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Alleged rhino horn poachers, police officer and Chinese interpreter, released on R5 000 to R20 000 bail

By [Sihle Mlambo](#) 3h ago

Johannesburg - Two alleged rhino poachers, a police officer and a Chinese interpreter, who appeared in the Palm View Magistrate's Court, have been released on bail of between R5 000 and R20 000.

The accused, Warrant Officer Stephanus Peter Peters, 53, and Lina Zhang, 39, were granted R5 000 and R20 000 bail respectively. They are expected to appear in court again on November 10, while the NPA and the Hawks investigate further.

Peters and Zhang are alleged to have dropped off a consignment destined for Malaysia at Pomona in Kempton Park and allegedly falsely declared it as wine.

“Both accused were granted bail during their first court appearance facing charges of dealing in illegal rhino horns and contravening the Customs Act. The warrant officer was granted R5 000 bail, while the Chinese court interpreter was granted R20 000 bail. They are both expected back in court on November 10. The case is postponed for further investigation,” spokesperson for the Hawks in Gauteng Captain Ndivhuwo Mulamu said.

Mulamu said an investigative team which focuses on endangered species was alerted about the consignment and when they searched it at the warehouse they found a

wooden crate containing wine and found 30 rhino horns wrapped in plastic concealed under the crate.

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“The crate with its content was taken to Forensic Services for analysis. Further investigation led the police to positively identified shipment senders, a police official and a court interpreter. Warrants of arrest were issued for their apprehension,” said Mulamu.

The suspects were arrested in Brakpan and Bassonia on Thursday, after an intelligence operation, the Hawks said.

The Hawks also seized electronic gadgets and documents for investigation.

The Hawks said they expected to make more arrests.

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