stop flowing

This week concerned top policemen visited violence-wracked Westbury - a suburb where gangster related crime had led to the murders of several youngsters in past weeks. JOHANNES VOGEI asked the community, especially mothers, about their tense situation.

W
hile millions of South Africans optimistically greeted the start of a new year, a grief-stricken Westbury, Johannesburg, mother mourned the death of her son, who was executed by a mob of about 15 who pumped 27 bullets into his body.

Bridget Louw was just another numbed mother who had to bury a child amid the ongoing and senseless bloodshed in the area.

On the second day of 1999 a heartbroken Louw stood by a grave and scattered soil to pay her last respects to her beloved son Dominique Singh, gunned down at the age of 15.

She cannot understand what motivated the people who murdered Dominique. She said neighbours had witnessed how a large armed gang came to her house to look for him.

Popular

He was not at home, but the mob found him on his way back and gunned him down near a church in the area.

"He did not deserve to die like that. He was popular among the locals and never caused any trouble. We were best friends," a visibly moved Louw told the Saturday Star.

And other mothers whose sons have been senselessly murdered have made a passionate plea to Westbury families to stand together and help stop the killings.

But the riffs in this shell-shocked neighbourhood make co-operation almost impossible.

A Saturday Star investigation found a community whose lives have been shattered by years of killings and the inevitable revenge attacks. Mistrust among residents is sometimes even the closest of friends, is the sad result.

Families have been split: one brother might be a gangster and the other a police reservist. Even grieving mothers fight and operating with the gangsters and benefiting from the bad elements in the suburbs.

They complain that the police hardly ever attend to their calls and come only to "pick up the bodies."

"Even when we phone 1011 they either do not respond, or tell us to contact our local police station," several residents told the Saturday Star this week.

Some residents claimed some police officers were intoxicated when they went to report incidents at Sophiatown police station, while others were told that no official vehicles were available to respond.

"I certainly mothers who spoke to the Saturday Star said the killings would stop only if family members were prepared to implicate their own sons. Janet Louw, mother of Charleton Joko who was gunned down in June 1998, told us she had had to do most of the investigation herself to try to see justice done.

She said the system had failed her and that the killer was still roaming the streets of Westbury.

"Do people and these cops have any idea how it feels to face the murderer? To watch him freely walking the streets? He's arrogant enough to do that. And while he walks free because of poor investigative work, I have to carry the emotional scar, a prisoner of my emotions," she said angrily.

Louw said she would spend as much energy as possible to unite people in the area so that they could stand up

CONCERNED: Gauteng Police Commissioner Shama Mahade\n
point accusing fingers at each other. But both the community of Westbury and that of the adjoining suburb of Newclare are unanimous in pointing fingers at the local police, in whom they have lost faith.

Residents accuse policemen of co-operation with the gangsters and benefiting from the bad elements in the suburbs. They complain that the police hardly ever attend to their calls and come only to "pick up the bodies."

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EARLY GRAVE: Residents of Westbury put 27 bullets into his body against the "rotten elements in the community."

Many people come forward and shared their feelings. Others were too scared to speak out. This is an area where fear rules and divides.

When it gets dark in Westbury, people lock their doors and wait in
CULTURE OF VIOLENCE: A balde-load of youths armed to the teeth is a common sight in the blood-splattered suburb of Westbury. Ironically, many of these guns could be harmless look-alike toys, but to shell-shocked residents of Westbury, who constantly live with fear, it makes no difference - they dive for cover

Also see Page 1

In the wake of the spate of killings, Gauteng police commissioner Sharna Maharaj visited the area this week.

He admitted that in the past some policemen had worked with the gangsters, but he added that such behaviour would not be tolerated.

"There might even be current members who are helping the gangsters, but the only way we can get rid of these corrupt police officers is if the community come forward and give statements to the police."

Maharaj said more policemen would be assigned to the area to help stamp out corruption.

He added that various accusations directed at the police were not always justified.

Sceptical

But residents were sceptical about Maharaj’s visit: “They just drove along the main road for 10 minutes and they think that will solve the problem,” a bystander said. “Westbury doesn’t need another PR exercise; we need tough cops who will restore law and order.”

Detective Wayne Masgrove of Sophiatown police station appealed to witnesses to come forward with information about the killing of Singh and other related incidences. He said he would do everything possible to bring the killers to book.

Any witnesses should call the confidential toll-free number/0800 11 12 13 or contact Masgrove at (011) 677 1300.
Gang violence takes deadly toll in Westbury

Pass-by opens fire without provocation, killing man
Councils' forums can seal success of projects

Campaigning for safer cities
How to make this city safe? Programme manager Omar Valley wants greater involvement from local authorities and forums.
Street committees in pilot project

BY MIKE MASIPA

The street committee system — used so effectively by township communities in the old South Africa — will be put to use to combat crime and vigilantism across Gauteng if a pilot project in Ivory Park, Midrand, succeeds.

The North Rand township has been plagued by acts of vigilantism recently. In the latest episode last week, four suspected criminals, reported to be Mozambicans, were necklaced by a group of 400 vigilantes in Goniwe Section in Ivory Park.

Gauteng Safety and Security MEC Paul Mashatile held a meeting with Ivory Park residents and police on Monday to discuss the problem of vigilantism, said by police to be escalating. Five people were killed in numerous attacks on suspected criminals in the area last year.

Safety and Security spokesperson Delia Mahuleke said residents told Mashatile that they “were sick and tired of criminals breaking into people’s houses, stealing their belongings at gunpoint, raping young girls and murdering people with impunity.”

“The meeting, however, agreed that vigilantism was not the way to go ... that the community must mobilise against crime in a co-ordinated way, respecting the law.”

One such way was the street committee system which Mashatile suggested be implemented. The system replaced apartheid local authorities during the struggle against apartheid.

Mahuleke said the department wanted to revive the structures as a pilot project in Ivory Park and would extend it to other areas if successful.

