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A total of 25,3t of abalone, with a value of about R37m, was seized from the suspects since the inception of the investigation by the Hawks in George in 2016.

Journalist Kristy Kolberg | Friday, 14 June 2024, 10:57



(<https://cms.groupeditors.com/img/0dd683da-cbca-4001-93c0-12a55f39b024.jpeg>)

Jianxian Wu

Update

GEORGE NEWS - Following years of patient investigation, the illegal abalone trade in the Western Cape has been dealt a major blow when the Hawks in George arrested eight suspects between the ages of 45 and 65 for their involvement in an abalone poaching syndicate.



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suspects since the inception of the investigation by the Hawks in George in 2016.

The suspects were arrested during a takedown operation with a series of tracing operations across the Western Cape and Garden Route on Monday 10 June.

Warrants of arrest were executed by the multi-disciplinary team led by the Hawks and supported by the Public Order Police and Anti-Gang Unit from the Overberg District.

Seven suspects, Jerome Jacobs (51), Magnon Swartz (56), Marius Robyn Hendricks (50), Francois Visser (46), Jacob 'Jappie' Arendse (56), Danny Ralph Marais (65) and Koobadran Naidoo (62), were arrested in the Cape Peninsula, Overberg and Garden Route areas on Monday, while the first suspect, Jianxian Wu, was arrested in Brits in the North West Province in May this year.

The company, Kaiden Logistics CC, was also charged as it was instrumental in the operation. "The criminal grouping was mainly operating in the Western Cape and Gauteng," said Hani.

All the suspects appeared in the George Magistrate's Court on Tuesday 11 June.

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) issued a centralisation certificate to have all the cases heard in George as many of the alleged offences took place in this area. Also, the team from the Hawks, who have been investigating the case from the beginning, is based in George.

Wu's bail application has been postponed until Monday 24 June while the others will apply for bail tomorrow, Friday 14 June. All the suspects remain in custody.

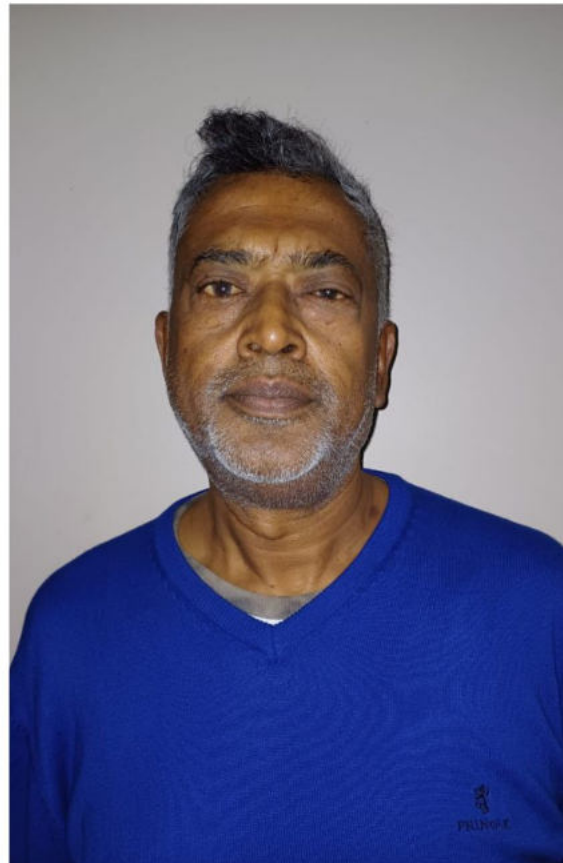
They face a series of charges ranging from transportation and storage of illegal abalone, money laundering, managing the affairs of a criminal enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity, and illegal exporting of abalone.

A total of 12 cases were registered with a combined total of 77 charges against the suspects.



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From the top left are: Danny Ralph Marais, Jerome Jacobs, Francois Visser and Koobadran Naaido.



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From the top left are: Jacob Arendse, Magnon Swartz, Marius Robyn Hendricks and Jianxian Wu.



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Posted on 10:57 Fri, 14 June 2021

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