



NEWS CRIME AND COURTS

Field ranger who hid two alleged poachers in his vehicle released on R15 000 bail



A field ranger was arrested after he allegedly hid two suspected poachers in his bakkie. Photo:Supplied

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Pretoria- A field ranger who allegedly hid two suspected [poachers](#) in his bakkie, appeared at the Bushbuckridge Magistrate's Court where he was released on R15 000 bail.

Bright Mashele, 36, the field ranger and his two accomplice, Collen Mathebula, 32, and Casper Mlambo, 30, were arrested on Saturday when they tried to enter the Kruger National Park through Numbi Gate.

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According to provincial police spokesperson Brigadier Selvy Mohlala, police received information about some individuals who were orchestrating to enter the park to [commit crime](#).

“A search at Numbi Gate and Pretoriuskop section was then carried out with the assistance of a SANParks helicopter. During the operation, a certain car, white Toyota Hilux bakkie driven by a field ranger was stopped and when searching, the team discovered that underneath a sail cover at the back of the bakkie, there were two male persons who were hiding.”

Mohlala said upon searching the vehicle, police found a hunting rifle without serial numbers as well as about ten live ammunition hidden behind a seat.

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“There were also two knives that were found inside the bakkie. The two male persons at the back of the bakkie reportedly failed to produce entrance permits hence they were arrested together with the driver,” he said.

The trio was charged with possession of unlicensed firearm with ammunition. Mlambo and Mathebula had trespassing added to their charge.

In court, Mashele and Mathebula were granted bail of R15 000 each, meanwhile Mlambo’s bail hearing was postponed due to investigation which revealed that he had previous convictions.

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His formal bail hearing will be held on Wednesday.

Mohlala added that investigations are continuing and police cannot rule out the possibility of adding more charges against the trio.

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