Police destroy illegal weapons

**CONFISCATED:** 5 000 FIREARMS AND OVER 50 000 KNIVES WERE MELTED DOWN

JeVanne Gibbs

Gauteng police highlighted the destruction of knives yesterday, as this type of weapon is being used more frequently in murders in the province.

More than 50 000 knives of all shapes and sizes were destroyed at Arcelor Mittal in Vereeniging yesterday.

Police also destroyed 5 365 firearms, including AK-47s, revolvers, rifles and pistols personalised with various decorations.

Gauteng acting provincial Commissioner Lieutenant-General Letsija Joel Mothiba said of the over 5 000 firearms destroyed, 4 083 (78%) were confiscated by police, while 1 282 (24%) were voluntarily surrendered.

"The firearms and knives being destroyed were confiscated during police operations over the past 12 months. A substantial amount of these firearms were seized on information provided by the community," said Mothiba. "The weapons were melted into iron ore."

In his State of the Nation address in February, President Jacob Zuma emphasised the importance of the National Crime Prevention Strategy and the progress made thus far.

This included continuous efforts to improve crime prevention and combating responsibilities, along with improved intelligence capacity.

"Concurrent with our efforts to combat organised, serious and violent crimes, our strategy for the improvement of service delivery and the prevention of crime is gaining momentum," said Mothiba.

Police urged community members to report crime and criminals anonymously to Crime Stop on 08600 10111 or Crime Line by sending an SMS to 32211.

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