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New report ranks SA 19 out of 193 countries for criminality

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Pretoria – A recent [report by the Global Organised Crime Index](#) ranked South Africa 19 out of 193 countries for criminality.

According to the report, the year 2020 shaped organised crime in many different ways because of Covid-19, but while the global economy ground to a halt under lockdowns and travel restrictions, criminals were working out how to circumvent obstacles and exploit the situation.

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“New opportunities soon became evident in the illicit trade in personal protective equipment, counterfeit medicines and fake vaccines, and in possibilities for corruption around public procurement,” read the report.

As it is, the country’s pandemic corruption scandal continues to grow and more officials continue to appear in court to account for missing millions which were meant for relief efforts.

To benefit from the pandemic, drug traffickers found novel ways of transporting their contraband, inserting their illicit goods into shipments of essential pandemic supplies that sailed through understaffed ports.

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“Southern Africa was also the region by far the most affected by the heroin trade, the second most pervasive criminal market in the region,” the report said.

The report also showed that drug gangs illicitly acquired guns sourced from the country’s police armoury over a number of years. These were weapons that had been due for destruction – and this has fuelled the abnormally high murder rate in the country.

The report also indicated that rhino poaching had declined during the pandemic. Population numbers for the Kruger National Park showed previously that the white rhino population had fallen by 67% from 2011 to 2019, and the number of critically endangered black rhino had decreased by 53%.

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In August, Minister of Police Bheki Cele released the latest crime statistics which showed that murder cases increased nationally by a staggering 11% with KZN recording the highest number – more than 1 600.

Gauteng was second with 1 490 murder cases while 994 were recorded in the Western Cape.

Cele stated that more than 6 400 people were killed in from April to June.

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