Residents told the MEC that although those attacked last week were foreigners, it should not be seen as a campaign against non-South Africans.

Ivory Park police station commissioner Captain Lucas Mashigo said police and community representatives would meet today to plan how the envisaged street and block committees should operate. Mashatile will return to the township on Sunday for a progress report.

“The block and street committee is a great idea. As police, we need to know who handles each area so that we can monitor every section and ensure that it works within the law,” said Mashigo.

Meanwhile, no one has been arrested in connection with last week’s vigilantism attack but Mashigo said he “expected a breakthrough soon” because people were reacting positively to the plea to come forward with information.
Korean firms issue warning in wake of murder

BY HYEWOOK CHEONG
Star Foreign Service

Seoul, South Korea — The Samsung and LG groups have ordered workers in South Africa not to leave their quarters at night, and the Daewoo Group has issued a warning to all its overseas branches, following the murder of Yong Koo Kwon, president of Daewoo Motors in southern Africa, in Sandton on Tuesday.

The media played down the possibility of withdrawing from South Africa, and Korean news reports of Kwon's death focused on the dangers facing South Koreans in postings all over the world - not only in South Africa.

Daewoo's executive Kang Dae-hyun was murdered in October 1994 after being attacked by Islamic fundamentalists in Algeria. Just 14 days later, another South Korean worker was kidnapped and killed by a robber during a business trip in Hong Kong. In April last year, trade representative Park Kun-shik, of Sun-kki Trading, was killed in Moscow.

Daewoo spokesperson Chang Se-chan said: "Although we do not have any plans to pull out of South Africa, Daewoo has lost a key member in the overseas sales team."

His untimely death has sent a shock wave throughout our company."

On Wednesday, the phone rang at Kwon's Seoul residence as his son, Taewook, and Kwon's wife returned home from paying for his college tuition. The family were in high spirits as their youngest son had been accepted into a top university.

The 19-year-old boy picked up the phone, assuming his father was calling to congratulate him, but the call brought the devastating news about his father's death.

Kwon's wife, Youil, said: "I cannot believe his life has ended in vain, when he lived life with such strength."

Kwon was sent to Johannesburg in January last year. It was his fourth foreign appointment since he joined the company in 1971.

After being separated from his family for over a year, Kwon was upbeat about their upcoming visit next week.

Daewoo has sent a company representative to escort Kwon's wife and two sons to Johannesburg. Though funeral arrangements have yet to be made, Daewoo officials say it is to be held in Seoul once the investigation is over.
Elite unit to fight hijacking in Gauteng

Supercops raring to go with the vital task of stopping vehicle thieves in their tracks, and nailing kingpins behind scourge that is blighting the province

BY MIKE MASIPA AND MATTHEW BURRIDGE

Gauteng’s safety and security department will launch a crack squad of supercops, backed by Justice department staff, next month, tasked solely with tackling hijacking in the province, it was announced yesterday.

Safety and security MEC Paul Mashatile met the national Director of Public Prosecutions, Bulelani Ngculu, yesterday to discuss the establishment of the unit, which will consist of “highly skilled, experienced and dedicated personnel”.

Safety and security spokesperson Delca Mahuleke said the unit would be made up of more than 16 investigators, 15 intelligence officers, two advocates, and prosecutors from both Ngculu’s office and that of the attorney-general of Gauteng.

The idea was based on the success of a similar project in KwaZulu Natal.

All hijacking cases in Gauteng will go directly to this unit and will not be handled at police station level.

The squad, which will be known as the Special Investigative Unit, will have its headquarters in Ngculu’s office in Pretoria, and will operate with its own fleet of specialised vehicles.

Mashatile said the number of convictions for vehicle hijacking was far from satisfactory.

The new unit was expected to make more arrests, and secure convictions more quickly.

Mashatile said the unit would also focus on people who bought stolen cars. Shop shops would be obliged to register with their local authority and with the police.

In addition, shop owners would be obliged to list every vehicle that came through their doors, on pain of being closed down.

Mashatile said he could not say how much it would cost to set up the unit, and that he would be appealing to Business Against Crime to donate vehicles for the task.

The unit would also work closely with vehicle-licensing and border-control authorities.

“We want to close all the loopholes and start investigating the trade in stolen cars. It has become huge,” Mashatile said.

Mahuleke said the team had already been selected and was “raring to go ... they could actually begin with the task at any moment”.

“Hijacking has been a serious problem for too long, and it will need a co-ordinated approach and highly modernised investigative capacity to deal with it effectively,” Mahuleke said.

“What we are doing is simply to get to the kingpins of the crime and destroy the core of the whole thing,” Mahuleke said.

Mashatile said he was “determined at such an initiative”, which was “long overdue given that hijacking is a priority crime”.

He added, “however that what was needed was proper implementation and supervision of the project to ensure that hijacking kingpins were prosecuted successfully.”
Residents urged to invite a policeman to live in their home

Sancton's novel
Palisades plan for Houghton Estate comes under fire

A BID by homeowners in Houghton Estate to virtually close off their suburb is an indictment of the inability of the SA Police Services to curtail violent crime, according to resident Ed Reeves.

Reeves represents a section 21 company set up by 180 residents who want to seal off nine blocks with palisade fences, and restrict access to three entry points, manned by armed response units.

The blocks, bound by Oxford, River, Eleventh and Riviera roads, include former Gauteng premier Tokyo Sezweni’s home.

Reeves said yesterday that the decision to ask the Johannesburg eastern local council for permission to close off Houghton Estate was motivated by two housebreakings by armed robbers, two murders and five armed hijackings in the past year.

Residents of other northern Johannesburg suburbs, like Wendywood and Gallo Manor, have reported dramatic decreases in burglaries and hijackings since access was restricted by road closures.

The Houghton plan has come under fire, however, from six local objectors who have lodged protests with the council, and also from residents of neighbouring Killarney.

