

State takes bail money of fugitive Chinese

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by Werner Menges



THE N\$300 000 that was paid to get a Chinese national bailed out of jail following his arrest on a charge of possession of rhino horns early this year was declared finally forfeited to the state yesterday.

The money was forfeited to the state after Chen Nan (29) failed for a second time to appear in the Windhoek Magistrate's Court as required.

Chen and a co-accused and compatriot, Lu Yonghui (40), were both arrested in Windhoek on 19 January 2017, after police officers allegedly found two rhino horns in the garage of a flat in Windhoek that was being rented by Lu.

Having spent more than two months in jail, the two men were granted bail in an amount of N\$300 000 each on 4 April.

They were required to make another court appearance on 21 June. Chen was absent on that date, though, leading to the

issuing of a warrant for his arrest and the provisional forfeiture of his bail to the state.

With Chen still absent yesterday, magistrate Vanessa Stanley ordered that the N\$300 000 paid to have him released on bail should be finally forfeited to the state. Chen was in Namibia on a short-term visitor's visa when he and Lu, who has been living in the country since 2001, were arrested on 19 January. They were charged with illegal possession of controlled wildlife products after their arrest.

Lu was present for his court appearance yesterday.

Public prosecutor Joseph Andreas asked for a further postponement of the case for investigations to be completed, and with Lu's defence lawyer, Mbushandje Ntinda, not opposing the request, the case was postponed to 30 August. Lu's bail was extended until then.