

Men arrested with rhino horns, abalone granted bail

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Two men arrested by the Namibian Police Force (NamPol)'s Protected Resources Unit for the possession of rhino horns and abalone products at the beginning of this month, have been granted bail.

The two men - Khomasdal resident James Barron Wallace and his Chinese accomplice Zhi Geng (both ages not given) - were both granted bail at the end of their formal bail application before Magistrate Justine Asino in the Windhoek Magistrate's Court along Lüderitz Street on Monday morning.

Wallace was granted bail of N\$30 000 and Zhi N\$250 000.

The bail was granted with strict bail conditions in that the two men should hand over their passports to police investigator, Chief Inspector Lourentia Tsuses, and they should not apply for other travelling documents while free on bail.

The duo was also ordered not to leave the district of Windhoek without making prior arrangements with the police investigator, Chief Inspector Tsuses of NamPol's Protected Resources Unit.

The Chinese national, whose photo will be placed at all Namibian border posts and airports, must report himself daily to the Windhoek Police Station between 07h00 and 10h00 and between 17h00 and 20h00.

Wallace was ordered to report himself every Tuesday and every Friday between 10h00 and 19h00 to the NamPol's Protected Resources Unit or to Tsuses.

In addition, the two accused persons were further ordered not to discuss the details of this case with any State witness/witnesses and must not interfere directly or indirectly with the police investigations.

The case was on Monday remanded until 13 May this year, pending further police investigations into the matter and as per agreement reached between the accused men's privately-instructed defence lawyers Norman Tjombe and Willem Visser as well as prosecution representative, Public Prosecutor Ivan Tjizu in court on Monday.

The two men face charges of illegal dealing and possession of about 1,15 kilogrammes of rhino horns worth N\$91 000 when they were arrested at a house in Ludwigsdorf on 2 February this year.

The rhino horn products were found cut in small pieces, presumably for easy transportation out of the country.

In addition, the police found in their possession a number of documentation indicating that the two men over a few weeks illegally imported into the country a consignment of about 94 kilogrammes of abalone products valued at a total of N\$235 000 without proper or valid documents.

Abalone products include controlled and lucrative sea fishery products, ranging from small sea snails to large edible snails and molluscs.

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