



Rhino horn smuggling 'kingpin' arrested

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There has been a major breakthrough with the arrest of a Chinese man whom the police believe to be the kingpin in one of Namibia's biggest rhino-horn smuggling cases. Wang Huii was arrested on Monday at the Windhoek Country Club and has been charged with the possession and export of controlled wildlife products. He appeared in the Windhoek Regional Court in Katutura yesterday. The 40-year-old Huii is being linked to the three Chinese men who were arrested with 14 rhino horns last year at the Hosea Kutaku International Airport. At that time, Li Xiaoliang, Li Zhibing and Pu Xuexin were caught with 14 rhino horns worth more than N\$2.3 million as well as a leopard skin valued at N\$50 000 stashed in their luggage while they were on their way to Hong Kong via Johannesburg. Last year, the three men gave evidence during their bail hearing that they would stay at the home of Huii in Otjiwarongo if they were released on bail. The bail request was denied. Their case was postponed for plea and trial until June 25. Huii has been linked to this case and is also being investigated in connection with other poaching cases in Namibia. Huii has apparently been travelling between China and Namibia regularly and when the investigating officers learnt that he was back in the country they tracked him down at the Country Club on Monday night where he was gambling. Huii is originally from Jang Su in China. He is currently staying in Otjiwarongo where he owns the Happy Life Import Export Company. His case has been postponed until June 10 for the Prosecutor-General to decide on the course of the prosecution. He remains in custody. Orben Sibeya appeared on behalf of Huii and Anthony Wilson appeared for the State. WINDHOEK ELLANIE SMIT



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