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Police nab alleged rhino poaching kingpin in Limpopo

The suspect is allegedly linked to a series of cases including murder, racketeering and rhino poaching committed in Mpumalanga.



The police recovered a bag dropped by the suspect and it contained six 375 live rounds, one silencer and three knives. Picture: Supplied

An alleged kingpin of a rhino poaching syndicate is due to appear in the Hoedspruit Periodical Court in Limpopo on Monday after he was arrested at the weekend.

Rhino poaching

The 59-year-old man, who is alleged to be a kingpin of a rhino poaching syndicate that operates between Mpumalanga and Limpopo, was arrested on Saturday in the Mopani District of Limpopo during a joint intelligence operation conducted by the Provincial Stock Theft Unit, Hoedspruit police, and other law enforcement agencies.

He was arrested after police received a tip-off regarding two suspects who were driving a grey Toyota Bakkie that was suspected to be involved in rhino poaching in Lydenburg, Mpumalanga.

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The vehicle was spotted driving along the R531 public road at Klaserie One Stop Station in Kampersrus and police set up a stop and search operation in the vicinity in an attempt to block the suspects' vehicle.

Roadblock

According to police spokesperson Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, while approaching the roadblock, the suspects unexpectedly made a U-turn and drove back in the same direction.

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A car chase then ensued for about 6km until it stopped in the middle of the road and one suspect vacated the vehicle and managed to flee into the bushes in an attempt to evade arrest.

The suspect dropped a black bag on the road, which contained six 375 live rounds, one silencer and three knives believed to have been used in the commission of the crimes.

“Afterwards, the motor vehicle continued to drive off until it was subsequently cornered at Kampersrus after it collided with another motor vehicle. The motor vehicle was searched and police discovered money concealed in the backseat.

“The driver of the motor vehicle was immediately placed under arrest,” Ledwaba said in a [statement](#).

He said preliminary investigations revealed that the suspect is linked to a series of cases that include murder, racketeering and rhino poaching that were committed this year in Mpumalanga.

“A manhunt of the unknown suspect is underway and anyone with information that can assist with his apprehension should contact the Investigating Officer, Captain Pieter Meyer, on 066 016 4156 or Crime Stop number 08600 10111 or [MySAPSApp](#).”

Police investigations are continuing.