They say road closures will hamper emergency vehicles and worsen traffic congestion. One said she did not want to live in a “paranoid, alienating, classist area”. The objectors say the section 21 company failed to properly advertise its intentions and invite objections.

Reeves, a hijack victim, said the number and size of the company’s posters complied strictly with municipal requirements.

Ward councillor Mike Moriarty said he was not contacted about the plan. The council’s planning and development committee would consider the application and objections.
Municipal policing in Guidance set to become a reality

Job losses not result of export competition

Employee, credit and insurance, which occurs in the normal environment. But, the same environment in which the employer operates may have an impact on the potential for job losses. The report also notes that a combination of factors can contribute to job losses, including:

- The economic climate
- The level of competition
- The skills of the workforce
- The location of the business

The report recommends that employers take steps to mitigate the potential for job losses, such as:

- Investing in employee training and development
- Implementing cost-saving measures
- Exploring new markets
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The report concludes that by taking these steps, employers can help to reduce the potential for job losses and ensure the continued success of their business.

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Funds for city police
Pearl Sebolao

THE Gauteng government has not taken a decision about what role it will play in the funding of municipal policing, despite the fact that a metropolitan police are expected to become a reality by the end of June.

Safety and Security MEC Paul Mashatile told the provincial safety and security committee yesterday that his department had only made provision for facilitating the establishment of metropolitan police.

Mashatile said R35 000 had been budgeted for this financial year. It would go towards setting up the stakeholder base and facilitating the establishment of metropolitan policing. The cash strapped local authorities would take the responsibility of funding this service.

He admitted that the budgeted amount might not be adequate, as additional expertise would be required and more people would have to be recruited.

Mashatile said the training of instructors had started and local authorities should be ready to implement the programme by the end of June.

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Suspicion and fear have given way to suburban bliss in a neighbourhood whose residents have taken the fight against crime into their own hands, writes LAURICE TAITZ

TWO years ago, the Maponya family moved from cramped Alexandra to Gallo Manor, a sprawling far northern Johannesburg suburb of large ranch-style homes.

Motshidi Maponya, a TV and radio producer, viewed the move as a step up from an East Bank house in the township to a landscaped property big enough to accommodate two new cars, an office and a swimming pool for their children.

A month later, their neighbour, a white man, was shot dead. A week or two after that, another neighbour’s car was hijacked, and the Maponays stood byhelplessly while the getaway car sped past their gate. Suddenly the Maponyas didn’t feel safe at all and wondered whether they’d made the right choice.

“We were very concerned about the high level of crime; kids’ bicycles were being stolen from them while they were on them, and nobody even let Khplane and Sipho ride theirs in the street. We just didn’t feel safe at all,” he says.

Eight years earlier, the residents had clubbed together and bought themselves a police station. But staff and resource shortages within the police force put an end to that plan.

Crime continued to spiral — car thefts were being hijacked — until a year ago, when residents proposed turning Gallo Manor into a gated community.

“We were very supportive,” says Maponya’s wife, Thandi. “We said, ‘We’ll pay.’

Ten months after the idea became a reality, the suburb that hit the headlines for its high crime rate has practically eliminated serious crime.

Today, its 800-old homes are ringed with metal-spake fencing, patrolled by private security cars and guarded by security at all exits. Most of the access roads have their gates closed off. The remaining five are guarded by day. Just two stay open after 8pm.

The privilege of living within this self-styled fortress residents pay R110 a month — an amount offset in most cases by a 30 percent reduction in their household insurance.

“It has made all the difference,” says Maponya.

Life in Gallo Manor, where a bottom-end seven-bedroom house will set you back about R350,000, has changed irreversibly, and most agree it has been for the better.

Ask anyone and you’ll get more or less the same answer: children are back playing on the streets, people are walking their dogs after dark and neighbours are starting to greet each other as they drive home in their up-marketed family sedans.

Security cars cruise the streets day and night in search of suspicious activity.

Maponya speaks for all when he praises their 24-hour patrols. “The other day I was outside my house chatting to a friend and one of the cars stopped to check on us.” Far from feeling threatened, or even alarmed, by such close scrutiny, he was impressed. “You can’t ask for better than that.”

Tony Greenfield has lived on Dufibord Street for 17 years. One of the prime movers behind the gated community idea, he remembers when life in Gallo Manor was hell.

“We had residents being murdered, children being shot at and Lift schemes hijacked. One of the worst incidents was when the hijackers drove off with the kids still in the car. We had regular robberies — everything from petty theft to house being cleaned out. I was scared to enter my own driveway.”

Everyone who has lived in the suburb for longer than two years has a “war” story to tell.

“At night we had guards in the streets,” says residents’ committee member Graham Fine. “If you think this is a bad picture we are painting, you should know we are not exaggerating.”

In the month before the suburb was enclosed, seven hijackings were recorded in four days. The gates closed on Gallo Manor on June 20 last year. Since then, there has been just one serious crime — a hijacking — and the patrolmen on duty that day were so mortified they traced the criminals to Tembisa and arrest-ed them. Like any momentous event, the date of that hijacking is imprinted on the collective memory of Gallo Manor residents.

It was August 11.

Like early settlers, the people of Gallo Manor have redefined the terms under which they live, creating their own boundaries and new frontiers. Life in the nger has also given life to its own distinct vocabulary.

Housewives matter about the demise of “schedules of offences”. Paramilitary-style security has taken on a softer, more neighbourly appearance, with security now described as “static wardens.”

In the reception area at Coin Security Group headquarters in Sandton, pictures of the way things used to be hang on the walls guards in riot helmets, tank-like armoured cars and automatic weapons. But in Gallo Manor the security image has changed. The security guards wear black pants and white shirts — more school yard than parade ground. They’ve even changed the colour of their patrol cars — from cameo-brown to blue and white — to make them less intimidating to residents.

