

**Channel News Asia**

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**Smuggling of rhino parts goes online**

*CNA/cc*

SINGAPORE: Rhinoceroses are a protected species, and it is illegal to import their horns here. However, some traders allegedly get round the law by taking the transactions online.

In a correspondence via email, a Channel NewsAsia reporter contacted a seller, allegedly based in Singapore, who claimed to be able to ship the horns over in two days.

This, the seller said, could be done via an international mailing service, disguising them as art pieces.

The demand for horns exists, as some believe they can treat cancer.

But practitioners of traditional chinese medicine said there is no scientific evidence to prove this.

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority said it has not seized any illegally-smuggled horns since 1995.

But a local animal welfare group said the illegal acts are still going on.

Mr Louis Ng, executive director at the Animal Concerns Research & Education Society said:  
"Sometimes they are smuggled in powder form, which is the same property as our fingernails, so it's hard to detect with our current measures in place. But what we really need to do now is employ sniffer dogs, that can sniff out rhino horns, bear parts, tiger parts, (and) live animals. That would be a more effective deterrent.