

23 poachers arrested in Kruger National Park in 18 days

Since Thursday, 19 July - the day the rangers corps lost a colleague in a contact with a poaching group - 23 suspected rhino poachers have been arrested in the Kruger National Park (KNP). Respect Mathebula became the second ranger casualty since 1958 involving poacher contact in the park.



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The managing executive of the KNP, Glenn Phillips, commended the work of the rangers saying they are resilient in the aftermath of the tragic loss of a colleague, “The arrests are a sign that the spirit of Respect is being honoured by the rangers corps. Further to this, the fact that no poachers were wounded or killed in these contacts is a clear demonstration of the professionalism and discipline that embodies our rangers corps.”

Relentless poacher activity

“There has been relentless poacher activity since his passing, with 156 activities reported and that includes contacts. We are still making a plea to our neighbouring communities to help us in this fight by exposing those who are exploiting their children, husbands and relatives to illegally hunt rhino. These people do not have the welfare of the communities at heart but are criminals without a conscience and they need to be put behind bars for a long time for their criminal acts,” said Phillips.

The 23 arrested suspects were also in possession of 10 high calibre rifles and poaching equipment. They will be facing charges related to poaching and possession of unlicensed firearms and ammunition.