The company’s Pieter Venter says the wardens and patrolmen should know everything about the suburb they’re protecting — from being able to recognize residents on sight to the names of garages, domestic and “even the names of their dogs”. Despite having to go that extra
in time in a

Te under siege

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Gulnaaz Dethnud, who lives a few kilometres away in Wendywood Extension 4, "We are waiting for the bail to be legal. And then ours are going up.

Dethnudh says she feels as if her house has been under siege. "We have had a number of attempted robberies. Last year, I came home while my house was being broken into. It was broad daylight... It was like these people had been watching me and reading my mind because I had let the alarm off. When we arrived one of them was hiding outside with a gun. The day after, we spent R20 000 on burglar bars.

"I have to open 100 locks to get in and out."

Faine is sensitive to criticism about living in a gated suburb. He says he would be a lot more critical of the enclosure if he didn't live in it. "Unfortunately, the state doesn't provide us with fundamental safety."

The Gallo Manor enclosure has the support of 90 percent of residents. According to committee member, domestic workers, asked for their comment, "were quicker to sign on the dotted line than householders."

Despite the controversy within the walls, the Johannesburg metropolitan council has other views on the matter. It plans to test in court. While road closures are legal, with the council's permission, restricting access to the suburb is not. But until the fences are pulled down, life goes on - and Mayatapu can safely enjoy playing on the streets with his children at sundown.

The first week we moved here someone jumped over our wall and tried to carry off our garden furniture. Since then we have put up razor wire and had an alarm and panic buttons installed. Now with the guards it's a hell of a lot safer - they're so close I can have eye contact with them when I leave my house."

Sandton estate agent Amanda Calder says security Gallo Manor style is a definite selling point. "The average client wants a house with alarms, burglar bars, electronic gates and Rottweilers," she says.

Far from putting off prospective buyers, such measures with lists are expected to enhance property prices in the suburb. However, another real estate prediction yet to be borne out by figures has it that, at prices rise to enclosed suburbs, surrounding, unfenced suburbs will fall prey to much of the crime that's been pushed their way, causing a consistent drop in values.

You don't have to tell that to

their suburb, where (above left) it is now safe for children to be on the streets

Pictures: ELIZABETH BEJAKE and CATHY PINNOCK

neighbourly appearance, with sentries now described as "static watches."

In the reception area at Colo Security Group headquarters in Sandton, pictures of the way things used to be hang on the walls - guards in riot helmets, tank-like armoured cars and automatic weapons. But in Gallo Manor the security image has changed. The security guards wear black pants and white shirts - more school yard than parade ground. They've even changed the colour of their patrol cars - from camouflaged brown to blue and white - to make them less intimidating to residents.

The company's Perter Vester says the wardens and patrolmen should know everything about the suburb they're protecting - from being able to recognize residents on sight to the names of gardeners, domestics and even the names of their dogs. Despite having to go that extra mile to get out of the suburb and perhaps - during peak times - having to queue at access points, most people wouldn't have it any other way. Says Faine: "Kids growing up here don't know any better. At peak times it takes a few minutes extra to get to school, but that's no price to pay for your child's safety."

At the local primary school a framed poster of helmets brandishes the message "Children learn what they live" hangs outside the principal's office. Among the homilies is one that the parents of Gallo Manor take very seriously: "If a child lives with security he learns to have faith."

The first thing Alfie Wilson sees when he walks out of his front door is the security hut and the candy-striped boom at the gate. "It is," he says with confidence, "the best thing we could have done."

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Chinese community's protest against crime fails to reach Mandela

BY LURKA OLIPHANT

Members of Johannesburg's Chinese community yesterday expressed disappointment because no one was present at President Nelson Mandela's Houghton home to receive their memorandum expressing concern about crime.

"Not, even his secretary came out to receive the memorandum," said the director of the Chinese Gazette, Andrew Huang, after members of the community had gathered at Mandela's home to present the memorandum.

Huang said the Chinese community would try again after Mandela returns from a state visit to Europe.

Mandela's spokesman Parks Mankahla said the president was aware of the march and had said he would meet the Chinese delegation after he returns to South Africa on March 19.

Mandela's office had earlier said the president's secretary-general, Jakes Gerwel, would contact the Chinese leaders to set up a meeting.

The demonstration followed the death of businessman Pung Tung Chuang, who was shot at his Bree Street clothing store on February 28.

The demonstrators called for the reinstatement of the death penalty and a more efficient criminal justice system.

"South Africa cannot be a better place if criminals who advocate violence and 'break the law have the upper hand," said Huang.
Chinese call for return of hanging in wake of trader’s killing

BY BUNTY WEST

The family of a Taiwanese businessman, who was gunned down in his Bree Street, Johannesburg, shop, is trying to come to terms with his death two weeks after the shooting.

On Sunday, a demonstration by more than 600 members of the Chinese community was held at the Wits Great Hall before they drove to the Houghton home of President Nelson Mandela to protest against the murder of Fung Tung Chuang (51) at his shop on February 28 by two robbers.

After the cremation of the body in Johannesburg, the motocarade drove to the Buddhist temple at Bronkhorstspruit, where the remains will be interred until they can be returned to Taiwan.

The family, who live in Wendywood, Sandton, were too upset to speak to the media about their loss and appointed a spokesperson, Jack Tsao, to speak on their behalf.

He said Chuang was well respected in the community because of his willingness to help people on both a personal and business level.

"This was not the first time that thieves attempted to rob him. He fought them off before and they got nothing. This time he just wanted to protect himself and his son, and he died. It took just a few seconds to snuff out the life of a good man.

"The family came to South Africa looking for a new life, but now they have lost their breadwinner. In Taiwan, if you murder or rob someone, you are sentenced to death. It is time that South Africa applied the same rules,” Tsao said.

According to police spokesperson Superintendent Chris Wilken, the men entered the shop just after 1pm and demanded cash from Chuang. He handed over about R7,000, but instead of lying on the floor as he was told, pulled out a gun and shot at the two men.

