



More arrests expected in rhino horn case

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More evidence has been discovered in the case in which three Chinese men were arrested in March, allegedly with 14 rhino horns, and this may lead to more arrests. The three Chinese nationals are accused of trying to smuggle the rhino horns worth more than N\$2 million out of Namibia. They have appointed new legal representation for after they were refused bail in May. Li Xiaoliang, Li Zhibing and Pu Xuexin have been charged with the possession and export of controlled wildlife products, after they were allegedly caught with the rhino horns and a leopard skin in their suitcases at the Hosea Kutako International Airport on March 23. They have maintained that they did not know what was in the suitcases. The three suspects yesterday appeared at the airport after their case was postponed for final investigations at their bail hearing. State prosecutor Anthony



(<https://d3rp5jatom3eyn.cloudfront.net/asse>)

Wilson revealed that new evidence had come to light and that new suspects may be added to the case. Wilson said evidence such as affidavits, police statements and photo plans had been that has to be followed up by the police, and this can add possible new suspects to the case. The head of the Namibia Protective Resource Unit, Chief inspector Barry De Klerk previously testified that there is evidence that the three Chinese men are part of a much larger international syndicate. He also said a Chinese investigator will arrive in Namibia within the next few weeks to assist with the investigation. De Klerk told Namibian Sun yesterday that currently they cannot disclose any information with regard to the new evidence. "All will be revealed very soon in the trial," he said. Asked about the Chinese investigator, he said they had decided to explore another avenue. "We have engaged not only the Chinese, but also other countries and we are at an advanced stage of cooperation." The three Chinese are now represented by Sibeya and Partners. Defence lawyer Olivier Lino previously represented the three men and confirmed to Namibian Sun yesterday that he no longer represents them. Lino said his mandate was only for the bail hearing and he has since been informed that the three men had new legal representation. The case was postponed by Magistrate George Mbundu to September 11 and was transferred to the Windhoek Magistrate's Court in Katutura for the completion of the outstanding investigations. WINDHOEK ELLANIE SMIT