

A Business Owner On Crime's Impact

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The City of Johannesburg, popularly known as Joburg, is the economic hub of Gauteng and Africa as a whole. Many come here looking for employment and a place to stay. But because of how busy the area is, they often become victims of crime in the city.

Talking to business owners around the city, I met up with a local shop owner who runs a leather shoe shop called Martins & Sons. He expressed how dangerous it is to run a business in Joburg. "I opened my business in 2020 - during lockdown - and ever since I got here, I have witnessed people getting mugged in the city, and I could not assist them because I was prioritising my own safety."

Armed robbery, pickpocketing and hate crimes are the most he has experienced since he opened his business. But he explained, "I cannot report the crimes because criminals often get released in a day or two." This puts his life and business in danger due to the criminals coming back to harm them. So, to ensure his and his business' safety, he usually minds his own business and keeps vigilance on his business at all times. It seems that the visibility of security guards and police help reduce the crime in the city.

While conducting research for my article, I also met with Percy Ngqulunga who works as a security in the city. Mr Ngqulunga is from KwaZulu Natal in a town called Nongoma. He also came to Jozi looking for employment.

He said, "The visibility of patrollers and security help with reducing crime, and shop owners are more relaxed since my appointment a month ago (Mr Ngqulunga was hired in September 2023)." He also added that if the government can do more, Joburg would be safer.

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