They returned fire and Chuang was shot in the chest, stomach and jaw and died on the spot. In the exchange of fire, one robber was killed and the other escaped without the money, but he was struck by at least one bullet.

Chuang’s son Willy (18), who had crawled to the back of the shop, returned to his father’s body but he was already dead, said Wilken.

Traders in the area say they are under siege from robbers and murderers who are frightening away business. Another local businessman was shot dead during a robbery last year.
Terrified train commuters seek protection

By Gill Gifford
Crime Reporter

Thousands of Johannesburg train commuters stare violent crime in the face every day as police and Metrorail security battle to bring crime under control.

While Metrorail is looking at new security measures, and a police task group, has been established to combat train attacks, passengers who have been attacked or mugged claim they are soft targets for armed criminals.

The problem was highlighted by a report in The Star this week describing the ordeal of well-known cartoonist Dr Jack and a group of friends, who were robbed by armed attackers on a train between Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Budget and manpower constraints faced by Metrorail mean that security personnel on trains are limited. While the company runs 200 commuter trains on the Witwatersrand each day, there are only enough security officers to safeguard 90 trains at any given moment, according to Craig Nko, assistant manager of Metrorail’s protection services division.

The biggest problem protection services faced, he said, was under-reporting. The second was a lack of highly visible security guards.

Superintendent Martin Aylward, police spokesperson for crime prevention and response services, said a work group had been established on December 9 “to focus on the problem surrounding crime prevention and the investigation of crimes on trains and at railway stations”.

But commuters are getting a raw deal in the meantime. One couple, who asked not to be identified, were held up, robbed and left naked on the train.

“One guy tried to stab my wife, and when I stopped, someone tapped me on the shoulder,” the man said. “When I turned around I was staring down the barrel of a gun. The guys took everything from us. I still have nightmares about it.”

Deon and Adele Wehmolt were attacked in separate incidents. Adele was mugged about two years ago and robbed of her bag. Deon was held at knifepoint in November last year while travelling on a mid-morning train from Springs. His attackers licked his finger to remove his wedding ring.

David Brown, a city commuter who uses the Vereeniging train, has been attacked three times. In the most recent attack last month, he was hit in the face with a bottle, but kept hold of his briefcase.

Jacky Costello, who used to travel on the same line, was robbed at knifepoint on one occasion and then mugged for her handbag when getting off.

Rina Kotze was one of eight people who were held up by an armed gang at Eiland Park station two weeks ago.

“Five guys pulled out guns and made the two men lift their hands while they pulled their wallets out of their pockets. One of them put a gun in my ribs while he ripped off my chain. They took our bags, everything,” Kotze said.

She said the group petitioned Metrorail management for improved security following violent attacks on two other commuters.

“They have given us one female security guard armed with a baton at our station,” Kotze said.

Metrorail spokesperson Bintu Pezana said the company made use of contracted security as well as its own staff, and was working closely with the police.

I turned and was staring down barrel of a gun
Most violent crooks in SA are from Zimbabwe – police

Warning that false figures will fan hate for foreigners

PETA KROST

Top policemen revealed this week that the majority of violent criminals robbing banks and homes in Johannesburg were Zimbabweans – not South Africans.

"We can definitely say at least 60% of bank robberies and serious house robberies are perpetrated by Zimbabweans," said the commander of the Brixton murder and robbery unit, Johan Steyn.

"In fact, it is higher than that percentage if you look specifically at house robberies."

Superintendent Steyn – whose unit investigates only the more violent house robberies and where elderly people are involved in the greater Johannesburg area – said he was working on the Zimbabwean "problem" at the moment because of its magnitude.

But Johannesburg police liaison officer Mark Reynolds said it was important to note that just because there were many Zimbabwean criminals, it did not mean all Zimbabweans in South Africa were criminals.

Human Rights Commission Jody Kollapen said he had difficulty in accepting the police claims.

"If this was so, then court processes and press reporting of the courts would have revealed this by now."

Mr Kollapen said if the figures were exaggerated then it would "feed into" political parties' attitudes. He added that he had recently tried to get such figures from the police but was told they did not keep them.

Well-respected detective and former acting head of the Brixton murder and robbery squad Willie Steyn said that as many as 99% of the foreign African criminals the unit dealt with were Zimbabweans, with just one percent Mozambican.

"Now I think there are more Mozambicans, but not many," said Mr Steyn, who has retired from the police.

"As I recall, 90% of criminals who break into homes, commit armed robbery and rape are Zimbabweans."

Another top detective, Piet Byleveldt, said that while the authorities might not agree with the detectives: "I know it to be true because I deal with the investigations and I also know how difficult it is to get these guys back from across the border when they prove they are Zimbabweans."

Jane from Operation Camelo – a consciousness-raising campaign about rape that was started by the parents of two young girls who were raped two years ago – said that five Zimbabwean men attacked her family.

This gang has been linked officially by the police to 66 other crimes – including murder and rape – and unofficially to 693 cases in Johannesburg.

"Within three weeks, one of them had been arrested and the rest had returned to Zimbabwe," said Jane.

"We knew where they were because we have contact with the Zimbabwean minister of foreign affairs. Three of them were arrested and released in October 1997 after waiting months for the South African Government to repatriate them."

She explained that by January, one of these men had returned to Johannesburg and robbed the Taiwanese Embassy in Houghton where he was shot in the hand and arrested. Another man arrested initially on the Camelo rape case tried to escape and spent nine months recuperating at taxpayers' expense at the Gordon City Clinic.

"I cannot see why they can't just walk across the border and bring these guys back to face their crimes," she said.

"It makes me sick that these criminals just come and go as they please and nobody seems to have the power to stop them."

While these allegations imply there are huge numbers of Zimbabwean criminals, there are actually only 359 Zimbabweans in jails in South Africa. Of these, 245 are convicted and the rest are awaiting trial, according to correctional services spokesperson Barry Ekesten.

