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Three SANParks employees arrested with rhino horns outside gates of Kruger Park

News24 Wire



(<https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/crime/2374757/three-sanparks-employees-arrested-with-rhino-horns-outside-gates-of-kruger-park/>)
Police arrested three siblings over fraudulent insurance claims. Picture: iStock.

The accused appeared in court on Thursday and are to be held in custody until their bail application on 29 October.

Three SA National Parks (SANParks) employees, among them two security guards, have been arrested in possession of fresh rhino horns outside the gates of the Kruger National Park.

SANParks said the third person arrested is in technical services.

They were arrested on 20 October in an intelligence sting coordinated between SANParks, the police's crime intelligence unit, and the Sabi Sands and Skukuza stock theft units.

Their arrests came at the end of a car chase.

Between July and September this year, anti-poaching teams have arrested 16 people inside the park and confiscated seven rifles, according to SANParks.

They also observed and followed-up on 410 poaching activities, sightings, spoors and camps in the last three months.

Managing executive of the Kruger National Park, Gareth Coleman, said these activities broke trust among employees and were disheartening.

"Whilst they may succeed in the short term, history shows that they will eventually be caught and this will be at the expense of their employment, the wellbeing of their families and community," he said.

The accused appeared in court on Thursday and are to be held in custody until their bail application on 29 October.

According to the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, in 2018, 769 rhino were killed for their horns in South Africa. During 2019, rhino poaching continued to decline, with 594 rhino poached nationally during the year.

It is most commonly traded for medicinal use.

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