

Hawks nab fuel theft kingpin

The Hawks on Wednesday pounced on an alleged kingpin of a syndicate linked to the theft of fuel, which has caused damage to essential infrastructure.



Image source: Kindel Media from [Pexels](#)

The 35-year-old suspect was arrested in Pretoria by a multidisciplinary team, led by the Free State Hawks Serious Organised Crime Investigation team, together with Bidvest Protea Coin Security and the Gauteng Traffic Department Saturation Unit.

Hawks spokesperson, Lieutenant Colonel Philani Nkwilase, said the arrest followed further investigation into the arrest of two suspects, aged between 35 and 41, on Saturday. The two were arrested for the theft of fuel and tampering with the Transnet national pipeline in Vrede, Free State and were arrested on delivering the stolen fuel in Kromdraai, Witbank.

“The duo, Mauro Aurelia Langa (41), a Mozambican national and Solly Khoza (35) appeared in the Vrede Magistrates’ Court and are expected to be back in court on 24 October 2022.

"They were arrested by a multidisciplinary team comprising the Hawks' Non-Ferrous Metals, Tactical Operations Management Section, with Secunda and Middelburg-based Serious Organised Crime Investigation, assisted by Bidvest Protea Coin, Ekurhuleni District Operational Task Team, Badboyz Security and South African Revenue Service (SARS).

"Police seized the tanker with fuel, which was involved in Saturday's incident."

The alleged kingpin is expected to appear in the Witbank Magistrates court today and will later appear in Vrede with other suspects.

Nkwalase said it was now on public record that almost 8.5 million litres of fuel, valued at approximately R102m, has been stolen from national Transnet pipes in the last year.

"There are 46 suspects arrest in the last three months owing to the multi-disciplinary approach operations which prove to be a working formula. Now with the additional three linked to this incident, we are sitting at total of 49 suspects arrested in the country," he said.

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