"This is a large proportion of foreigners in South African jails," Mr Ekesten said.

However, the police say that the reason for the low numbers of convicted Zimbabweans is because the criminals escape back to the safety of their own country.

Centre for Policy Studies senior researcher Marlene Reitise said the other side of the picture was that foreigners were clearly the victims.

After interviewing many people from other African countries who are living here she said: "These people are not disproportionately involved in crime but rather disproportionately victimised by police and criminals."

Ms Reitise said that given their vulnerable status, local criminals considered people from neighbour countries as soft targets.

"We have much anecdotal evidence to suggest that police turn a blind eye to or crimes against foreigners at worst actually participate in the crimes," she said.

"Criminals might report the presence of foreigners to police who then go in and arrest them, leaving the foreigners' homes open to theft. The police are alienating some of their potentially best allies."

The Zimbabwean High Commission's press secretary Morgan Dube would not comment.

"There is no way I would know if there was such a high number," said Mr Dube. "How can they possibly know if all these criminals are indeed Zimbabweans? I have never heard of this before."
Death penalty not a solution, says Mandela

The death penalty would not be restored while the African National Congress was in power because "slaughtering people" was not a solution to crime, President Nelson Mandela said at his Pretoria residence yesterday.

Mandela was speaking after meeting representatives of SA's Chinese community who handed him a memorandum detailing their concerns about the crime wave.

Mandela was flanked by Pei Chun Mao, a Chinese South African whose husband was gunned down in central Johannesburg six weeks ago.

"We did not even raise the death penalty issue this time round, because we knew we would get nowhere," community leader Gino Feng said yesterday. "But we brought to his attention that Chinese people are still dying."

More than 1 000 Chinese marched to the Union Buildings in July last year to demand the restoration of the death penalty after a 20-month-old boy was killed in a robbery.

Feng said SA's 50 000 strong Chinese community would have left SA long ago if they were not bound to the country by economic need. "We are manufacturers," Feng said. "We cannot get up and leave like traders can. But in our hearts we left this country a long time ago."

Mandela commended the Chinese community leadership for its restraint. "You could have called on people to take the law into their own hands, but you did not."

Mandela assured the Chinese community that it was not the only target of violent crime.

President Nelson Mandela met Pei Chun Mao, centre, and her son Vincent Lee, left, at Mandela's Pretoria residence yesterday. Mao's husband was killed by robbers outside his shop in central Johannesburg six weeks ago.

Picture: TREVOR SAMSON
SCHOOLS in the Western Cape were this week given R3.1-million by the Education Department to fight gangsterism and vandalism.

Representatives of 208 high-risk schools were given R15 000 each at a meeting at Mzamomhle Primary in Philippi. The money is expected to be used on burglar bars, other security and alarm systems linked to armed response units, but the schools will make the final decision.

The department has spent R11-million a year for the past four years on security contracts at 80 high-risk schools. This will be replaced by the new system aimed at making schools use their own initiative and eventually take full responsibility for their own security.

Brian Gilbert, deputy director general of the department, said crime cost millions of rands a year and undermined morale and transformation.

"The era of armed guards in our schools is no longer affordable because more guards mean fewer textbooks and teachers."

Peter Present, of the department's physical resource planning directorate, said: "We always had these 200 schools needing security, but we never had the budget because it was tied up in the other 80 schools."

The cancellation of the contract means the R11-million will be available for other projects.
With winter just around the corner, the principal of Siviwe Primary School in Guguletu is a worried woman.

The school has been burgled 14 times in the past year – without a single arrest being made – and 16 classrooms are without doors. Many windows are broken.

Ms Poppy Jaca said: “Most of the things that we have worked hard for in this school are gone and I am scared that if something is not done now we will be left without a roof to keep the children dry.”

Fridges, lawn mowers and doors are among the items stolen.

“There is a caretaker, but he is scared because the criminals are always armed.

“The worst thing is that they do not just steal, but they vandalise the school by breaking windows and doors,” said Ms Jaca.

After many break-ins the school installed a security gate, but it was shot out and broken.

Earlier this year we replaced 16 doors in classrooms and the administration block, but within a month they were stolen and vandalised again,” said the angry principal.

Siviwe is one of the schools that has benefited from the R15 000 each given to 208 high-risk schools by the provincial education department to fight gangsterism and vandalism.

Ms Jaca said the money had come at the right time. “We desperately need security here.”

Mzomhle Primary in Philippi is an example of what can be done when parents and teachers work together. They started fixing the school in December, repairing broken doors, painting, cleaning toilets and installing a burglar alarm.

Deputy principal Eric Tiffana said the school would be completely renovated by the end of this year.

A total of 208 schools targeted by gangsters and vandals in the Western Cape have been given R15 000 each to beef up security.

The provincial education department has raised its R11-million security budget by R3.1-million to help high-risk schools.

Brian Gilbert, deputy director general of the Western Cape Education Department, presented cheques of R15 000 each to representatives of 208 high-risk schools at a function at Mzomhle Primary in Philippi last week.

He said: “The Western Cape Education Department has made the safety of our schools a priority and made an additional R3.1-million available over and above the R11-million we spend annually on security.”

Armed guards at schools were not the answer, he said. More guards meant fewer textbooks or fewer teachers.

The department has spent up to R44-million on security at 80 high-risk schools in the past four years.

However, they will now introduce a system aimed at encouraging schools to take responsibility for their own security.

The schools that have been given the funds will be expected to report back to the department by the end of June on how they have spent the money.

In another new funding move, the department’s directorate of physical resource planning has also implemented a system of unscheduled maintenance from April 1.

In terms of this, schools will be given money directly to sort out problems such as blocked drainpipes or lavatories, broken windows, doors and light switches.

An amount of R15-million from a total budget of R17-million will be used for this.

