



LOCAL NEWS
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Limpopo man nabbed with lion teeth and claws granted bail

Review Online

The man was nabbed in Bela-Bela during raids executed simultaneously at properties in Bela-Bela and Pretoria.

LIMPOPO – The Bela-Bela Magistrate’s court last week granted bail to a Vietnamese national who was arrested earlier this month on charges related to the illegal trade of wildlife.

According to Mashudu Malabi Dzhanggi, the regional spokesperson for the National Prosecuting Authority the accused in the case, Guyen van Phong, was granted R10 000 bail and is expected to reappear on November 30.

Phong was apprehended on August 12 in Bela-Bela after a four-month investigation by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) into the illegal trade of wildlife in the area.

DEFF spokesperson Albi Modise earlier explained that “search and seizure warrants were executed simultaneously at a Vietnamese-owned farm near Bela-Bela and at two storage units in Pretoria.

“During the raid the team seized 4.19kg of lion teeth, 680g of lion claws and more than 60 kg of processed animal products believed to be lion gelatine,” he explained.

He added that an illegal firearm was also confiscated.

He faces charges of illegal possession of a threatened species in terms of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act and the illegal possession of a firearm.

August 16

LIMPOPO – A man who was arrested last week for the illegal trade in wildlife is expected to reappear in the Bela-Bela Magistrate’s court on Friday (August 20).

The Vietnamese national was arrested on Thursday (August 12) during a simultaneous joint operation comprised of officials from the Green Scorpions from the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET), the Gauteng

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD), SANParks, as well as the police.

According to the department the arrest follows a four-month investigation into the illegal trade of wildlife in the area.

Departmental spokesperson Albi Modise explained that “search and seizure warrants were executed simultaneously at a Vietnamese-owned farm near Bela-Bela and at two storage units in Pretoria”.

“During the raid the team seized 4.19kg of lion teeth, 680g of lion claws and more than 60 kg of processed animal products believed to be lion gelatine,” he explained.

He added that an illegal firearm was also confiscated.

The man was arrested and charged with illegal possession of a threatened species in terms of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act and the illegal possession of a firearm.

Modiso said the suspect appeared in the Bela-Bela Magistrates Court last week and his case was postponed to Friday to ensure that a Vietnamese interpreter is present.

“The collaborative nature of this operation has once again proven the importance of an integrated approach to investigations. The valuable assistance of the private sector in this matter is also highly appreciated,” he concluded.