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Chinese rhino smuggler Wang Hui. Photo: NMH Archive

POLICE AND CRIME

RHINO SMUGGLER ESCAPES FROM CUSTODY

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Windhoek (rr/cr) - Chinese rhino smuggler Wang Hui (48) escaped from custody around 11 a.m. on Monday. Wang escaped after driving to Brakwater with a guard from Windhoek Central Prison to collect supplies from a supplier.

This was confirmed by the spokesman for the corrections department, Commissioner Michael Mulisa. "They went to the supplier to get materials for a workshop in the prison for a Ministry of Health project that the prisoners are working on," he said. When they arrived, Wang said he needed to use the restroom, so he took the opportunity to escape.

As the mastermind behind a Chinese smuggling syndicate he ran with Li Xiaoling, Li Zhibing and Pu Xuexin, Wang is serving a 14-year sentence with five years suspended.

The four were caught at Hosea Kutako Airport in 2014 with 14 rhino rhino horns and a leopard skin in their luggage. They were found guilty in 2016 of illegally possessing and illegally exporting wildlife products but were acquitted on the main charge of money laundering.

Information circulated on emergency service groups that Wang was probably on his way to Swakopmund in a Mercedes Benz SLK without license plates. Information later came in that he was heading to the coast in a bakkie. However, this could not be confirmed by Mulisa.