The remaining R2-million will be managed by the department’s head office for problems such as fire damage, underground electrical cable repairs and burst pipes.

Peter Present of the physical resource planning directorate said: “The department is aware of the scope of the unscheduled maintenance needs at our schools.

“ar to ensure we succeed with this programme of empowering our schools and communities, the budget for 1999 has been increased by R3-million to R5-million.”

By employing local contractors, schools will help to empower their communities.

The funding is allocated to schools in line with the South African Schools Act, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding and the Government’s policy of school-based management.
Crime at Dainfern complex angers residents

Jonny Steinberg

DAINFERN, a luxury residential development north of Johannesburg prized for its security, has this month suffered four break-ins, including an armed robbery.

The development, which sports a golf course and several multimillion-rand properties, is home to some of SA's most senior corporate executives. It is closed in by several kilometres of wall and palisade fencing.

The development's only access point is staffed by guards 24 hours a day.

Residents say armed robbers gained entry to the development by prising open a section of the fence on the perimeter.

During the armed robbery an intruder tried to shoot a resident, but failed as his gun jammed.

On Monday about 300 residents, at a protest meeting in Dainfern Country Club, complained to Dainfern's management that no substantial measures had been taken to resecure the development.

Dainfern developer Johnnic should have surrounded the entire development with a solid wall, not fencing, they said.

"More guards were stationed at the perimeter and a constant patrol established, but these measures petered out after a couple of days," said a resident who asked not to be named.

However, a pamphlet distributed by the Dainfern board of trustees said a dawn helicopter patrol was being carried out and a ring of armed guards had been stationed around the perimeter since the break-ins.

Residents have formed a crisis committee, consisting of two representatives from each of the development's residential villages, which met Johnnic representatives on Wednesday night to discuss the issue.

A resident who attended the meeting would not be drawn on what had transpired.

Dainfern general manager Alan Corrigan refused to take questions yesterday. His secretary said a trustees' meeting would be held last night and that Corrigan would comment once he had a mandate from the trustees to do so.

Board of trustees member Patrick Ronan appealed to residents yesterday to avoid a hysterical reaction.

"In this development's eight-year history this is the first trouble we have had," Ronan said.

"Given the unbelievable level of crime in Johannesburg we are doing remarkably well," he said.
Zimbabweans indeed a major factor in crime

While Mark Shaw, head of the monitoring and analysis unit, accepted there were significant numbers of Zimbabwean criminals in Johannesburg and that this problem needed to be addressed, it was important that the report's figures were an overestimation, based only on arrests. Shaw also noted that SA criminals far outnumbered any foreign criminals.

Although the Brixton police cited a number of methods they used to find out whether the suspects were Zimbabweans, Shaw queried their accuracy. A disproportionate number of illegal foreigners lived in the Greater Johannesburg area covered by the Brixton police, he added.

The report said that, according to the detectives: "Zimbabweans are extremely successful at committing bank robberies and other serious crimes as a result of their often having been trained in military tactics and techniques."

The detectives said one arrested suspect was found to have held the rank of captain in the Zimbabwean African National Union, and others were Zimbabwean African People's Union cadres.

The report showed that many Zimbabweans working as security officers for banks, who gained access to privileged information through security systems in order to plan robberies.

Another factor was that movement through the border between SA and Zimbabwe was easy. De Kock explained that the economies of both Mozambique and Zimbabwe were in decline and that South African currency was freely usable there.

These foreign nationals, particularly the illegal ones, were also easily exploited by South Africans as they were unable to complain to the authorities.
Residents, who expected road to be safer, say minister has failed them

Sydney Mufamadi is surrounded by crime — and not only in his portfolio as Minister of Safety and Security. Ten of the 50 homes in his street in the Randburg suburb of Bryanston have been targeted by criminals in the past seven months.

Now the residents, who expected their area to be safer since Mufamadi's arrival about two years ago, are asking: "We have Mufamadi, why are you not helping to fight crime in your own street?"

Mufamadi's home, the only one in the street with a 24-hour police presence on guard, has not been hit.

Although warning the minister to intervene in some positive way, residents admit that a block watch in their area has deteriorated due to lack of support from residents themselves, and that crime has increased.

Resident Petrus Schlebusch says Mufamadi had never belonged to the block watch. "He could have joined if he had wanted to," she said.

The most recent robbery, on Sunday night, occurred only 100m from Mufamadi's modest home in Andrew Murray Road. A visiting German professor and a friend were held up by three armed men in the driveway and robbed of a cellphone, car keys and their wallets.

Denise Martin, in whose driveway the robbers held up the couple at gunpoint, said Mufamadi: "We know you're a busy man, but please get involved in what is happening on your own doorstep."

Martin said residents had spent a lot of money trying to make their homes secure, including putting up their own street lights. "I don't know what the solution is. Somebody like Mufamadi, who is so closely linked to safety and security, would be able to come up with feasible ideas on how to curb crime," she said.

On Thursday last week, Mufamadi's own door neighbour was also held up in his driveway. The robbers fled on foot with the victim's briefcase, watch and car keys, again not taking the car. The agrees ends in a cul-de-sac.

The fact that Mufamadi lives here has not helped us at all. However, I think that the robbers were not able to enter because there was a police officer there.

Residents' lack of support led to failure of block watch

Residents are a sign of the times that we live in," De Villiers said.

In both cases, according to residents, who are stationed in a hot on Mufamadi's property, did not assist.

However, a man whose house was robbed at gunpoint in their driveway said he had found Mufamadi extremely approachable and that when the minister was back in residence he would contact him to ask his help.

Martin, co-ordinator of the block watch, said Mufamadi had spent much of his time in Cape Town since moving into the suburb and that as soon as he returned, he would be approached on the issue of security in the area.

Mufamadi could not be reached for comment yesterday.
Mufamadi hits back at his ‘racist’ neighbours

STAFF REPORTERS

Racism from his neighbours and his belief that he served the entire country and not just those who lived in his street stopped Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi from joining his local neighbourhood watch.

