

Auto theft racket

Business



The high rate of auto theft is alarming and after every 21 minutes a vehicle is stolen in the United States. This has gross ramifications on the individual in terms of cost and society since it has led to insurance premiums hitting the roof.

More often than not such stolen vehicles are used to commit other felons. The theft is well planned, executed and under the control of sophisticated networks of international criminals (Biham et al., 2008). One such network was unraveled by London officers from the vehicle stolen unit under the Directorate of Specialist Crime. The gang comprised of male Britons aged 32, 27, 16, 54 and were believed to have stolen about 120 vehicles with most of them being Mercedes.

The cars were stolen around London and within moments were taken to yard where they were quickly disassembled by 2 Nigerian men. The spare parts were shipped to Nigeria where they fetched higher prices and the remnant of the vehicle was converted to scrap metal. It is incredible that within hours of the auto theft, the car ceased existing from all databases (Law, 2006) In Russia the auto racket involves well connected Government officials and luxury cars stolen in the United States and Western Europe are easily moved into Eastern Europe. Custom officials at the borders are bribed and the vehicle is smuggled successfully and a fresh set of documents is issued by corrupt police with the vehicle being registered under a dead or homeless person. There is a ready market of stolen luxury cars in Moscow's elite high class society.

It is estimated that approximately 1.5 million stolen luxury cars are on Russian roads (Guardian News, 2003). Auto theft prevention tips include parking in well lit areas. Don't tempt fate by leaving valuables in clear view. Consider installing mechanical devices which lock the brakes and the steering wheels.

(Bono et al., 2005). There are also security systems that shut off the fuel supply preventing the stolen vehicle from being driven off. Auto theft is rife and curbing it will require high security intelligence and Government intervention as regards border infiltration. (Seave, 2008)