

Rhino horns worth \$600,000 seized at Bangkok airport

January 7 2013



This file photo shows a man showing a piece of rhino horn, in Hanoi, on April 24, 2012. Illegal hunting of rhinos has risen in recent years to meet surging demand for their horns in parts of Asia, in particular Vietnam where they are highly prized for their supposed medicinal qualities.

A Vietnamese man was arrested with rhino horn worth more than half a million dollars in his luggage at Bangkok's main airport, Thai officials said.

The six pieces of horn, weighing about 10.6 kilos and valued at an estimated 18 million baht (\$600,000)—are believed to have been smuggled from Mozambique, [wildlife protection](#) authorities said.

The 56-year-old suspect was detained on Sunday evening after arriving in Thailand on a flight from Ethiopia, while waiting to board a connecting flight to Hanoi.

"He left his suitcase on the baggage [conveyor belt](#) and did not check it in on purpose, so it seemed like he wanted it to be picked up by someone else," said Narongrit Sookprakarn, a wildlife official at Suvarnabhumi airport.

The man is accused of bringing protected [wild animal](#) parts and prohibited goods into the country without permission.

If convicted he could face four years in prison and a fine of at least 40,000 baht (\$1,300).

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