Interviewed at his Bryanston home last night, Mufamadi disputed some of his neighbours’ claims that he was not interested in their security and had failed to join the neighbourhood watch. He had already initiated a probe into the crimes in the neighbourhood.

Mufamadi was responding to reports in The Star this week that said 10 out of the 30 homes in his street had been targeted by criminals.

Mufamadi, whose home has not yet been hit, said the reason he had a 24-hour policeman on guard was “not because I’m a member of the royal family. It’s because I’m a minister in Government”. Recently, however, the white occupants of a passing car had smashed his security light.

Some neighbours have accused Mufamadi of ignoring crime “on his doorstep”. Last night, however, the minister hit back, saying the fact that some of his neighbours had become crime victims was not an act of negligence on his part.

“The issue of the neighbourhood watch was first raised with me by a lady who has lived in this street as far back as 1987. The first time she came here was in 1986, hardly a week after we had moved into the house. She arrived with an empty cooldrink can and said to my wife, in a very aggressive way, that we were lowering the standards of the area. She said Bryanston was not Soweto.

“When my wife later told me the story, we concluded that she was ‘probably’ suffering from a sickness that is not typical to South Africa – racism.”

The woman’s second visit was to complain about a black couple sitting in a car outside a nearby house. She asked the minister to question the couple and while he and his guards were doing so, she vanished.

The third time the woman visited, she asked Mufamadi to join the neighbourhood watch.

“Shortly after her visit,” another neighbour came to see me. He said he understood that I had had a nasty experience with this lady. He said she had right-wing ties and expressed concern that I was being set up. He advised me not to join the neighbourhood watch.”
Shilow's the next Cantwell Premier – Root out rotten policemans list –
A mission to free John pure from crime
Stolen car fraud rife

By Noxolo Nxusani and Siphiwe Mpye

The Johannesburg Traffic Department confiscates about 10 fraudulent car registration forms weekly from syndicates involving departmental employees and the public.

This was revealed by deputy chief traffic officer Mr Gerrie Geneke during an interview with Sowetan yesterday.

Geneke said this had resulted in the suspension of three staff members, including a top official.

The three were suspended last year and were still under investigation, but one of the officials later died in a car accident.

Ten other employees were dismissed between 1997 and 1998 after they were found guilty of corruption.

According to Geneke, there are several ways of duplicating a car. This involved the taking of registration, chassis and engine numbers of cars that are written-off and then re-registering them.

Another way is by taking down the registration numbers of a car while being driven and obtaining the owner's identity number, name and address, the chassis and engine number from contacts inside the department.

Corrupt department employees sold blank documents (documents used for registering a car) for about R350. They sell information about a car for R20.

Administrative weaknesses also played a major role in this escalating problem.

Another flaw lies with the computer system used by both traffic and police officials.

The two systems are not connected and criminals are taking advantage of the loophole.

Geneke said it could take up to three months before a stolen car is marked on the department’s computer system - the National Traffic Information System - Natis.

This system, Geneke explains, has improved efficiency within the department and one can identify a marked car and who owns it.

Commenting on measures taken to combat corruption within the department, he said registering of workers on a national list (similar to that used by doctors and lawyers) could ensure that if anyone were dismissed because of involvement in crime, they would be barred from working in a similar department.

Another measure is that of sending details of all duplicate cars to the anti-hijacking unit with an instruction to confiscate the vehicle and arrest the owner. Arresting all suspects caught in possession of false documents is a policy Geneke believes can act as a deterrent.

Geneke said the department was in the process of moving the Diepkloof and Brixtor vehicle units to Langlaagte testing station, west of Johannesburg, where testing, registering and elegance of motor vehicles will be done under one roof.
significant success could soon replicate the violence of the Western Cape, where JobЫ Steenberg
Vigilante group unlikely to work in suburbs
Johannesburg - The criminals who commit most of Gauteng's hijackings, housebreakings and muggings are brazen men living the high life, unafraid of death and viewing prison as a place to learn about crime and gain peer status.

"Brash," "violent" and "charismatic" are the words researcher Lauren Segal chose to describe "amagets" - the title she uses for criminals dealing in hijackings and housebreakings.

"It is township lingo, but we have used the term to describe those specifically involved in crime. The basic profile is a black male between 13 and 30 years old who carries a gun," she said.

Ms Segal, along with researchers Joy Pelo and Pule Ramo, interviewed 26 amagets - some of whom are serving prison sentences - and 165 township youths.

Most described access to guns as "no more difficult than buying milk from a cafe". The major sources of amagets-owned firearms were said to be housebreakings, or attacks on policemen, or supplies by former MK contacts, or African immigrants.

Ms Segal said those interviewed described guns as essential "tools of the trade" - a "new rite of passage" proving manhood and serving as an indication that the owner was "serious about business".

Their attitude to violence was that of unconcern, with the death of a gang member seen almost as a celebration.

"They don't have a sense of living beyond 25, so death is not something they care about. If a brother is killed, the funeral is a massive event where they spin cars, fire guns, drink beer, and generally endorse a culture where people's duty is to fight and die together," said Ms Segal.

A lack of faith in the criminal justice system, compounded by a low conviction rate, corruption, bribery and the police and easily bribed detectives, led amagets to see themselves as operating above the law.

"These who served prison sentences or who survived gunshot injuries were admired as strong leaders who had paid their dues," Ms Pelo said that while the stereotyped image of a young man sporting jewellery and designer clothes generally held true, a new breed had emerged.

"Now you get the guys who rob at ATMs. They are smart, formal dressers and carry a briefcase, so you let your guard down," said Ms Pelo.

Ms Segal said some recently initiated sports projects had shown success, with young people turning to their soccer coaches, rather than the amagets, for role models.
Police crushing criminals
Major anti-crime campaign puts thousands of crooks behind bars in Cantabria