

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 14 MARCH 2014

RE: TWO CONVICTED FOR RHINO HORN POSSESSION

RICHARDS BAY: Mr. Thulani Mbatha (27) and Mr. Muntogokwakhe Israel Khoza (44) of Vryheid and Ulundi respectively were sentenced in the Richards Bay Regional court on Wednesday for possession of rhino horn.

On 15 March 2013, Kingsley police stopped a vehicle driven by the first Accused at 3 o'clock in the morning. He got off the car and presented the police official with a fraudulent driver's licence. The officers then asked to search the car. Accused 2 was sitting in the front seat of the car with a packet at his feet. Inspection of the packet revealed 2 blood stained rhino horns. The men were immediately arrested.

Investigations and DNA linked the horn to a rhino shot 2 days before at Louwsberg.

Both men were convicted for being in possession of rhino horn and were sentenced to 6 years imprisonment each.

Accused 2 was further convicted of fraud (for presenting a fraudulent drivers licence) and driving without a licence. He was sentenced to 6 months for fraud and 3 months or R1000 fine for unlicensed driving. The sentences will run consecutively.

Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu Natal, Adv. Moipone Noko welcomes the sentence and conviction. "This case is a typical example of our serious attitude towards the eradication of wildlife crimes, she said."

ENDS

Note: The NPA's media statements are available on the website:
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