

# Getaway

## Two rhino poachers sentenced to 19 years in prison

Posted by Zimasa Katamzi on 25 June 2021

Two rhino poachers were sentenced to 19 years imprisonment on Thursday, 24 June, after they were caught with two rhino horns, ammunition, and an axe just outside Kruger National Park around Komatipoort in 2019.



Three accused were arrested after the public reported them to officials.

They are Thembi Juliegirl Mhangane, a 34-year-old South African citizen who was the driver of the vehicle they were caught in; George Vasco Tibane, a 34-year-old Mozambican citizen and Joao Matshinga Sithole, a 24-year-old Mozambican citizen.

Tibane and Sithole pleaded guilty while Mhangane proceeded to plead not guilty. The state then applied for separation of trial in respect of Mhangane whose trial will proceed on July 27, 2021.

Tibane and Sithole were convicted of the following counts:

- Trespassing in KNP. Sentenced to 3 years
- Immigration Act. Sentenced to 1 year
- The killing of a Rhino. Sentenced to 10 years
- Possession of a firearm with serial number obliterated. Sentenced to 6 years
- Possession of a firearm silencer. Sentenced to 6 years
- Possession of a firearm with the intention to commit a crime. Sentenced to 5 years
- Possession of ammunition. Sentenced to 2 years
- Possession of an Axe. Sentenced to 1 year.

The effective jail term is 19 years.

Source: [SANParks – Kruger National Park](#)

PICTURE: Unsplash